

CREATING AND SUSTAINING  
A CHURCH PLANTING MULTIPLICATION MOVEMENT  
IN GERMANY

A DISSERTATION  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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APRIL 2006



# **Creating and Sustaining a Church Planting Multiplication Movement in Germany**

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Doctor of Ministry

2006

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The goal of this dissertation is to explore the concept of a church planting multiplication movement in Germany. Some argue that a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches has not occurred in Germany, but that the Bible warrants this viable phenomenon as Christians intentionally seek it under God's guidance. The thesis of this dissertation, therefore, states: Germany can support a church planting multiplication movement through a bold action plan and a restructuring and reconsideration of current planting methods.

The dissertation is divided into three parts: first, the context for a church planting multiplication movement in Germany; second, the biblical and theological concepts pertaining to such a movement; and third, practical steps to create and sustain this movement in Germany. The first section studies the ecclesial terrain of the established Protestant Church in Germany and of the denominational and non-denominational German Free Churches. With the exception of a few innovative Free Churches a church planting multiplication movement seems unlikely. The second part of the dissertation considers the kingdom of God as the foundation for church planting, studies the concept of multiplication in the Bible, and explores the life and teachings of Jesus as the seeds for church planting. The third section articulates the practical principles of creating and sustaining church planting multiplication movement in Germany.

This dissertation concludes that a church planting multiplication movement for Germany is both biblical and necessary. Successful church planting, however, requires a restructuring of methods. A viable church planting multiplication movement in Germany will demand a heart-felt seeking after God, a reproducible system of leadership training of non-professionals, and the planting of socially high profile and low profile cell churches.

Theological Mentor: John Hull, DMin

Words: 275

To **Jan Carla**—the light of my life and love of my heart

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am greatly indebted to the goodness of God shown to me through the lives of the following people, who have all made an impact on my life and ministry as reflected in this dissertation. By her constant intercession and encouragement, my mother, Thea Schindler, was instrumental in leading us back to Germany, the land of my heritage. My wonderful wife, Jan Carla, and our awesome children, Erich and his wife Kelley, Monica, and Lukas were an unending source of joy and strength.

Dr. Bob Logan inspired me to think beyond church planting addition to multiplication. Dr. Dallas Willard enriched both heart and mind, giving life-sustaining insights in to a deeper experience of living in the kingdom of God. Ernst-Wilhelm Erdlenbruch and Erhard Michel, past and present leaders of the German Evangelical Free Church's church planting ministry, believed in what God could do through my ministry to further His kingdom in Germany. My friendship with Pastor Fritz Weidemann in Heidelberg remains a constant corrective and inspiration. I shudder to think where I would be today without the trust and support of these my brothers and colleagues in the German Evangelical Free Church. My brother-in-law Dr. Stephen Boyer, Professor at Eastern College, made this work much better than it could have been through his helpful comments. My content reader, Dr. Heinrich Hofmann, provided much encouragement and valuable advice along the way.

I would like to thank the churches in the United States that have stood behind us in prayer and giving, enabling us to plant churches in Germany for more than twenty years now: Elmbrook Church, Westbrook Church, Northbrook Church, the Evangelical Free Church in Wheaton, Crossroads Church of Libertyville. Our mission organization, TEAM, especially with the encouragement of Mike Cochrane and Dr. Charlie Davis, gave me great liberty to pursue this project.

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## INTRODUCTION

For decades the Christian influence and established Protestant Church in Germany (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* or EKD) have declined steadily. In the 1980s, 94 percent of Germans declared themselves to be either Catholic or Protestant, but today, that figure has dropped to 72 percent.<sup>1</sup> While 59 percent of Americans claim to value religion as very important in their lives, only 21 percent of Germans do.<sup>2</sup> A decade ago the average attendance in a local, established Protestant church was 23.5 people.<sup>3</sup> Recently the Free Churches in Germany have demonstrated growth, but much of it has been incrementally low with little social impact. This crisis in contemporary German Christianity demands action to prevent further decline and cultural marginalization as studies indicate that the status quo will yield no improvement.<sup>4</sup>

The author of this paper believes that simply planting more new churches in Germany in a conventional manner will not significantly improve the current crisis. Conventional church planting describes a slow process by which an established church

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<sup>1</sup> Klaus-Peter Schöppner, “Weihnachtsumfrage: Nicht einmal mehr jeder Vierte betet regelmäßig” (Christmas poll: less than one fourth prays regularly), *Die Welt* 24 (December 2004) <http://www.welt.de/data/2004/12/14/379729.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Jay Tolson, “European, Not Christian,” *U.S. News & World Report*, 30 May 2005, 52.

<sup>3</sup> Wolfgang Simson, *Houses That Change the World: The Return of the House Churches* (Emmelsbull, Germany: C & P Publishing, 1999; reprint, Bletchley, UK: Authentic Media, 2005), 21 (page citation is to the reprint edition).

<sup>4</sup> James H. Furr, Mike Bonem, and Jim Herrington, *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), ix.

starts a new church and then may require a decade of recovery before undertaking another planting project. Aggressive church planting has been pursued among the Free Churches for the past thirty years, but only yielded marginal denominational growth. Conventional church planting has done little to stop decline of Christianity in Germany. The author of this paper believes a successful German church planting multiplication movement must emphasize a rapid and healthy multiplication and replace the current mode of planting. David Garrison asserts a successful church planting movement “is a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment.”<sup>5</sup> Such a movement, fanned by the Spirit of God, and resulting in noticeable moral and social impact has yet to occur in Germany. The absence of a successful church planting movement in Germany provides both the impetus for this present work and encouragement to overcome the downward spiral of the waning Christian influence in German society.

This dissertation contains three parts including an ecclesial context, an exploration of the biblical and theological impetus for planting, and the praxis of a church planting multiplication movement. Chapter 1 explores the ecclesial background for a church planting multiplication movement. It describes the spiritual and structural state of the Protestant Church and explores the Church’s identity, parochial polity, relationship to the government, concept of ministry, theology, and membership. This first

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<sup>5</sup> David Garrison, *Church Planting Multiplication Movements: How God is Redeeming a Lost World* (Midlothian, VA: WIGTake Resources, 2004), 21.

chapter concludes that the established Protestant Church itself has become its own nemesis and shall continue to degenerate if nothing changes.

Chapter 2 analyzes the Free Churches in Germany including: Baptist, Evangelical Free, Methodist, Seventh Day Adventist, and Pentecostal. Some independent Free Churches have developed in Germany within the past twenty years, such as fundamentalist and diverse charismatic groups, which exist outside the confines of denominations. These newer churches, less burdened with personnel, finances, buildings, and infrastructure show more rapid growth than the older Free Churches and offer true potential for church a planting movement.

Chapter 3 explores the biblical and theological underpinnings of a church planting multiplication movement and examines the foundation for church planting in the theology of the kingdom of God including: the concept of multiplication in the Bible along five lines (theocratic blessing, Christological expectation, pneumatic activity, eschatological fulfillment, and ecclesial expectation), and principles on multiplication distilled from the research. This chapter then describes church planting principles gleaned from an inductive study of the life of Jesus in the Gospels.

Chapter 4 suggests how a church planting multiplication movement in Germany can be initiated and sustained and describes ten additional principles of effective church planting that have come out of the author's twenty years of experience as a church planter in Germany.

Chapter 5 addresses the central issue in effective church planting: training disciples to reproduce themselves and can plant new churches in order to create a true

multiplication movement. Chapter 5 then explores important leadership issues including competency, development, sustainability, and barriers that pertain to a church planting multiplication movement. Finally, it outlines a strategy for such a movement and demonstrates how barriers can be overcome and the movement sustained.

The research, biblical precedent, and practical plan suggested by the author of this paper support this dissertation's thesis that Germany can, in fact, initiate a successful church planting multiplication movement through a bold action plan that restructures and reconsiders established planting methods.

PART ONE:  
THE CONTEXT FOR A CHURCH PLANTING  
MULTIPLICATION MOVEMENT IN GERMANY

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CHAPTER ONE  
THE ESTABLISHED PROTESTANT CHURCH IN GERMANY

**Introduction**

Germany has become a heathen land with a Christian residue.

Harenberg, *Der Spiegel*<sup>1</sup>

The dismal spiritual landscape of contemporary Germany can be seen in the imposing cathedrals, once filled with vibrant spirituality, now echoing with the muffled whispers of shuffling tourists. Low attendance and high maintenance costs cause churches that have been in operation for centuries to close their doors. Powerful preaching, saturated with personal conviction and biblical truth, has given way to humanistic, environmental, and philosophical rhetoric. Sixty percent of Germans between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine living in Eastern Germany have never attended a Christian worship service,<sup>2</sup> and many younger Germans no longer consider Christianity significant or relevant. A recent survey asked the question: “Do you believe that in our day the Christian faith is important, or is this faith no longer contemporary and out of date?” 53 percent of Germans between the ages of 16-29 responded that they felt

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<sup>1</sup> Werner Harenberg, “SPIEGEL-Umfrage über Glauben und Religion, Kirchen und Kirchensteuer” (SPIEGEL-questionnaire concerning faith and religion, church and church tax), *Der Spiegel* 25 (15 June 1992): 36. My translation.

<sup>2</sup> “Die meisten jungen Ostdeutschen nie im Gottesdienst” (Most East German young people have never attended a worship service), *IDEA Spektrum*, (27 October 2005): 12.

the Christian faith was outdated, 19 percent said that it was important, and 28 percent had no opinion.<sup>3</sup>

While German Christianity today faces major issues, other types of religious interest thrive. Mosques have become increasingly commonplace in German cities; the 3.4 million Muslims living in Germany pray in 2,400 mosques. The last census taken in 1987 before reunification reported that adherents to Islam in Germany have increased by 20 percent while Lutheran membership has decreased by 20 percent.<sup>4</sup> Buddhism has captured the attention of many people caught in the throes of life's stress, and some even re-examine and embrace the old Germanic gods that predated Christianity.

“A large German insurance company publishes an annual report of the fears of Germans. At the top of the list is the increase of the cost of consumer goods. Citizens are concerned about the business climate, unemployment, and the fear of terrorist attacks is pervasive.” This climate has caused many Germans to experience *angst* and frustration in the postmodern society.<sup>5</sup> Many people feel helpless and inundated by too much information and the fast pace of life. Families are often dysfunctional and disjointed because individuals often lack the energy and the patience needed to invest in vibrant, mutually beneficial relationships. While the world often perceives Germans as engineers

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<sup>3</sup> Renate Köcher, “Die Herausforderung durch den Islam als Chance” (The challenge of Islam as opportunity), *Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach* (December 2004): 5.

<sup>4</sup> Wolfgang Huber, “Interview,” *Focus* 48 (November 2004): 37.

<sup>5</sup> “Ende eines Angstjahres” (The end of a year of angst), *Die Rheinpfalz* (December 2004): 2. My translation.

who produce high quality products, the author of this study believes their task-oriented habits often result in fragile family relationships.

This current cultural and religious context provides a daunting task to win Germans over to a life of faith in Jesus Christ. In 1998 Donald McGavran claimed: “Germany needs 20,000 new churches.”<sup>6</sup> This, however, has not occurred. Studies suggest the existing Protestant Church’s inability to meet the spiritual needs of contemporary men and women demands new churches.<sup>7</sup> An exploration of the existing ecclesial context of Protestant Christianity in Germany will demonstrate the need to initiate a church planting multiplication movement. The author of this paper believes the Protestant Church itself contributes greatly to the fact that a church planting movement has not yet occurred in Germany.

### **Weaknesses of the Established Protestant Church in Germany**

Germany is the birthplace of Protestantism, and Protestantism shaped the context in which church planting currently occurs in Germany. Understanding the Protestant Church of Germany (EKD), its history, its role in society, the Church as a system, and the relationships between church members contextualizes the need to plant new multiplying churches in Germany.

Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) refers to a federation of twenty-three regional churches roughly corresponding to the geography of Germany’s former

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<sup>6</sup> Donald McGavran, “Deutschland braucht 20.000 neue Gemeinden” (Germany needs 20,000 new churches), *Gemeindewachstum* 32 (1988): 10.

<sup>7</sup> This study is limited to German Protestantism within a Protestant and Free Church context and does not consider German Roman Catholicism.

kingdoms and counties. While the English language has one word to describe church, German has two terms: *kirche* and *Gemeinde*. *Kirche* derives from *kyrios*,<sup>8</sup> “belonging to the Lord,” and it usually refers to the Church as an institution such as the Protestant or Roman Catholic Church. The Greek word *ekklesia*<sup>9</sup> is predominantly translated *Gemeinde* and refers to a fellowship of believers or to the local church. In an attempt to make these distinctions for English readers, when referring to *kirche* the author of this paper will use the upper case “Church,” and when referring to *Gemeinde* the lower case “church.”

#### Historical Development of Protestantism in Germany

Martin Luther (1483-1546) and Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560) strove to cleanse and purify the sixteenth-century Roman Catholic Church of doctrinal error, but neither man ever intended the creation of Protestantism as a movement or an ecclesiastical body. Protestantism ultimately emerged for political rather than religious reasons.

