



Why Plant New Churches? Six Good Reasons

(1) *This is the way the church grew in the book of Acts.* The basic reason for planting new churches is that this is the way the church grew in the book of Acts. One missionary journey after another resulted in new churches. The kingdom of Christ grew by the multiplication of churches.

In addition to this basic reason, we find five other practical reasons:

(2) *New churches do not possess baggage of two kinds.* Long-standing churches can carry ***traditional baggage***. Their religious buildings may put people off and their forms of worship may become inflexible and they may simply be unaware of the great distance between them and the culture around them. Alternatively, or sometimes in addition, churches can carry ***institutional baggage*** which may prevent it from adapting to the needs of the world. These institutional forces may be due to internal politics such as the influence of longstanding families or other pressure groups within the church. So folk within an existing church may want to reach the lost, but find all attempts resisted. A new church does not possess these kinds of baggage.

(3) *New and smaller churches can express specific and local concern* that churches which pool from a large geographic area find difficult to achieve. It is hard for someone who lives many miles from a congregational building to possess a passion for an area they do not live in. New churches made up mainly of people from the locality more readily express a natural concern for the people in their own community.

(4) *New churches are often born with an evangelistic purpose.* Some churches become inward looking over time, for one reason or another, and cease to care for the world. Some even justify their lack of Gospel zeal with notions such as "it's the day of small things", "the world is so hard to the Gospel today", "the great commission was only for the apostles", "it's because we are being faithful that no-one is being converted", all the while neglecting the Master's words, "go.... make disciples..." and "the fields are white unto harvest." (Matthew 28, John 4:35).

(5) *New churches start off as more effective serving centres.* Small churches can be more effective places to serve because....

- the *need* to serve rises in small churches
- *ownership* of ministry rises
- *relational* organisation takes place instead of *organisational* organisation

(6) *New churches enable "The Church" to re-examine its traditions* in the light of Scripture. New churches, properly founded, are not clones of their mother churches, but are given the freedom to implement Biblical principles in a new, fresh and relevant way to both the culture of the day and the people they are trying to reach.

Summary

We do not believe that church planting is the only way to grow the kingdom, but we do believe it is the most significant way. As an example, in *The Churching of America*, Fink and Stark point out that America was won for the Gospel by the rapid planting of many churches over it's brief history, resulting in a church attendance growth from 17% in 1800 to 62% in 1980.