Emperor Charles V (1500-1558) became “[h]eir of Spain, the Netherlands, the Austrian territories of the house of Habsburg, master of a considerable portion of Italy, and of newly discovered territories across the Atlantic, [and] his election as Holy Roman Emperor made him the head of a territory vaster than that of any single ruler since Charlemagne. It was an authority greatly limited, however, in Germany by territorial

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<sup>8</sup> William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 459-461.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 240-241.

powers of local princes.”<sup>10</sup> Terrified by the advances of the Turks into Hungary close to Germanic territory, Charles convened a *reichstag* (a legislative assembly of ruling German princes over which the Emperor presided) in Speyer on April 19, 1526.<sup>11</sup> Charles sought the political unity of the warring factions in his empire in his effort to stop the impending Turkish onslaught. The *reichstag* stated: “[P]ending a ‘council or a national assembly,’ each of the territorial rulers of the empire is ‘to live, govern, and carry himself as he hopes and trusts to answer it to God and his imperial majesty.’”<sup>12</sup> Thirty years later, Charles, still distraught over rivalry among Catholic and Lutheran princes in the Empire, convened a third *reichstag* in Augsburg on September 25, 1555. He acquiesced to pressure from Luther-loyal princes and the peace of Augsburg was cemented.

By its provisions equal rights in the empire were extended to Catholics and Lutherans—no other Christians were recognized. Each lay prince should determine which of the two faiths should be professed in his territory—no choice was allowed his subjects—and but one faith should be permitted in a given territory. This was the principle usually defined as *cujus regio, ejus religio* (The confession of the regent is the religion of his territory).<sup>13</sup>

In this time, “Lutheranism acquired full legal establishment, and Germany was permanently divided. Luther’s dream of the purification of the German church had vanished, but so had the Catholic conception of visible unity.”<sup>14</sup> The State Church

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<sup>10</sup> Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1970), 309.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), 614.

<sup>12</sup> Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 318.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 342.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

concept was transferred to the kingdoms and counties of the Empire and it included an ecclesial body that directly depended upon the personal convictions of the head of each individual state. The head of state was also head of the region's Church, and legally every citizen was required to be a member of a Church or be expelled from the country.

Germany did not separate Church and state and allow religious bodies other than the State Churches to attain their own property until the demise of Germany at the end of World War I and the establishment of the Weimar Republic in 1919. In contemporary Germany, the Federal Republic confers upon legally recognized religious bodies certain rights, allowing them, for instance, to receive funds directly from church members' salaries (Church tax), to conduct religious instruction in public schools, and to provide spiritual guidance for soldiers.<sup>15</sup>

With the exception of two World Wars, most German military conflicts were religious in nature. The author of this paper believes the shifting of boundary markers and people, and the transition from over 300 German kingdoms to sixteen states in a federated Germany, deeply and negatively affected religious and social life. The author of this paper believes three major factors including identity confusion, parochial systems, and Church-State partnership, contributed to the weakening of Protestantism. The next sections will explore these issues.

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<sup>15</sup> *Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany), (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1998), 91-92.

## Identity Confusion

The ever-shifting adjectives preceding *kirche* represent the ambivalent identity of German Protestantism. The *staatskirche* (State Church), generated by Emperor Constantine's Edict of Milan in A.D. 325, developed first. As Pontifex Maximus, Constantine became head of the Church because he was head of the state. The emperor's realm and reign became equated with the range of Christianity, although at this time Germany's territory was not Christian.<sup>16</sup>

Until the Enlightenment, Constantine's was the only known and accepted form of organized Christianity. Christianity was in the hands of religious regents whose use of power often superseded their piety. The personage of the king united the legislative, executive, and religious branches of government, and his power alone could appoint or depose religious leaders. At this time, to live in a certain area made one Protestant or Catholic, by virtue of the ruler's religion. With the advent of the Reform movement known as Calvinism, some Protestant Churches became reformed in theology while others combined their traditions and became United Churches.

In 1822, Friedrich Schleiermacher coined the term *volkskirche* (Church of the People) as opposed to the *staatskirche* (Church of the State). *Volkskirche* referred to adherents of Christianity with a common language, morals, and history.<sup>17</sup> Later national socialists and Nazis reapplied this concept to describe a *volkstumskirche* (National

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<sup>16</sup> Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 91-93.

<sup>17</sup> *Ständiger Theologischer Ausschuss der EKV* (Standing Theological Committee of the Evangelische Kirche der Union), "Stichwort Volkskirche" (Term volkskirche), in Wilhelm Hüffmeier ed., *Modell Volkskirche* (Concept peoples church) (Bielefeld: Luther-Verlag, 1995), 17.

Church such as the German Aryan Church). Churchmen such as Karl Barth reacted to such racialism by calling for a *bekennniskirche* (Confessional Church). In the years after World War II, *Kirche für das Volk* (Church for the people) became a widely disseminated and accepted concept of Church.

Jürgen Moltmann referred to the “double crisis” of the established German Protestant Church. On the one hand, the Church suffers a crisis of relevance and on the other hand a crisis of identity, and both crises stand in opposition to one another. The more the Church seeks to become relevant, the more it surrenders its identity. Yet its quest for a unified identity is hampered by reality of a fractured Church that cannot grasp its own identity, thus making it more irrelevant.<sup>18</sup>

Manifold labels, interconnectedness with government, syncretism identification of race with confession, and the abuse of power by Adolf Hitler when he secured the allegiance of religious leaders for his war effort influenced a German Church lacking in definition and resolution. The author of this paper believes this ambiguous terminology concerning its identity ultimately confuses the nature, mission, and purpose of the Church.

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<sup>18</sup> Klaus Douglas, *Die Neue Reformation: 96 Thesen zur Zukunft der Kirche* (The new Reformation: ninety-six theses concerning the future of the church) (Stuttgart, Germany: Kreuz Verlag, 2001), 18.

### Parochial System

Since the ninth-century, belonging to a local parish was concomitant with residence in a particular locale in Germany. This arrangement enabled accessible personal pastoral care and effectively organized church life. The parochial system allowed members to secure spiritual instruction, personal care, fellowship, and services of a local church. In contemporary Germany, the majority of Protestant Church members do not regularly participate in local church life. They do so, however, on special occasions such as the death of a loved one, marriage, baptism of an infant, and confirmation ceremonies.

This system does not require growth. The non-voluntary nature of the parochial system assures membership and funds, but without participation. The local church essentially succumbs to becoming a service organization, much like the postal or train companies. “It is obvious that the ‘service organization local church’ is difficult to reconcile with an evangelistic Church.”<sup>19</sup>

### Church-State Partnership

While the Church ceased to be part of the State in 1919, the German government continues to aid the Church and keep it alive.<sup>20</sup> Ironically, this support saps the church’s missional vitality. The government recognizes the Church’s contribution to upholding societal values, culture, education, and health care. In return, the government extracts

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<sup>19</sup> Klaus Richter, *Kursänderung: Evangelium und Gemeinde in der Volkskirche* (Change of course: the gospel and the church within the established church) (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Aussat Verlag, 1993), 20.

<sup>20</sup> Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 1374.

approximately 8 percent of the Church member's taxed income and funnels it to the member's denomination. Church attendance does not directly affect the church's income.

#### Causes of the Weakening Established Protestant Church in Germany

A variety of other factors emerge from Germany's Church structure. The author of this study believes the structure and history of German Protestantism enables the following consequences, which ultimately contribute to the continued erosion of the Church.

#### *Clergy-Centered Ministry*

A minister within the EKD is seen as the professional representative of the Church, and ministers must fulfill various expectations and play certain established roles. A professional minister must preach, baptize, perform weddings, bury, conduct religious education in the public schools and confirmation classes, oversee parish kindergarten teachers, conduct meetings, and attend local festivities. Within the system, one pastor serves 2000 members.

Rudolf Bohren suggested: "We have laid the spiritual gifts into the coffin of the office of the minister. The minister continues to be the sole king, priest, prophet and teacher. Thus all serve the one, and the one serves everyone. In this way the local church remains immature and the minister overloaded."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Theo Sorg, *Wie wird die Kirche neu?* (How can the church be renewed?) (Wuppertal: Aussat Verlag, 1977), 25.

### ***Theological Liberalism***

The theological education of Protestant ministers in Germany is integrated into the rationalistic university system. The EKD oversees the study of Protestant theology in nineteen universities and in three academies. In 2004, 10,354 students were registered to study Protestant theology and many of them became religion teachers in public schools.<sup>22</sup> Theological faculties submit their theologies to rationalism and higher criticism. Rudolf Bultmann commented on the anti-supernatural bias of this form of study: “One cannot use electrical lights and radios, procure modern medical and clinical aid in time of illness and at the same time believe in the spirit and miracle world of the New Testament.”<sup>23</sup> Prospective ministers must pass two theological examinations in order to enter the ministry, but are not thoroughly questioned on their personal piety or faith.

During the protest movement on Germany’s campuses in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Evangelicals asserted the need for theology students to receive spiritual and intellectual support against the onslaught of an unsettling hermeneutic and a critical posture toward the Bible. This tension resulted in four evangelical *studienhäuser* (study houses) comprising of 1 percent of all Protestant theology students. The Evangelical *studienhäuser* provide students with spiritual and professional aid to protect their Evangelical convictions while studying Protestant theology.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> “Das Theologiestudium ist wieder beliebter” (The study of theology is once again sought after), *IDEA Spektrum* 45 (2004): 8.

<sup>23</sup> Werner Harenberg, “Ist Jesus auferstanden wie Goethe?” (Is Jesus resurrected like Goethe?), *Der Spiegel* 31 (1966): 42. My translation.

<sup>24</sup> “Wo gibt es geistliche und fachliche Hilfe?” (Where can one find spiritual and professional help?), *IDEA Spektrum* 19 (2001): 22.

In *This Church Must Change!* Georg Huntemann posits three significant ramifications of theological liberalism: horizontalization, desubstantialization, and pluralism. Horizontalization describes the movement toward an aberrant form of Christianity that jettisons transcendence for a humanistic emphasis. Huntemann quotes theologian Heinz Zahrnt in this regard: “Gone is the old paradigm of the two worlds with their damaging and schizophrenic thinking in two stories, in which there is a separation of realities between this side and the other side, human history and salvation history, above and below.”<sup>25</sup> Desubstantialization describes the deformation of the gospel message by which it loses its substance.<sup>26</sup> Pluralism has given rise to the reality of proclaiming many different gospels in the Church without negative recourse. In this system, reason has ascended the throne of authority over the biblical message, and become the guiding force behind what is proclaimed. The finished work of the gospel thus becomes refinished (Gal 1:6-9), and as a result, loses its supernatural power.

Peter Stuhlmacher also laments the crisis in which the Church finds itself. His article suggests that church leaders think socially rather than biblically: “The question is not, ‘What could or should happen in the Church as biblical principles are considered?’ but, ‘How can the present Protestant Church, on which much is riding, be preserved and be led accountably?’”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Georg Huntemann, *Diese Kirche muss anders werden!* (This church must change!) (Bad Liebenzell: Verlag der Liebenzeller Mission, 1979), 55. My translation.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>27</sup> Peter Stuhlmacher, “Kirche nach dem Neuen Testament” (Church according to the New Testament), *Theologische Beiträge* 6 (1995): 303.

This contemporary crisis inspired prominent former German finance minister Hans Apel to suspend his membership in the Protestant Church in 2002 and join a Free Church. Interviewed in the weekly news magazine *Focus*, Apel sharply criticized the insignificance of the Church's message: "The Church is failing to fulfill her commission. She no longer propagates the teaching of Jesus Christ, but evades it by succumbing to marginalism (i.e., blessing of homosexual unions, ceremonies for divorced, political statements, etc.), because her clientele wishes such. . . . The Protestant Church has decayed to a comfortable blessing-Church. The gospel dissolves like a piece of sugar in the Atlantic Ocean."<sup>28</sup>

The author of this paper believes the German established Protestant Church has jettisoned biblical authority for democracy, and such a pragmatic and humanistic stance has resulted in major compromise rather than the assertion of biblical truth.

### ***Anemic Membership***

Anemia describes a condition in which a person lacks vigor or vitality, and the author of this paper believes this condition characterizes the spiritual lifelessness and lethargy epidemic in the Protestant Church in Germany. A recent statistic reported that almost 2.7 million members of the EKD suspended their membership during the ten years

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<sup>28</sup> Hans Apel, "Interview," *Focus* (July 2003): 38. My translation.

from 1991-2001.<sup>29</sup> “More than 60% of [EKD] members feel ‘somewhat’, ‘hardly’, or ‘not at all’ connected” to their Church.<sup>30</sup>



Figure 1. Suspended membership

Of the twenty-three regional Protestant Churches in Germany all but one have suffered from declining membership in the past twenty years.<sup>31</sup>

### *Non-Faith Baptism and Confirmation*

Entrance into the Church and into the Body of Christ commences with paedobaptism. Baptism in turn lays the foundation of Church membership, which is spiritually insignificant for many persons. The decisions of the parents are visited upon the children, and these children often grow up with little or no personal faith in Christ or spiritual

<sup>29</sup> Referat Statistik Kirchenamt der EKD (Division of statistics in the EKD), Conveyed to the author in an e-mail on January 17, 2005.

<sup>30</sup> “Mehrheit is distanziert, aber nicht austrittswillig” (The majority is distant, but not willing to suspend membership), *IDEA Spektrum* 42 (2003): 14. My translation.

<sup>31</sup> “Die Mitgliedskirchen der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland (EKD) und ihre Entwicklung” (The member churches of the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD) and their development), *IDEA Spektrum* 31 (August 2005): 16.

interest in the Church itself because they have no role models and they are not educated enough in the Christian faith. Klaus Eickhoff remarked on this phenomenon:

Is the Church baptizing itself to death? The Church is slowly baptizing itself to death, because it baptizes children without inquiring into the faith of neither parents nor godparents. In this way it tempts them to lie before the altar, by requiring the parents and godparents to promise to raise their children christianly. Yet it knows all too well that many parents and godparents are not able to do so. And these in turn know that the Church knows of this. What an undignified baptismal theatrical!<sup>32</sup>

If paedobaptism is the reception of the grace of God, then confirmation proclaims the volitional assent to that grace. “Confirmation . . . is the believer’s public reply to his baptism, or his public confession of Christ, who has cleansed him in baptism (Ephesians 5:26; Matthew 10:32). Confirmation, of course, was not instructed by Christ; yet we retain it as a laudable, useful Christian custom because it reminds the believer of His baptism and the exceeding grace which God conferred on Him in that priceless Sacrament.”<sup>33</sup>

While Confirmation should be a major event in a young person’s life, a sociological rite of passage, it is often not a faith-event. The festive occasion on which young people confess their “faith” before a full and happy church is often followed by their entrance into passive neglect of the church. Georg Huntemann comments: “Confirmation is not a true confirmation in that the confirmands would actively integrate into the life of the church. After the worship service one has the sense that a ‘foreign

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<sup>32</sup> Klaus Eickhoff, “Tauft sich Kirche zu Tode?” (Is the Church baptizing itself to death?), *IDEA Spektrum* 19 (August 1992): 2. My translation.

<sup>33</sup> John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1955), 496.

army' had occupied the church (Helmut Thielicke), after the great gift-giving orgy at home (with very few exceptions) the confirmation ceremony becomes a discharge out of the life of the Church."<sup>34</sup>

### ***Passive Membership and Low Church Attendance***

Bishop Horst Hirschler suggests his rationale for the phenomenon of passive membership in contemporary German churches:

This Volkskirche [Church of the People] is a Church of the baptized. Naturally she has at her center active volunteers and regular attendees of her meetings and worship services. Yet the others, who do not come or are entirely absent, are also part of the Church, for they have been baptized, meaning Christ has been active in them. Because faith defies measurement and all of us are sinners before God, the active Church is not more Christian than the outsiders. As with a sewing machine that can be set to sew narrower or wider stitches, so too are there Christians with narrower stitches, i.e., regular worship attendance and volunteerism, and there are Christians with wider stitches who are less active in their membership. The main thing is that the thread holds it all together.<sup>35</sup>

In 2000, 4.2 percent of German Protestants regularly attended church services.<sup>36</sup>

"In many places practicing Christians are such a minority that they are hardly noticed."<sup>37</sup>

T. R. Reid wrote of the juxtaposition of beautiful sacred architecture and religious neglect: "I have attended church on Sunday morning in dozens of European cities and

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<sup>34</sup> Huntemann, *This Church Must Change!* 44. My translation.

<sup>35</sup> Quoted in Rudolf Möckel and Wolfgang Nestvogel eds., *Volkskirche am Abgrund: Eine Dokumentation über evangelikale Pfarrer und die bibeltreuen Christen in der Volkskirche* (People's church at the precipice?: a documentation concerning evangelical pastors and Bible-believing Christians in the people's church) (Stuttgart: Hänssler-Verlag, 1996), 15-16. My translation.

<sup>36</sup> "Prozent mehr Gottesdienstbesuch," [www.religion-online.info/archive/newsletter-2002-01](http://www.religion-online.info/archive/newsletter-2002-01) (accessed April 19, 2006). This compares to 16.6% of Roman Catholics and 80.0% of Free Church members who regularly attend worship services (Ibid.).

<sup>37</sup> Richter, *Kursänderung*, 39. My translation.

villages. Sitting in those marvelous old cathedrals, listening to the mighty organs echo in the vaulted ceilings, two things always struck me: how beautiful those structures were, and how empty.”<sup>38</sup> Twenty-seven million Germans report that they are members of the established Protestant Church, but they have largely chosen to have no active part in church life, instead they are disinterested, internally non-engaged, mostly secular nominal Church members. These contributing factors demonstrate a marginalized church in contemporary Germany that needs a drastic revitalization.

### **The State of the Protestant Church and its Relevance for Church Planting**

In June of 1994, the Federation of Protestant Churches met in a synod to discuss the topic: “Church as People’s Church.” Michael Beintker gave the plenary address in which he succinctly summarized the current state of the established Protestant Church in Germany.

The Church finds itself in a process of upheaval. Suspension of membership, less finances, degenerating acceptance in society signify that the times have passed in which the Church lived “securely”. Many Church members in western Germany view this as a painful process of decline. Many Christians in eastern Germany sense that hopes are not being fulfilled. The talk of a People’s Church to which the majority of the population belong, is long unjustifiable in the East and becoming more so in the West. . . . In this situation we must bid farewell to a Church that hides from new challenges.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> T. R. Reid, *The United States of Europe: The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 215.

<sup>39</sup> Michael Beintker, “Kirche als Volkskirche“ (Church as peoples’ church) in *Modell Volkskirche* (Concept of people’s church), ed. Wilhelm Hüffmeier (Bielefeld: Luther-Verlag, 1995), 53. My translation.

Since Beintker's 1995 address, the situation has not improved, and the Protestant Church has not transformed itself in order to influence secular society. Instead, the Church remains trapped in the confines of its own system and traditions.

The author of this paper believes the inertia within the Protestant Church's inability to overcome its own powerlessness makes church planting in Germany imperative. Three observations about the current state of German Protestantism provide the impetus for planting new churches: institutional rigidity, myopic vision, Christ-less Christianity. The following sections describe these issues that necessitate a change in the status quo.

#### Institutional Rigidity

In *The Desecularization of the World*, Peter Berger posits that, in general, the world "is as furiously religious as it ever was."<sup>40</sup> He notes, however, that religion no longer extends over all of society, as it did prior to the Enlightenment. Others have also noted how the individualization of society has led to the segregating of religious influence. Edward Rommen reports: "[A]s plurality increases, the various religious groups are forced to compete with non-religious institutions and with one another for that diminishing segment of life allotted the religious."<sup>41</sup> In the contemporary world, the Church must compete with secular venues for attention and respect. Between 1992 and 2003 the number of Church buildings used for worship within the EKD declined by more

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<sup>40</sup> Peter L. Berger, *The Desecularization of the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), 2.

<sup>41</sup> Edward Rommen, "Communicating the Gospel to Nominal Christians in West Germany" (D. Min. Diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1982), 32.

than 10 percent.<sup>42</sup> These houses of worship were conceived to meet the needs of people who wished to exercise their faith in them, but their increasing non-utilitarianism reflects the attitudes of Church members at large.

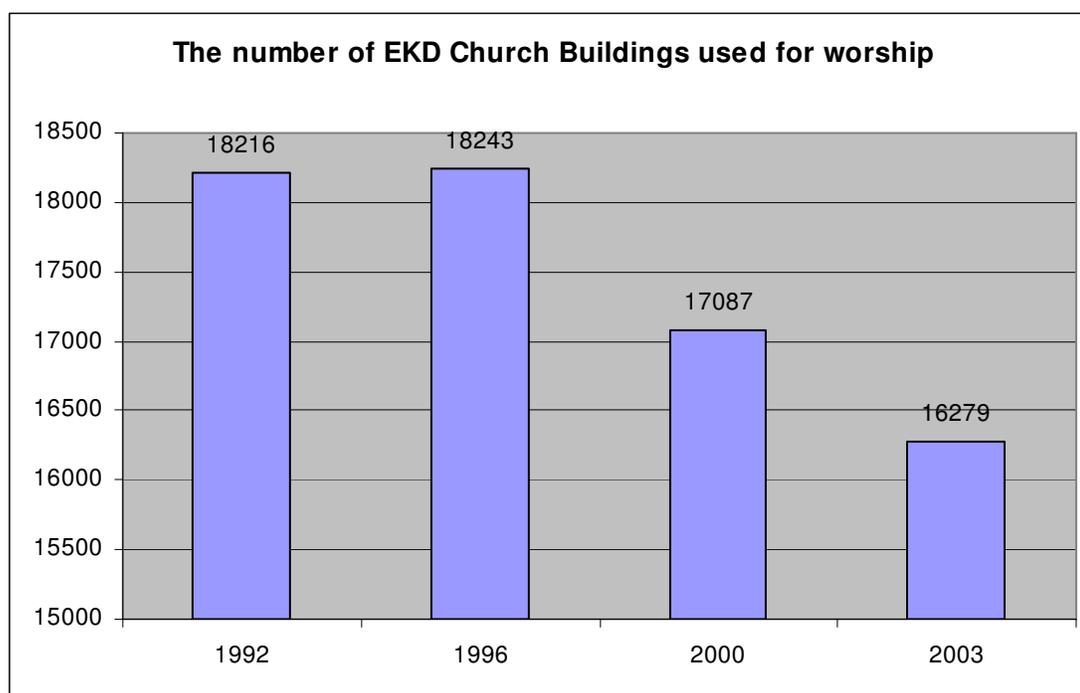


Figure 2. EKD church building used for worship

### Myopic Vision

While the EKD currently looks outward to greater cooperation with other world Churches in the ecumenical movement, it ignores its inward focus. Efforts to bring about church growth in stagnant congregations have only emerged in the last twenty years, but have largely concentrated on nominal Christians within the Church. Reinhard Neubauer writes: “The Church is no longer a fellowship of people, but an organizational power over the people. She does not seek to win people, because she already has them. Her

<sup>42</sup> Referat Statistik Kirchenamt der EKD (Division of statistics in the EKD), Conveyed to the author in an e-mail on January 17, 2005.

effort is now not to lose them.”<sup>43</sup> The parochial system, clergy-centered ministry, and membership based upon infant baptism indicates an introspective church. The reactive German church fails to retain active membership or grow new membership. Renate Köcher writes that both the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church in Germany “largely respond defensively to the changes of a society that has seemingly irresistibly severed itself from ecclesiastical and religious bonds.”<sup>44</sup>

### Christ-less Christianity

In an article on that state of Christianity in Germany, Renate Köcher writes: “As an institution of the State whose growth is secured via paedobaptism, the Church was never an evangelistic Church. Evangelism was hindered on the basis of a conservative theology of baptism, which equated infant baptism with conversion.”<sup>45</sup> In Germany infant baptism does provide a Church full of members, however, most are not Christians in a real, active sense but in name only. Wolfgang Kopfermann is critical of the Church and wrote: “What truly holds the EKD together is not a unified, substantive confession of Christ, but the tradition of paedobaptism, the Church tax system, the operation of Church polity.”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Reinhard Neubauer, *Auslaufmodell Volkskirche—Was kommt danach?* (Old model peoples church—what comes next?) (Stuttgart: Quell Verlag, 1994), 43. My translation.

<sup>44</sup> Renate Köcher, “Nachhut oder Vorhut? Dem Christentum mangelt es an Selbstbewußtsein und Strahlkraft“ (Rearguard or vanguard? Christianity lacks self-confidence and shining power), *Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach* (April 1995): 1. My translation.

<sup>45</sup> Richter, *Kursänderung*, 24.

<sup>46</sup> Wolfram Kopfermann, *Abschied von einer Illusion: Volkskirche ohne Zukunft* (Farewell to an illusion: people’s church without a future) (Mainz-Kastel: C & P Verlag, 1990), 46.

Many German Protestant Church members do not see the value of fellowship among a body of believers. Professor Wolfgang Lück advocates: “The person who seeks fellowship in the Church should be able to find it. But the freedom of the Christian should be seen in his freedom from the fellowship of the Church.”<sup>47</sup> Theologian Walter Nigg summarizes the malaise of nominal Christianity within the Protestant Church, “It was disappointing, painful, and depressing that no reformation of life took place in the Reformation.”<sup>48</sup>

Christian Schwarz observed the effects of Luther’s reformation upon the general populace: “For the large majority of the population, the spiritual effect of the Reformation was that millions of nominal Catholics became millions of nominal Protestants. They thus came under the influence of Reformation theology – which can perhaps be regarded as progress—but the idea that this meant an upsurge of spiritual life is one of those popular legends we would do well to lay aside.”<sup>49</sup>

DAWN Germany reports that only 1.5 percent of Germans claim to know Jesus Christ personally.<sup>50</sup> While Christianity still exists in the institution and the buildings of the Church, the soul has left the body. It seems the *volkskirche* is a Church without people, and the people are without Christ.

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<sup>47</sup> Michael Herbst, *Missionarischer Gemeindeaufbau in der Volkskirche* (Missional church growth in the peoples’ church) (Stuttgart, Germany: Calwer Verlag, 1996), 53. My translation.

<sup>48</sup> Christian A. Schwarz, *Paradigm Shift in the Church: How Natural Church Development can Transform Theological Thinking* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 1999), 86.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 86-87.

<sup>50</sup> Wolfgang Simson, “Gib mir Deutschland—oder ich Sterbe: Die DAWN-Bewegung in Europa” (Give me Germany—or I perish: The DAWN movement in Europe), *Gemeindegrowth* 54 (1993): 4.

## Non-essential Evangelism

Renate Köcher describes German Christianity as distant, individual, and private. As a consequence “everything related to evangelism among European Christendom today is deeply suspect—one reason why the attempts to re-win Eastern Germany for Christianity had to fail.”<sup>51</sup> Germans confuse adherence to Christ with adherence to a denomination. While most people belong to a Church and they would not consider themselves anything but Christians, they disdain evangelism. The Protestant Church concerns itself with baptizing members rather than training disciples and calling people to repent and follow Jesus as Lord and Savior.

The implications of Constantine’s edict of Milan in A.D. 325 in which he declared his empire to be Christian continues to manifest itself in ecclesiastical thinking, and a Christian society no longer needs evangelism. Murray wrote: “Mission in a New Testament sense became irrelevant. If the whole empire (with the awkward exception of the Jews) was now Christian, evangelism was obsolete.”<sup>52</sup> This perception continues in contemporary Germany.

## Conclusion

The medical profession developed a technical term for an alarming phenomenon: an “iatrogenic” disorder, leading to illness or even death that is brought on inadvertently

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<sup>51</sup> Köcher, “Die Herausforderung,” 4. My translation.

<sup>52</sup> Stuart Murray, *Church Planting: Laying Foundations* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001), 111.

by direct medical intervention.<sup>53</sup> This phenomenon provides an analogy for the contemporary spiritual malaise in Germany. The Protestant Church has directly contributed to the decline in spiritual vitality among Germans as the established Protestant Church induces its own spiritual illness.

Donald McGavran suggests that the future viability of Germany's established Protestant Church depends upon its conviction concerning the need for church planting. "One of the questions determining the fate of the Church in Germany is the question of how convinced it is that the multiplication of churches is the best way to face the present missionary challenge."<sup>54</sup> The author of this paper believes the established Protestant Church has not acknowledged this need. The ecclesiastical structure and theology of the Protestant Church in Germany acts as its own nemesis rather than the increasingly secular society outside the church. Factors that continue to inhibit spiritual renewal include membership based on non-voluntary involvement, maintenance-minded pastors, the parochial structure, government-garnered income, and leaders more concerned with popular culture than their biblical mandate. Reid concludes: "The striking fact remains that 'Christian Europe' is hardly Christian anymore, except as a collection of inspiring Gothic reminders of Christianity's past. 'For the first time in 1500 years,' wrote historian Norman Davies in the late 1990s, 'Christianity was becoming a minority religion' in Europe."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*, 2<sup>d</sup> ed. (New York: HarperBusiness, 1997), 53.

<sup>54</sup> McGavran, "Deutschland braucht 20.000 neue Gemeinden," 10.

<sup>55</sup> Reid, *The United States of Europe*, 217.

While Germany's established Protestant church cannot return to its former incarnation, it can find renewal through a rethinking of methods and its mission. The next section discusses Germany's free churches and their methods for growth and renewal in the contemporary world.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE FREE CHURCHES IN GERMANY

The Protestant Church is akin to a cruise ship  
that has sprung a leak and is sinking.  
It is only a matter of time before it goes under.  
The Free Churches are the lifeboats.

Konrad Eissler, German Evangelical Free Church Conference<sup>1</sup>

With its current network of 16,356 local churches, the Protestant Church in Germany now concerns itself with retaining its existing presence, not on starting new churches.<sup>2</sup> The author of this paper believes a thorough exploration of the German Free Churches and their efforts to grow through church planting may provide important parallels to address the crisis within the Protestant Church.

#### **Overview of Germany's Free Churches**

The term "Free Church" defines an evangelical denomination or nondenominational body unaffiliated with the established Protestant Church. The adjective "free" has historically been used to describe three issues: the freedom of each individual member to confess the member's faith, the freedom of the church from

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<sup>1</sup> Konrad Eissler, German Evangelical Free Church Conference, Langeoog, October 1988.

<sup>2</sup> Karsten Huhn, "Gründerzeiten" (Pioneer times), *IDEA Spektrum* 25 (2004): 17.

taxation, and the separation of the Church from the State.<sup>3</sup> In 2003 Free Churches had a total of 859,000 members.<sup>4</sup> These churches represent one percent of Germany's 82.5 million citizens. Seven hundred German cities with a population greater than 10,000 people<sup>5</sup> and 62 percent of Germany's smaller cities, villages, and towns have no Free Church presence.<sup>6</sup> Table 1 demonstrates the four broad categories of Free Churches.

Table 1. Adherents of Free Churches in Germany

Adherents of Free Churches in Germany	
Eight full member Churches in the Union of Free Church Denominations (VEF <sup>7</sup> )	280,000
Four guest member Churches in VEF	70,000
Russian-German Baptist Churches	321,000
Independent evangelical or charismatic Churches	188,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>859,000</b>

<sup>3</sup> Reinhard Hempelmann, "Die 'neuen' evangelischen Freikirchen" (The "new" Evangelical Free Churches), *Materialdienst der Zeitschrift für Religions- und Weltanschauungsfragen*, June 2002, 161.

<sup>4</sup> "Eine einzige evangelische Freikirche?" (A one and only free church?), *IDEA Spektrum* 49 (2003): 9.

<sup>5</sup> Jörg Schröder, "Die Städte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland—Eine Herausforderung für die Freikirchen?" (The cities of the Federal Republic of Germany—a challenge for the Free Churches?), *Blickpunkt Gemeinde* 2 (1993): 4.

<sup>6</sup> "In Deutschland fehlen 700 freikirchliche Gemeinden" (700 Free Churches lacking in Germany), *IDEA Spektrum* 33 (2002): 4.

<sup>7</sup> The *Vereinigung Evangelischer Freikirchen* (Union of Free Church Denominations) include: Mennonites, Baptists, Evangelical Free Churches, Methodists, Salvation Army, Nazarenes, Free-evangelical Churches of the Mülheimer Association, and Pentecostals.

### **Church Planting Among the Free Churches**

In the past ten years Free Churches have planted 1,500 local churches, while disbanding 200 congregations.<sup>8</sup> Russian immigrant churches of either Baptist or Mennonite varieties have the greatest attendance of worship services in Germany. In the past twenty years church planting has also made great strides outside of VEF denominations by both independent fundamentalist and charismatic groups.

This study considers the traditional Free Church denominations in the VEF, including the four guest member Churches: Seventh Day Adventists (35,990 members in 576 churches),<sup>9</sup> Church of God, Cleveland (3,000 members in 100 churches),<sup>10</sup> Free Church Federation of the Church of God (2,500 worshippers, no membership in thirty churches),<sup>11</sup> and Moravians (Herrnhuter, 7,200 members in nineteen churches).<sup>12</sup> To enable a more consolidated overview of these twelve denominations, this study will consider only those Free Churches in the VEF who have a membership of greater than 30,000 adherents. This effectively negates the study of church planning among Mennonites (6,200 members in fifty-two churches),<sup>13</sup> Salvation Army (2,000 members in

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<sup>8</sup> Huhn, "Gründerzeiten," 16.

<sup>9</sup> Vereinigung Evangelischer Freikirchen, [www.vef.info/adven](http://www.vef.info/adven) (accessed February 22, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> Vereinigung Evangelischer Freikirchen, [www.vef.info/gg](http://www.vef.info/gg) (accessed February 22, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> Vereinigung Evangelischer Freikirchen, [www.vef.info/bgg](http://www.vef.info/bgg) (accessed February 22, 2006).

<sup>12</sup> Evangelische Brüder-Unität, [www.ebu.de](http://www.ebu.de) (accessed February 22, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> Vereinigung Evangelischer Freikirchen, [www.vef.info/menn](http://www.vef.info/menn) (accessed February 22, 2006).

forty-eight churches),<sup>14</sup> Nazarenes (2,300 members in twenty-nine churches),<sup>15</sup> and Churches of the Mülheimer Association (3,000 members in forty churches).<sup>16</sup> Table 2 illustrates the development of the five largest VEF denominations.

Table 2. Church planting in the Union of Free Church Denominations (VEF)  
Church Planting in the Union of Free Church Denominations (VEF)

<i>Denomination</i>	<i>Year: 1994</i>		<i>Year: 2004</i>	
	Members	Churches	Members	Churches
Seventh Day Adventists	34,465	597	35,990	576
Pentecostals	26,000	351	34,000	598
Baptists	87,972	902	84,975	851
Methodists	40,642	637	36,094	568
Evangelical Free Churches	29,448	367	34,100	410

### Seventh Day Adventists

The Seventh Day Adventists began their work in Germany as a church planting movement, but their growth peaked in 1951 when they registered 900 churches and 45,000 members.<sup>17</sup> Since that time the denomination has steadily declined, although after the collapse of Communism in 1989, the influx of Adventists to Germany from former Eastern Bloc countries caused a slight increase. Between 1994 and 2004 the denomination lost twenty-one churches. Some of this decline resulted from closing small

<sup>14</sup> Vereinigung Evangelischer Freikirchen, [www.vef.info/heilsarmee](http://www.vef.info/heilsarmee) (accessed February 22, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> Vereinigung Evangelischer Freikirchen, [www.vef.info/nazarener](http://www.vef.info/nazarener) (accessed February 22, 2006).

<sup>16</sup> Vereinigung Evangelischer Freikirchen, [www.vef.info/muehlheim](http://www.vef.info/muehlheim) (accessed February 22, 2006).

<sup>17</sup> Michael Dörnbrack and Edgar Machel, "Gemeindegründung als Herausforderung und Chance für die Adventgemeinde in Deutschland—Strategien für Vereinigungen und Verbände" (Church planting as challenge and chance for the Adventists in Germany—strategies for associations and districts), *Friedensau* (2002): 4.

stagnant churches or fusing two churches into one. Leader Frank Waldschmidt remarked, “Before proceeding to plant churches we have decided to renew our existing churches.”<sup>18</sup>

Robert Logan’s consultation with key denominational leaders in 2001-2004 and the availability of resources from the United States have breathed new life into Adventists’ church planting in Germany. At present ten potential church planters have attended an assessment seminar, and a five-year plan has been written to target new areas for church planting. Part of this plan will initiate needs-based ministries such as pioneer clubs for children or employment counseling and training for the unemployed. The denomination hopes that these ministries will become the base for establishing new churches.<sup>19</sup>

#### Union of Free Church Pentecostal Churches (BFP<sup>20</sup>)

Pentecostals have experienced the most growth of the VEF denominations. They grew 41 percent in the total number of churches between 1994 and 2004, and church planting achieved much of this growth. During those ten years, The Pentecostals started 140 new church planting projects.<sup>21</sup> Thirty foreign missionaries, seventeen from the United States, participated in these church plants. Forty-one church starts were mother-

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<sup>18</sup> Hhn, “Gründerzeiten,” 17.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> *Bund freikirchlicher Pfingstgemeiden* (Union of Free Church Pentecostal Churches).

<sup>21</sup> Huhn, “Gründerzeiten,” 16.

daughter constellations, and the majority of German Pentecostal church planters are lay people.

Pastor Manfred Lanz leads the church-planting ministry within the Pentecostal denomination. The ministry works to partner with local churches wishing to start new churches. It groups Pentecostal churches into regional constellations and offers services of training, mentoring, and coaching. Lanz considers the training of church-planting coaches to be pivotal to continued growth.<sup>22</sup> Denominational president Ingolf Ellssel optimistically writes: “Every town should have at least one evangelical church.”<sup>23</sup>

#### Baptist Union (BefG<sup>24</sup>)

Since the Third Reich, when Adolf Hitler required churches to register as part of a recognized denomination, Brethren Churches have been included in the Baptist Union. These constitute 140 churches representing 9,000 members.<sup>25</sup> The decline of fifty churches in the past ten years in the Baptist denomination caused concern among its leadership. In 2004 the Baptist Union suffered its steepest loss since reunification, a 1.3 percent decline in membership (1,117 people).<sup>26</sup> Significant Russian Baptist churches,

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<sup>22</sup> E-mail from Manfred Lanz to the author on March 21, 2005.

<sup>23</sup> Sturm, “Gründerzeiten,” 16.

<sup>24</sup> *Bund evangelisch freikirchlicher Gemeinden* (Baptist Union).

<sup>25</sup> “Was ‘Brüder’ und ‘Baptisten’ verbindet” (What “brethren” and “Baptist” Aligns), *IDEA Spektrum* 15 (2005): 10.

<sup>26</sup> “Nicht abfinden mit einem Negativ-Wachstum” (Not consigned to a negative growth), *Die Gemeinde*, 5 May 2005, [www.die-gemeinde.org/php/dg/news/lese\\_news.php?NewsNr=151](http://www.die-gemeinde.org/php/dg/news/lese_news.php?NewsNr=151) (accessed April 19, 2006).

which comprise the larger congregations within the Baptist Union, have left the denomination largely due to theological and cultural differences. Financial constraints have necessitated the curtailment of funding for new church starts. The ministry of American Southern Baptist church planters has initiated recent church starts, and currently twenty-five such missionaries work in Germany.<sup>27</sup> The head of the church-planting arm of the Baptist Union, Wilfried Bohlen, cites the decade-long failure to teach church planting in the Church's seminary as a major reason why church planting has stagnated.<sup>28</sup>

#### Evangelical Methodist Church (EmK<sup>29</sup>)

The Methodists suffered the heaviest loss of both churches and members of VEF churches. Within ten years the denomination experienced an attrition rate of 12 percent, despite planting twelve new churches during that period.<sup>30</sup> Like most of the VEF denominations, Methodism came to Germany as a church planting movement, but drifted into maintenance mode after revivalist times subsided. Now many of their congregations have an average membership age of sixty years or older, a sign of future decline. Of the VEF denominations, the Methodists have, more than the other Free Churches, tried to

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<sup>27</sup> "Amerikaner in Deutschland sorgen für hohes Gemeindegewachstum" (Americans in Germany contribute to high church growth), *IDEA Spektrum* 11 (2001): 7.

<sup>28</sup> "In Deutschland fehlen 700 freikirchliche Gemeinden," 4.

<sup>29</sup> *Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche* (Evangelical Methodist Church).

<sup>30</sup> Huhn, "Gründerzeiten," 17.

position themselves as a *kirche* akin to the Protestant Church, but the author of this study believes the desire for cultural acceptance has come at the expense of vibrancy and growth.

#### Federation of Evangelical Free Churches (BFeG<sup>31</sup>)

Church planting drives the Evangelical Free denomination, which relegates 30 percent of its 4.8 million euro budget to starting new churches.<sup>32</sup> The German Evangelical Free Church has increased its congregations by 11.5 percent over the past ten years. From 2003 to 2004 the membership increased by 2.5 percent.<sup>33</sup> In March 2005, the leadership of the Evangelical Free Church announced its goal of planting 100 new churches within the next ten years.<sup>34</sup>

Erhard Michel leads the church-planting arm of the denomination or the “Inland-Mission.” The Inland-Mission celebrated its one-hundredth birthday in June 2004. It began as an evangelism-oriented ministry and took on a new church planting emphasis in the early 1960s. The Inland-Mission wishes to serve as a catalyst to foster new Evangelical Free churches throughout Germany. In the past the Inland-Mission often paid

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<sup>31</sup> *Bund Freier evangelischer Gemeinden* (Federation of Evangelical Free Churches).

<sup>32</sup> Karsten Huhn, “Wie die Inland-Mission des Bundes Freier evangelischer Gemeinden neue Gemeinden gründet” (How the Inland-Mission of the Federation of Evangelical Free Churches plants new churches), *IDEA Spektrum* 25 (2004): 18.

<sup>33</sup> “FeG: Wer homosexuell ist, soll umkehren” (FeG: homosexuals should repent), *IDEA Spektrum* 39 (2004) 8.

<sup>34</sup> “Inland-Mission: 100 neue Gemeinden in 10 Jahren!” (Inland-Mission: 100 new churches in ten years!), *FeG Forum*, June 2005, 23.

the salary of a full-time church planter, but financial difficulties have forced it to reduce paid positions to only one new church planter annually. As a consequence, the Inland-Mission has taken on more of a mentoring or coaching role to help existing churches plant new churches. In many regions of Germany, the Inland-Mission has recruited passionate pastors to serve as representatives in their respective areas. These pastors work with Erhard Michel to achieve the vision of planting churches and to aid existing church planting projects. A recent poll among Evangelical Free pastors revealed that at least fifty-six churches plan to plant churches within the next four years.<sup>35</sup> In many regions, committees have been formed to foster the vision of church planting and support a network of regional churches.

Critics of church planting often argue that new church starts merely take Christians from existing churches and integrate them into the new church. This criticism has some validity, for according to statistics within the Inland-Mission, 70 percent of members in newly established churches were previously members of other churches. Michel commented on this subject: “Most of them were not active members in their previous churches. Many were only on the church membership roles, but had neither a personal relationship with God nor did they attend worship services regularly.”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>36</sup> Huhn, “Wie die Inland Mission,” 19.

According to Michel: “We are growing by virtue of believers who discover among us a spiritual home.”<sup>37</sup>

### **Independent Church Planting**

While many denominational Free Churches plant congregations, a growing number of non-denominational churches have planted churches in Germany. Often fundamentalist or charismatic churches boast some 188,000 members, and many of these churches were planted only in the past twenty years.

#### Independent Fundamentalist Non-Charismatic Churches

Stephan Holthaus, president of the *Freie Theologische Akademie* (FTA) in Gießen, claims that 400 independent non-charismatic churches have been founded in Germany in the past ten years.<sup>38</sup> Twenty percent of FTA students have emerged from these churches, and often the founders and adherents of these churches were disillusioned with a watering down of biblical imperatives in both the Protestant and the Free Churches. Though independent, and therefore not seeking fellowship with other evangelical groups in the German Evangelical Alliance (*Deutsche Evangelische Allianz*), these churches fellowship with and instruct one another through loose networks.

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<sup>37</sup> Erhard Michel, “Erstaunliches Wachstum: Die Entwicklung des Bundes von den siebziger Jahren bis heute” (Surprising growth: the development of the Federation von the Seventies until today), *Christsein Heute* 21 (1999): 10.

<sup>38</sup> “In 10 Jahren 400 unabhängige Gemeinden” (In ten years 400 independent churches), *IDEA Spektrum* 13 (2005): 12.

Wilfried Plock leads the *Konferenz für Gemeindegründung* (KFG or Conference for Church Planting.) Despite the fact that KFG churches seem to identify themselves by what they disapprove of, such as infant baptism, ecumenical movement, denominationalism, and women in leadership, they have assembled other disillusioned Christians to start churches. Founded in 1983, the KFG states its goal: “To assist in the foundation and organization of New Testament churches and to guide and help in the various areas of the churches' development, such as the exchange of ideas between Bible-believing churches.”<sup>39</sup> Slightly more than 200 churches ascribe to the ethos of the KFG, all of them non-denominational.<sup>40</sup>

#### Independent Charismatic Churches

Independent Charismatic Churches had an estimated 2,000 churches and 150,000 members in 2004, and these numbers have doubled in the last ten years.<sup>41</sup> The *Biblische Glaubensgemeinde* (Biblical Faith Church) in Stuttgart, one of the largest of this new breed of independent charismatic churches, has a current membership of 2,300.<sup>42</sup> Strong charismatic leadership, emphasis on the sign gifts, healing services, prayer, fasting, unique evangelistic methods, and a priority on planting churches encourage the astounding growth of these churches. This church grew from eighty attendees to 2,500 in

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<sup>39</sup> Konferenz für Gemeindegründung, [www.kfg.org/en/kfg.htm](http://www.kfg.org/en/kfg.htm) (accessed April 19, 2006).

<sup>40</sup> Huhn, “Gründerzeiten,” 16.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

fifteen years and has since also planted fifteen daughter churches, forming an extensive network of like-minded fellowships.<sup>43</sup> Peter Wenz estimates that, on average, one or two independent charismatic churches start in Germany weekly.<sup>44</sup>

### **Analysis of Church Planting among the Free Churches**

When compared to the Protestant Church, the VEF denominations (with the exception of the Methodists and the Baptists) are growing, but the independent Free Churches grow even more quickly than the VEF churches. An examination of the similarities and dissimilarities between VEF and non-VEF Free Churches enhance this study's context. The author of this paper believes seven major factors contribute to successful church planting.

1. Enduring Intentionality: Successful planting churches have purpose. Whatever differences exist between these churches, they all possess a passionate drive to plant new churches. The author of this paper believes the intentionality of a denomination often becomes the driving force behind the church planting movement. Because the Protestant Church or the Methodists lack intentionality, they experience attrition rather than growth.

2. Passionate Spirituality: Church planting cannot succeed with coolness of heart toward the Lord and the lost. It must have passion. Peter Wenz wrote: "Looking at our human weakness, we know how necessary the help of the Holy Spirit is. . . .The person

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<sup>43</sup> "In 15 Jahren von 80 auf 2.500 Gottesdienstbesucher" (In 15 years from 80 to 2,500 in attendance), *IDEA Spektrum* 54 (2001): 6

<sup>44</sup> "Charismatiker: Wöchentlich ein bis zwei neue Gemeinden" (Charismatics: weekly one or two new churches), *IDEA Spektrum* 27 (2001): 2.

who does not accept the power of the Holy Spirit, as he worked during the times of the Apostles, inhibits himself in his work.”<sup>45</sup>

3. Calculated Risk-Taking: While committing people and resources to the cause of starting churches involves risk and does not guarantee success, growth cannot occur without an attempt. Church planting denominations and groups live by the maritime maxim: “A ship in the harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are made for.” The author of this paper believes successful church planters take risks because they know the unsurpassed benefits of Christ’s eternal glory.

4. Progressive Support: Successful churches offer regular ongoing training and support to their people. They supply a curriculum of how to plant churches, carry out assignments, and encourage and correct to ensure effectiveness. In the Evangelical Free Church context, church planters meet annually in a retreat setting to encourage and teach one another. They offer teams two-year church planting workshops. The Pentecostals have initiated “Barnabas Days” on which they invite their teams, mostly non-professionals, to gather and enjoy an atmosphere of inspiration and encouragement with other church planters. Adventists, Evangelical Frees, and Pentecostals also have coaching relationships for new church planters.

5. Need-Based Ministries: Effective church planting churches offer an attractive assortment of creative ministries that respond to local needs. The *Biblische Glaubensgemeinde*, for example, lists drug rehabilitation, feeding and clothing the poor,

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<sup>45</sup> Huhn, “Gründerzeiten,” 16.

Christian youth scout troops, and translation of its services into twelve languages among its ministries. It even boasts an amateur soccer team that plays in a regional league.<sup>46</sup>

6. Regional Church Planting: Free Churches have much more freedom to plant churches than Protestants constrained by the parochial structure. Like the apostle Paul who thought in larger regions as he planted churches, mother churches look to the region around them to start new churches. The *Biblische Glaubensgemeinde* in Stuttgart has planted fifteen churches in that Neckar-river area of Baden-Württemberg. Baptist missionary pastor David Action, who has planted the fastest growing church in the Baptist Union, has plans to plant ten churches in the area around Magdeburg.<sup>47</sup> Ten Evangelical Free church congregations form a ring around the center of Munich where in 1965 the first church of that denomination was established in the Bavarian capital. By virtue of their population density, many larger urban areas are prime targets for church planting movements because they allow for networks to flourish and support new church starts without members needing to move away to do so.

7. Expatriate Missionary Partnerships: Many successful denominations like the Evangelical Free Church and the Baptist Union partner with North American missionaries. Missionaries come with support in hand, a learning posture, and a positive attitude. Sometimes they can be more effective than nationals because they have not been

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<sup>46</sup> “In 15 Jahren,” 6.

<sup>47</sup> “33 Amerikaner erreichen ‘echte Heiden’” (33 Americans reach “real pagans”), *IDEA Spektrum* 27 (2003): 14.

inoculated against new strategies or tactics. Generally, the author of this paper finds North Americans to be more forward looking and pragmatic than their German counterparts because they often come from home churches with adequate training. Currently, seven couples from North America serve in the Inland-Mission. A partnership between nationals and expatriates, in which mutual respect and learning together, can make for enhanced church planting effectiveness.

### **Conclusion**

With few exceptions, the Free Churches, both outside and within the VEF, actively and successfully plant new churches. More churches are currently being planted than at any other time. Yet, considering the stagnant Christian population and the number of EKD members leaving their Church annually, these new church starts cannot keep pace with the growing body of secular Germans. Furthermore, while these churches grow, their efforts are not true church planting multiplication movements, but consist of slow, incremental growth. Most churches that plant a daughter church move into a long recovery time, many will not attempt another planting, and many new churches will not plant their own churches. Most of the Free Churches that have been planted are quite vibrant, but they remain small and do not effect perceptible sociological change. In fact, not one of the VEF denominations has an average membership of over 100 members per church.<sup>48</sup> Many of these church plants serve as gathering places for the already

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<sup>48</sup> Sturm, "Gründerzeiten," 17.

committed, and they lack significant numbers of new converts. While church planting may lay a foundation that can be built upon, transfer growth is not the conversion-based growth stated in the New Testament.

The Free Churches are the prime channels through which God brings His kingdom to Germany. These channels, however, should increase their effectiveness. Free Churches need both to build upon past insights and also to explore new ways to plant churches.

This comparison of Germany's churches demonstrates the possibilities for Protestant growth and contextualizes this dissertation's thesis that Germany can support such a movement through a bold action plan. The following chapter discusses and explores the biblical and ecclesiastic foundations for church planting and discusses the principles of planting that can be learned from Jesus' example.

PART TWO:  
THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION  
FOR A CHURCH PLANTING MULTIPLICATION MOVEMENT

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## CHAPTER THREE

### GOD'S PRESENT KINGDOM: CHURCH PLANTING FOUNDATIONS

A Christian's main vocation  
is to become a prime citizen of the kingdom of God.

Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Engaging God's World*<sup>1</sup>

Germany's contemporary Protestant and Free Churches currently face a sobering ecclesiastical reality, and although many churches seek renewal, they cannot achieve it. The thesis of this dissertation is that church planting multiplication is the best means of turning the tide of ecclesiastical decline and low social impact and that a bold action plan and reconsideration of planting methods can yield positive results. Yet despite its practical necessity, church planting requires theological justification, and churches must consider what lies at the foundation of their efforts. This chapter will explore the concept of church planting through New Testament text, and demonstrate that it is founded upon and encompassed by the teaching of God's kingdom.

#### **The Universal Rule of God**

The Bible begins and ends with an indisputable theocentricity: God is the ultimate, personal cause of all that is good. As such, God owns and instigates the created order (Col 1:17). God established humanity as the apex of creation, breathed into them

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<sup>1</sup> Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning, and Living* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 108.

“the breath of life” (Gen 2:7), sustains human life (Psa 65:9), brings it to an earthly close (Job 1:21), and determines its eternal destiny (Matt 10:28). All strata of humanity exist under God’s scrutiny and sovereignty (Isa 45:1; Phil 2:10-11). According to the Bible, God rules completely over the seen and the unseen worlds (Col 1:16). In short, the rule and dominion of God are universal.

### God is King Universally

The Bible often refers to God as king, and in doing so borrows from the anthropological imagery of the historical culture. “The Lord reigns, he is robed in majesty; the Lord is robed in majesty and is armed with strength” (Psa 93:1). “The Lord is King for ever and ever; the nations will perish from his land” (Psa 10:16). The New Testament defines Jesus Christ as the “King of Kings and Lord of Lords” (Rev 19:16). While all human kingdoms are tentative and brittle as straw, God’s is “a kingdom that cannot be shaken” (Heb 12:28) and will therefore stand the test of time. To speak of God as king acknowledges His universal dominion over the will and authority of all created beings.<sup>2</sup>

Since God is eternal, His universal dominion has no beginning, but His power manifests itself at creation. The act of creation is inherently hierarchical and non-egalitarian; God created humanity and gave His children the seed-bearing plants, the beasts of the field, the earth to tend and to enjoy. While God loves His human creation,

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<sup>2</sup> Arthur F. Glasser, *Announcing the Kingdom: The Story of God’s Mission in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 22.

they are His subjects and the created, not His equals. The Genesis account of creation asserts that humanity is of the created order, and therefore, under the rule, God's rule.

### God's Kingdom is *Shalom*

The apex of God's creative act was the creation of human beings. While God labelled His work at the end of each of the first six days as "good" (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25), He created human beings in His image and called them "very good" (Gen 1:31). God placed humanity at the center of His affection and love, He created them in His image, gave them fruit trees (Gen 2:9), and gave them each other for company (Gen 2:20b-24). The first couple spoke with God as friends do, they enjoyed their Creator as well as His creation, and they truly experienced paradise. Paradise is not merely a place of pristine beauty, but also the rapture of perfect closeness of thought, will, and desire between God and humanity. The Bible refers to this state as *shalom* or the reality of holistic well-being. *Shalom* is "universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight"<sup>3</sup> and describes the way all creation was meant to live as a result of living under God's dominion.

### The Covenantal Rule of God

The perfect world of unadulterated fellowship between God and humanity did not require a covenant. A covenant is "a bond in blood sovereignty administered,"<sup>4</sup> and

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<sup>3</sup> Plantinga, *Engaging God's World*, 112.

<sup>4</sup> O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980), 4.

became necessary when *shalom* was violated. Indeed, evil can be defined as “any spoiling of shalom.”<sup>5</sup> Adam and Eve forfeited *shalom* when they mistrusted God and rebelled against His order not to eat of the tree of good and evil (Gen 2:17). In tasting the fruit they “died,” destroyed the holy, uninhibited, free communion with God, and assured their physical expiration.

### The Fall and the Need for God’s Covenantal Rule

The loss of *shalom* caused hostility between God and humankind (Eph 2:3, 14), so God began the journey to restore *shalom*. What the Old Testament refers to as *shalom*, the New Testament calls “the coming of the kingdom” when, through Christ, God makes “all things new.”<sup>6</sup> God first announces good news in the demise of man’s sin, guilt, and shame in the proclamation to the serpent: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he [Christ, according to the New Testament] will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Gen 3:15). Walter Kaiser underscores that fact that the pronoun referring back to “seed” is masculine singular in the Hebrew.<sup>7</sup> The Reformers understood this verse to be the first mention of the gospel in the Bible, the *protoevangelium*. In seminal form it implied Jesus’ coming to institute a “new covenant” in His blood (Luke 22:20). The old covenant depended upon the faithfulness of the nation of Israel as it pledged allegiance to Yahweh in the desert after

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<sup>5</sup> Plantinga, *Engaging God’s Will*, 51.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, xii.

<sup>7</sup> Walter C. Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), 36.

He rescued them from Egyptian oppression (Exod 24). The old covenant also represented all promises ever made and broken by men and women such as unfaithfulness, obstinacy, and hubris. Humanity needed a new life and a new covenant, and this life manifested “in the blood” of Jesus Christ.

### The Misappropriation of Dominion

The notion that God created human beings “in His image” has caused much confusion and speculation as to what the image entails. The many answers posited include concepts of rationality, morality, self-knowledge, community, and soul-life.<sup>8</sup> While these characteristics may help explain human likeness to God, the Genesis text also implies that God meant His children to exercise dominion as He does: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground” (Gen 1:27-28). The words “subdue” and “rule” indicate that God chose humanity for a specific purpose.

Psalm 8:6 builds upon this notion: “You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.” The task of ruling even continues into the new age of the kingdom, where Christ’s followers “will reign for ever and ever” (Rev 22:5).

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<sup>8</sup> For an overview of various views see T. C. Hammond and David F. Wright, *In Understanding Be Men: An Introductory Handbook of Christian Doctrine* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 71-72.

Scripture indicates that God meant for humanity to rule His created world, but with the condition that humans rule while willingly abiding under God's dominion.

Adam and Eve violated this condition when they rebelled against God (Gen 3:6-7), and from that rebellion, humans have continued to create their own kingdoms and exercised dominion on their terms rather than God's. The motivation behind building the tower of Babel demonstrates humanity's attempts to exercise control: "Come, let us build ourselves a city with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth" (Gen 11:3-4). Their attempt to reach "the heavens" implies they desired dominion over their total environment, and their achievement would remove the need for a supreme being, for they would have attained supremacy.

#### Lostness

When humans lost *shalom*, they became truly lost. Lostness describes the state of a person who builds kingdoms without being subject to God. Without God's rule, a person is cut off from life. "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient" (Eph 2:1). Jesus often uses the concepts of entering the kingdom of heaven and entering life interchangeably because the ideas parallel each other. "If you want to enter life, obey the commandments . . . I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 19:17-23). Lostness occurs when persons sever themselves from communion with God, which implies that persons have been cut from life.

### **Jesus Christ: The Center of God's Kingdom**

While the Bible begins with theocentricity, New Testament references to the embodiment of God's kingdom reflect a Christocentric perspective. In the New Testament, Jesus is at the center of God's kingdom.

John the Baptist referenced Jesus when he preached: "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens is near" (Matt 3:2). Jesus began His ministry proclaiming: "The time has come. The kingdom of heaven is near" (Mark 1:15; cf. Matt 4:17, 23). Jesus entrusted this message to His followers as He sent them out to preach: "As you go, preach this message: The kingdom of the heavens is near" (Matt 10:7). Jesus proclaimed God's kingdom in His post-resurrection interaction with His followers: "He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). The message continued through Jesus followers. Peter's Pentecost sermon exclaimed: "God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), Paul explained the kingdom of God while under guard in Rome (Acts 28:23), and the last verse of Acts is programmatic for the gospel of the early Church: "Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28:31).

The emphasis on the kingly role of the Messiah departs from prevailing Jewish understanding of God's kingdom in Jesus' time. The context for Jesus' teaching on the kingdom was the Jewish community and their understanding of the kingdom. First-century Jewish thought was divided into three positions: the Qumran community, Herod Antipas' views, and the Zealots.

First, the Qumran community believed its separation from the moral and theological filth of Rome-dominated Israel would give the way for God to usher in His kingdom. These followers considered themselves “sons of Zadok” and placed themselves in priestly lineage. Donald Gowan describes the Qumran perspective: “They believed that God had called them out of the world and made a covenant with them because the last days were near.”<sup>9</sup> Second, Herod Antipas advocated cooperation with the Romans, making the best of a bad situation, and hoping that God would somehow validate the experience.<sup>10</sup> Third, the Zealots were prepared to fight against the enemies of God and Israel and thus to partake personally in the coming of God’s kingdom. The Jewish historian Josephus wrote of this position:

For they [all], vile wretches as they were, cut the throats of the high priests, that so no part of a religious regard to God might be preserved; they thence proceeded to destroy utterly the least remains of a political government, and introduced the most complete scene of iniquity in all instances that were practicable; under which scene that sort of people that were called zealots grew up, and who indeed corresponded to the name.<sup>11</sup> The advocates of these positions postulated that they could bring about a

Messianic kingdom through their piety, politics, or rebellion. While they each attempted to support God’s kingdom, they did not understand or express the unique role of the Messiah in bringing in the kingdom.

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<sup>9</sup> Donald E. Gowan, *Bridge Between the Testaments: A Reappraisal of Judaism from the Exile to the Birth of Christianity*, 2d ed. rev. Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series, 14 (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick, 1984), 229; Helmut Thielicke, *Theologische Ethik Band 1 (Theological Ethics, vol. 1)*, 5 Auflage (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1981), 267-290.

<sup>10</sup> N. T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 37.

<sup>11</sup> Flavius Josephus, *The Life and Works of Flavius Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (Philadelphia, PA: John C. Winston, n.d.), 848.

### Jesus is the King of God's Kingdom

Jesus radically broke from the conventional understandings when He equated the kingdom of God and with His own kingdom, the kingdom of the Son of Man. The Son of Man sends angels to remove the evil from His kingdom (Matt 13:41). Jesus promised that some of His disciples “will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom” (Matt 16:28), and fulfilled this promise a week later in the Transfiguration (Matt 17:1-8). The mother of James and John asks Jesus for her sons to be seated in places of honor “in your kingdom” (Matt 20:21). Jesus Himself had authority to give Peter (and the Church) the keys to the kingdom (Matt 16:19). Later, Paul declared that at the end of the age every creature in heaven and on earth will bow the knee to Jesus the king and confess Him to be Lord (Phil 2:10-11).

As the king of God's kingdom, Jesus is also a radical new center of spirituality, meaning, and power. Both Jews and Samaritans understood the center of God's activity to be spatial, a physical place such as Jerusalem or Samaria, Jesus stated that the kingdom was personal and spiritual. “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father, neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. . . . God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:21-24). Jesus put Himself in the place of something as sacred as the temple, at the center of the kingdom.

### Jesus is King in the Lives of His Disciples on Earth

Jesus demonstrates His centrality in His relationship to his disciples. Both Jesus and the rabbis taught and lived with their disciples, but unlike the rabbis, Jesus

summoned people to follow Him (Matt 4:19). No record in Jewish literature suggests that any other Jewish rabbi issued a call to a disciple.<sup>12</sup> Rabbinical tradition asserted the learner should aspire to take the place of his master.<sup>13</sup> Jesus, however, would always remain the Lord, and call to discipleship is a call to Jesus as Lord (Mark 3:14). This call indicated the renunciation of personal desires (Luke 9:23) and of relationships that conflict with loyalty to Jesus (Luke 14:25-27).

The members of God's kingdom have aligned themselves to Jesus Christ as their king. He is their *savoir*, implying that His kingdom is soteriological in nature. He redeemed His subjects and they entered into His salvation blessing by means of His new covenant wrought on the cross (Matt 26:28; Heb 10:9-10). George Eldon Ladd describes the kingdom of God as presented in the New Testament: "[T]he sovereign rule of God, manifested in the person and work of Christ, creating a people over whom he reigns, and issuing in a realm or realms in which the power of his reign is realized."<sup>14</sup>

### **The Significance of the Good News of the Kingdom**

Shenk and Stutzman describe Jesus' gospel of the kingdom as "the supreme surprise."<sup>15</sup> While the gospel message is both significant and astonishing it poses the

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<sup>12</sup> Martin H. Franzmann, *Follow Me: Discipleship According to St. Matthew* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1961), 2; Martin Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers*, trans. James Greig (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 51.

<sup>13</sup> Mark Sheridan, "Disciples and Discipleship in Matthew and Luke," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 3 (October 1973): 251.

<sup>14</sup> George Eldon Ladd, *Crucial Questions about the Kingdom of God* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998), 80. [Italics Ladd's.]

<sup>15</sup> David W. Shenk and Ervin R. Stutzman, *Creating Communities of the Kingdom: New Testament Models of Church Planting* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988), 132.

question: What is so good about this good news of the kingdom of God that has come in Jesus?

### Accessibility

Jesus opened the kingdom of God to all, without exception. Pharisees, lawyers, and Levites became the gatekeepers of approved membership in the religious community of the time. Belonging to the synagogue meant being part of God's community and Jewish culture. One can imagine the horror the man healed of blindness by Jesus experienced when he was thrown out of the synagogue (John 9:22, 34). The Jewish establishment of the period characterized this man as outside of the bounds of blessedness, God, and community. The religious elite of Jesus' day proclaimed a gospel of exclusion and decided which people could participate God's community.

When Jesus announced the kingdom of God, He broke with this exclusive tradition. Jesus railed at the gatekeepers: "Woe to you teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to" (Matt 23:13-14). Jesus and his message attracted the religiously disenfranchised and He opened the kingdom doors for them. The narratives preceding and immediately following the Sermon on the Mount demonstrate the openness of Jesus' invitation. Both stories mention people who were not allowed to participate in Jewish ritual. Before the sermon, Jesus healed and preached to the sick, the diseased, those spastic with seizures, the demon-possessed, the pain-wracked, and the bed-ridden (Matt 4:23-25). After the sermon, Jesus healed a man

covered with leprosy (Matt 8:1-4). Even the sermon itself describes the accessibility of the kingdom. The Beatitudes list conditions to which to aspire, but more importantly serve as accounts of God's activity on behalf of society's outcasts. Dallas Willard wrote:

Jesus did not say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit *because* they are poor in spirit." He did not think, "What a fine thing it is to be destitute of every spiritual attainment or quality. It makes people worthy of the kingdom." . . . Those poor in spirit are called "blessed" by Jesus, not because they are in a meritorious condition, but because, *precisely in spite of and in the midst of their ever so deplorable condition*, the rule of the heavens has moved redemptively upon and through them by the grace of Christ.<sup>16</sup>

### Generous Provision

The kingdom is also good news because God makes abundant provision available to His people. David and Solomon had abundant resources at their disposal, but Jesus' unlimited resources were not subject to depreciation or theft (Matt 6:19-20). God's kingdom provides non-material benefits. While earthly kings command soldiers to guard and protect the kingdom, Jesus' commands legions of angels (Matt 26:53). Jesus' authority was unprecedented over heaven and earth (Matt 28:18), He possessed the power to eradicate sickness and incurable disease (Matt 9:35), He commanded demons (Matt 12:28), His holiness overshadowed evil and sin, He encourages righteousness and love to prevail (Matt 21:43; Gal 5:22-23), His presence ensures endless celebration and joy (Luke 14:17; Matthew 22:2), and God can accomplish whatever He wishes (Matt 6:9-10).

The Gospel writers emphasized the divine generosity in Jesus' kingdom. Jesus' subjects enter into the richness of kingdom living because of the generosity of the king.

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<sup>16</sup> Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998), 102.

Many passages describe the kingdom as a gift, freely given by God, to be received by oneself (Luke 12:32). Scripture encourages believers to receive the kingdom as children: “Anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it” (Luke 18:17). Plantinga wrote:

Jesus almost surely meant that before we ever have anything to give, before we’re ever ready to build a barn or dig a well, we have to learn how to become good *receivers*. Infants don’t do much. They just lie around all day. But they are perfectly wonderful receivers, and therefore they are our teachers when it comes to one of the relationships – dependence – that ties us to each other and God.<sup>17</sup>

The kingdom of God is the present possession of all who trustingly receive it and depend upon the one giving it to them (Luke 6:20, 12:32, 18:16; Mark 10:14), but it is also future and waits to be inherited (Matt 25:34).

Brownson and colleagues assert: “To put it in simplest terms, in the ancient world the king is the richest person around. He commands most of the resources in the country. The king’s power, however, comes essentially from generosity: that is, the king gives to others (especially to other nobles) and expects allegiance (both personal and financial) in return.”<sup>18</sup> Faith expressed through faithfulness serves as the covenantal bond that holds king and subjects together and allows participants to enjoy the resources of the kingdom.

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<sup>17</sup> Plantinga, *Engaging God’s World*, 117.

<sup>18</sup> James V. Brownson, Inagrace T. Dietterich, Barry A. Harvey, and Charles C. West, *Storm Front: The Good News of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2003), 38.

### Transforming Power

The goodness of the news about the kingdom also includes its power to effect transformation in the present. Jews in Jesus' day looked ahead to the kingdom the prophets described. John Bright explains: "To the Old Testament the fruition and victory of God's kingdom was always a future, indeed an eschatological thing, and must always be spoken of in the future tense: 'Behold, the days are coming'; 'It shall come to pass in those days.' But in the New Testament we encounter a change: the tense is a resounding present indicative—the kingdom is *here!* And that is a very 'new thing' indeed: *it is gospel*—the good news that God has acted!"<sup>19</sup> Jesus makes *shalom*, life, and restoration available to humanity once again.

Those who cast their lot upon Jesus as their Lord and Savior find that the kingdom of God becomes experientially real. George Eldon Ladd described it as life lived in the presence of the life of God: "While eternal life is eschatological, the central emphasis of the fourth Gospel is not to show men the way of life in the Age to Come, but to bring to them a present experience of this future life. . . . This life is not a quickening of any innate powers resident in man; it is the impartation of a new life, mediated through Christ; and those who do not 'eat his flesh and drink his blood' cannot share life (John 6:35)."<sup>20</sup> The availability of the kingdom of God focuses upon this dynamic of

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<sup>19</sup> John Bright, *The Kingdom of God: The Biblical Concept and Its Meaning for the Church* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1981), 197.

<sup>20</sup> George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1974), 257.

transformation. This spiritual kingdom does not imply outward obedience or submission, but the power to renovate the human heart.

When God transforms the human heart, a culture and society can also be transformed. F.D. Maurice wrote: “The kingdom of God begins within, but it is to make itself manifest without. . . . It is to penetrate the feelings, habits, thoughts, words, acts of him who is the subject of it. At last it is to penetrate our whole social existence.”<sup>21</sup>

Richard Niebuhr suggests that the kingdom of God is essentially the “conversion of the human spirit from faithlessness and self-service to the knowledge and service of God”<sup>22</sup>

#### Participation in God’s Mission

The gospel of the kingdom is “good news” because as Jesus invites men and women to follow Him, He invites them to participate in God’s doing work. Participation is predicated upon the alignment of the will with the will of God. Jesus said as much when He taught His followers to pray (Matt 6:9-13), the kingdom of God appears as God’s will is done on earth the way it is done in heaven. True participation can occur through prayer and the alignment of human will with God’s will. Dallas Willard suggests this entails “talking to God about what we are doing together.”<sup>23</sup> In summoning men and women to follow Him, Jesus incorporated them into His body, the Church. As His body,

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<sup>21</sup> Quoted in H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951), 228.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Willard, *Divine Conspiracy*, 243.

the Church must participate in God's work in this world as the incarnation of Jesus' bodily presence.<sup>24</sup>

### Living in the Kingdom

The *ekklesia*, the "called out ones," have been called to live under the generous fellowship and powerful dominion of Jesus Christ, and to become part of a new society. The Church consists of those who have heard and responded to the summons of Jesus as Lord and Christ, effectively coming under His reign and living by His resources. Jesus stated in a kingdom parable that the kingdom would be taken away from the current tenants and given to new tenants: "Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit" (Matt 21:43). Jesus is the true vine, and produces fruit with His subjects (John 15:1-9). The Church is the offspring of the divine reign and its fruit and evidence.<sup>25</sup>

Stuart Murray asserts "the church is a community, whereas the kingdom is an activity: God extending His rule throughout creation."<sup>26</sup> Murray warns against "static interpretations of the kingdom and ecclesiastical complacency, where it is assumed that the kingdom is in evidence because of the mere existence of churches in a region."<sup>27</sup> The author of this paper, however, believes a discontinuity between community and activity

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<sup>24</sup> Brownson, Dietterich, Harvey, and West, *Storm Front*, 31-52.

<sup>25</sup> Darrell L. Guder, ed., *The Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 98.

<sup>26</sup> Murray, *Church Planting*, 47.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

did not exist with Adam and Eve when lived under God's rule and they enjoyed His community. The New Testament asserts that there can be no communion with God without obedience to God, which demonstrates love and loyalty to Him. God designed both the Church and the kingdom to exhibit communion and extend His sovereignty in people's hearts.

The exchange of communion with God and actively extending His influence has practical implications for evangelism and discipleship. God constantly interacts with and influences the world, and through the Church, He extends His will and influence. The arrival of God's reign is not a single event but an ongoing, ever-increasing extension of His will and power. As Jesus' disciples live in His present reign, they experience a joyous anticipation of His working, a conscious alignment of actions with His, a positive change in character, and the reaping of a harvest of those who enter into His reign. The church demonstrates God's reign on earth, and believers work toward displaying God's character and actions and draw upon His power to see the kingdom lived out. God's reign in heaven mirrors God's reign in the church on earth, and believers' unity under God should reflect that. Hell is the place where many wills strive for ascendancy one against the other, but Heaven is the place of pure joy, where all live under the one supreme will of God.

The gospel is the good news of God's kingdom made accessible to humanity. From His heavenly kingdom God came into His creation and brought light to those living in darkness (John 1:3-5, 10-14). The Church exists in the incarnation of Jesus and works in fellowship with the triune God bringing the life of God to others.

Jesus connects the visible and the invisible worlds, the kingdom of God and the church. Van Engen wrote:

The kingdom of God and the Church are interrelated precisely in the person of Jesus Christ, who is at once King of the kingdom and Head of the Church. The believer in Jesus is brought into God's kingdom in space and time through redemption in Jesus Christ, the "head of the body, the church." This transfer is made by the Father who dwells in Christ in his "complete being" (Col 1:13-19). Thus Church, mission, and the kingdom of God are to build one another. They are not identical, yet intimately intertwine in God's mission through God's people in God's world. The Church, therefore, must be understood to be the missionary community of the disciples of the King.<sup>28</sup>

### **God's Kingdom and Church Planting**

As God summons His people, Jesus builds a kingdom based on His priorities, and calls the Church to continue His work. Jesus was a missionary, He said to His Father: "You sent me into the world" (John 17:18), and commissioned His disciples: "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21). Living under Jesus' rule enables Christ's body to go, as He did, to the disenfranchised of this world to bring them the good news of the kingdom.

### **The Missional Church**

The term "missional" describes a Church of a called and sent people. Mission is, therefore, not a particular facet of the Church's ministry, but the entire thrust and nature of its existence. David Bosch observed: "Because God is a missionary God, God's people are a missionary people. The church's mission is not secondary to its being; the church

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<sup>28</sup> Charles Van Engen, *God's Missionary People: Rethinking the Purpose of the Local Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991), 108.

exists in being sent and in building up itself for mission.”<sup>29</sup> The missional quality of the Church has a theological base. “The classical doctrine of the *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit [is] expanded to include yet another ‘movement’: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world.”<sup>30</sup> The theological and practical principle of missiology driven ecclesiology arises from the basis of “sending.” The starting point for the Church is not the Church, but God’s mission. The Church cannot be static, as if it were meant to exist for its own benefit. Instead, Christ graced the Church so that it may grace others.

The Church’s central missionary purpose must be rediscovered. Many churches become self-serving, which Guder describes as a consequence of Constantinianism. Before the Edict of Milan in A.D. 325 when Constantine established Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, the Church was mission-driven. After the Edict, however, there was not much mission (or a decline of mission) because people were baptized into the church rather than evangelized. The Edict of Milan resulted in a culture dominated by Christianity that no longer reached people with the gospel. Constantinianism still exists in contemporary German churches, and has led to ecclesiastical myopia and missional atrophy. Every church leader must convey to the people of the church that they are God’s instruments for His mission.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> David J. Bosch, *Believing in the Future: Toward a Missiology of Western Culture* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1995), 32.

<sup>30</sup> Guder, *The Missional Church*, 5.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

Another way to describe the missional nature of the Church refers to it as centrifugal, or moving away from a center. The concept behind Judaism was that Jews needed to orient themselves around the temple in Jerusalem, so traditional Jewish behavior was centripetal and moving toward a center. Jesus' teaching and the strategy of the Holy Spirit were centrifugal and commanded followers to go out into the world to preach the gospel.

### The Church is Reproducing

“It is through the creation [or planting] of churches that God's kingdom is extended into communities which have not yet been touched by the precious surprise of the presence of God in their midst.”<sup>32</sup> God extends His life and rule through His body the Church, and the Church can extend God's life and rule by reproducing itself in new and vibrantly reproducing churches.

The first-century Church demonstrates this reproductive pattern. Due to persecution in the church in Jerusalem the disciples scattered throughout Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1), soon churches sprang up in these regions as well as in Damascus (Acts 9:19b, 31). Peter's ministry in Lydda (Acts 9:32-35) and Joppa (Acts 9:39-43) also planted churches, and led to the first non-Jewish church in Caesarea (Acts 10:23-48). Paul's missionary journeys resulted in churches planted in Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and Achaia (Acts 13-28). The accidental movement of the Jerusalem believers to other parts of Judea and Samaria because of persecution seems divinely driven. The Holy

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<sup>32</sup> Shenk and Stutzman, *Creating Communities*, 23.

Spirit said to the gathered church in Antioch: “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them” (Acts 13:2). The first-century churches were missional and reproducing in mind-set and in behavior.

### The Church is Transforming

Jesus mandated to the church to make disciples, not plant churches (Matt 28:18-20). Planting of churches, however, became a necessary part of making disciples. Those churches inspired kingdom living, and therefore transformed lives. The power of transformation requires living in the presence and out of the resources of Jesus. Church planting takes Jesus and His message to society’s down-trodden, enslaved, and depressed and transforms them. Frank Viola links the kingdom of God with church planting: “The goal of planting churches, therefore, is to bring the kingdom of God into a city. It is to bring men and women into an encounter with the spiritual realm where Christ’s rule is observed. First-century church planters showed God’s people what it means to be ‘in Christ’ as well as the meaning of ‘Christ in you.’”<sup>33</sup>

### Conclusion

Only Jesus Christ, as He lives out His kingdom life in the life of his Church, can overcome the tide of ecclesial erosion and spiritual decline in Germany. As Jesus works in the lives of His disciples, He manifests His life in them. Through this work Christians can participate in God’s kingdom coming and in His work “on earth as it is in the

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<sup>33</sup> Frank Viola, *So You Want to Start a House Church? First-Century Styled Church Planting for Today* (Gainesville, FL Present Testimony Ministry, 2003), 25.

heavens.” The result will be healthy congregations with a missional bent as they will reach the unchurched and give birth to new churches. If “a Christian’s main vocation is to become a prime citizen of the kingdom of God”<sup>34</sup> then this vocation can manifest itself most powerfully as Christians plant churches that plant churches.

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<sup>34</sup> Platinga, *Engaging God’s World*, 108.

CHAPTER FOUR  
THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MULTIPLICATION

The great things of God are beyond our control.

Roland Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*<sup>1</sup>

The term “Church Planting Movement” (CPM) describes exponential growth, as opposed to incremental, the Christian mission experiences by starting new churches. As new Christians become disciples and follow Jesus, they win others to Christ through planting churches that grow to plant more churches. This disciple-making process and church planting multiplication movement is both high in quality and quantity. David Garrison defines a Church Planting Movement as “a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment.”<sup>2</sup> The term “multiplication” is incredibly important to the movement and to this paper’s thesis. Many writers have connected church planting with theological concepts such as church growth, God’s kingdom, and *missio dei*, but few have addressed the theological grounds for multiplication.

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<sup>1</sup> Roland Allen, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1997), 13.

<sup>2</sup> Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, 21.

## **The Concept of Multiplication**

The mathematical concept of multiplication corresponds to biblical concepts of growth and God's blessings. In contrast to normal, incremental church growth, multiplication describes surprising and unusual growth. Often Scripture conveys multiplication growth through rich imagery such as a sea teeming with fish, stars in the heavens, sand on the seashore, or a river exceeding its banks, rather than through actual numbers.

This chapter explores the connection between blessing and multiplication, and describes three areas of covenantal multiplication: Old Testament foundations, Jesus and multiplication, and multiplication in the early Church. The chapter concludes with principles concerning multiplication and practical conclusions.

## **Blessing and Multiplication**

The subject of multiplication first appears in Genesis as the term "blessing" often includes multiplication principles. When Genesis describes the aquatic animals and birds, it states: "God blessed them and said, 'Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth'" (Gen 1:22). God addresses the first humans in a similar manner: "God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it'" (Gen 1:28). After Noah and his family survived the Great flood, God commanded: "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth . . . multiply on the earth and increase upon it" (Gen 9:1-7). Each of these crucial verses repeats the intentional conjunctions of "blessing," "fruitful," and "increase." Walter Kaiser wrote:

Connected with the concept of blessing was the idea of being successful in a venture or being made prosperous by God. The verb *salah* (*hislah*), “make prosperous, bring success,” was used in Genesis 24:21, 40, 42, 56 in parallelism with *barak*, “to bless” (Genesis 24:1, 27, 31). It was God’s intention that His favor was upon the patriarchs—everything they attempted succeeded.<sup>3</sup>

Hansjörg Bräumer also suggests the association between blessing and fruitfulness:

“The blessing that God pronounces upon his created creatures is the power that gives them fertility, increase, and fullness. According to Arabic language consciousness, the associate words to the Hebrew term ‘to bless’ have the basic meaning of ‘to extend itself.’ The blessing is thus fruitfulness, rich harvest, extension, increase, flourishing.”<sup>4</sup>

John Oswalt writes that to “bless” in the Old Testament means “to endue with power for success, prosperity, fecundity, [and] longevity.”<sup>5</sup>

God’s promise to Abraham is an act of blessing and multiplication. In the midst of godless tribes and nations, God singled out Abram and said: “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing . . . and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Gen 12:2-3). God reiterated this promise to Abraham on four other occasions, and in each case attached the concept of multiplication. Abraham’s offspring will become “like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted” (Gen 13:16). The descendants issuing forth from the barren womb of Sarai will be like the uncountable

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<sup>3</sup> Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, 57.

<sup>4</sup> Hansjörg Bräumer, *Das erste Buch Mose, Kapitel 1-11* [Genesis 1-11], Vol. 1 (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus Verlag, 1983), 52.

<sup>5</sup> John N. Oswalt, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1980), 132.

stars of the heavens (Gen 15:5). God said to Abram: “I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.” (Gen 17:6). After Abram demonstrated his willingness to sacrifice his only son for God, the Lord said: “I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore.” (Gen 22:17). God also passed the promise of a great nation to Ishmael: “I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation” (Gen 17:20).

Genesis uses many multiplication metaphors in reference to blessing. The oceans are “teeming with living creatures” (Gen 1:20); aquatic animals “fill the water in the seas” (Gen 1:22); God tells Adam and Eve to “fill the earth” (Gen 1:28); God tells Noah to “fill the earth” after the flood (Gen 9:1-7); God promises Abram that his descendants would extend to “all the peoples of the earth” (Gen 12:3); Abram’s offspring were to be “like the dust of the earth” (Gen 13:16) and “like the stars in the heavens” (Gen 15:5); Abram was to become the father “of many nations” (Gen 17:5); Ishmael would “greatly increase in number” (Gen 17:20); God assures Abraham that his descendants would become “like the stars in the sky and like the sand on the seashore” (Gen 22:17); because God blessed him, Isaac “reaped a hundredfold” harvest (Gen 26:12); Jacob’s descendants were to be promised to be “like the sand of the sea” (Gen 32:12); from Jacob would spring forth “a community of nations” (Gen 35:11); and Joseph would become “like a fruitful vine” (Gen 49:22). Beyer wrote: “The blessing of Yahweh is the gracious divine gift

which He dispenses in sovereign freedom, granting His favour to individuals or to a people and causing the work of their hands to succeed.”<sup>6</sup>

### **Covenantal Multiplication**

In the creation accounts, God extended the blessing of multiplication to all creatures. After the Fall, the Bible links the multiplication blessing of God with His covenant people from the promise to Abraham through to the Church. Biology becomes the cradle for soteriology.

#### Old Testament Foundations

The first chapter of Exodus expresses the fulfilment of the promises made in Genesis: “Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, but the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous, so that the land was filled with them” [*sheres*] (Exod 1:6-7). During creation the waters teemed [*sheres*] with living creatures (Gen 1:20), and later Egypt teemed with Israelites.

The theology carried through the four centuries separating the patriarchal times from the Mosaic era. For example, Exodus refers to Jacob’s family: “but the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous, so that the land was filled with them” (Exod 1:7). This passage demonstrates the fulfilment of God’s promise that Jacob’s seed had indeed been “fruitful,” “increased greatly,” “multiplied,”

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<sup>6</sup> Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1964), 756.

and “grown exceedingly strong,” and it parallels the blessing promised in Genesis 1:28 and 35:11.<sup>7</sup>

The link between Genesis and Exodus expresses the first panoramic view of covenantal multiplication in the Bible through a series of surprising events. The fulfilment of a promise of descendants outnumbering grains of sand or stars in the sky overcame the barriers of infertility and the enslavement of a small clan of refugees. In spite of these issues, God blessed His people with covenantal multiplication beyond the ability of human design or manufacture.

The surprise of multiplication also lies in the nature of its carriers. Abraham was, at the time of his call, an unbeliever, and twenty-five years after receiving the promise of being the father of a great nation, his wife remained barren. Isaac’s wife, Rebecca, was also barren, but she finally conceived and bore twins. Jacob and his small tribe were on the verge of extinction brought on by a severe period of famine when they arrived in Egypt. Four-hundred years later, however, the Israelites flourished in Egypt in spite of the hardship of slavery. The narrative reveals the unlikelihood of multiplication made possible through God’s intervention and goodness.

The backdrop of the emergence and growth of Israel helps clarify Jesus’ view of the Church articulated in the New Testament. At the height of his power and influence, King David decided to build a temple for Yahweh. The God of Israel presented Himself to David through the prophet Nathan and referred to David’s plans. God told David that He would make his name (reputation) great among all people (2 Sam 7:9-10; cf. Gen

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<sup>7</sup> Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, 100.

12:1-3), just as He foretold of Abraham's legacy. The prophet said: "The Lord declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you" (2 Sam 7:11b). David understood that God would make a dynasty out of him that would extend to the Messiah and into eternity. God's promise to David mirrors His promise to Abraham.

The Scriptural examples lead to the following conclusions: First, covenantal blessing centers in God, comes from God, and is life-giving. Second, when God seeks to bless, He does so through the reproductive process, indicating that blessing is passed along through human agency. Third, God's will for the increase of human beings is not a biological or racial flourishing, but an extension of salvation to all people.

#### Jesus and Multiplication

In Matthew, Jesus links together God's promises to Abraham and David: "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it" (Matt 16:17-18). Here Jesus continues to build David's dynasty through a partnership with His disciples.

Peter made connections between David's dynasty and Jesus', and referred to God's promise to David: "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne" (Acts 2:29-31). Ladd suggests: "Peter transfers the messianic Davidic throne from Jerusalem to God's right hand in heaven. Jesus has now been enthroned as the Davidic Messiah on the throne of David, and is awaiting the final consummation of his messianic

reign.”<sup>8</sup> While both David and Jesus died, Jesus rose again, and while David no longer sits on his throne, Christ sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven as coregent with God (Acts 2:34-25).

In the parables, Jesus reveals the true nature of messianic dynasty-building and its connection with multiplication. Jesus depicts Himself as the farmer in the parable of the sower (Matt 13:1-9; Mark 4:1-9; Luke 8:4-8). His message of salvation is intended to produce a disciple who in turn produces other disciples in varying quantities, with the pinnacle being “one hundred-fold,” and He emphasizes a high-yield.

In the parable of the seed growing secretly, Jesus speaks of the axiomatic growth of the seed or the Gospel:

A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself [*automate*] the soil produces grain: first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come (Mark 4:26-29).

Although the farmer sows and can help growth to occur, he does not ultimately have the power to make the seed grow. The seed or the Gospel itself has the power to grow, which Paul asserted when he wrote that the Gospel is “the power of God [*dynamis tou theou*] for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16). Multiplication resides in God and in God’s message. Jesus said that this shows the true nature of God’s kingdom (Mark 4:26). The same power to save (Rom 1:16) is the power to multiply (Mark 4:28).

Before leaving His disciples, Jesus told them that they were to produce more and better fruit and works. “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I

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<sup>8</sup> Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 336.

have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father” (John 14:12). Jesus had great expectations for His disciples, and He knew that through the Holy Spirit’s power and in petitioning Him (14:13), they could continue to accomplish the work of God’s kingdom.

In John 15, Jesus spoke to His disciples concerning “more” and “better” fruit that they will produce as they abide in Him. “This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples” (15:8). Jesus chose them specifically to bear greater fruit (15:16), and the author of this paper believes that this fruit referred to the expansion of the kingdom.

#### Multiplication in the Early Church

Between resurrection and ascension Jesus readied His disciples for multiplication. In sending them out as His emissaries, Jesus spoke to them of the receiving of the Holy Spirit (John 20:22; Acts 1:8), gave them a global vision: “repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations” (Luke 24:47), and blessed them with life and power to achieve such multiplication (Luke 24:50-51). Luke documented the ministries of the early church and the ministries of Jesus through the Holy Spirit active in the disciples of Jesus. Acts 1:1 states: “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven.” Bernard wrote: “Thus does he, who at the commencement of history was seen to pass into the heavens, continue to appear in person on the scene. His Apostles act, not only on his past commission, but under his present direction. He is not wholly concealed by the cloud which had received him out of their sight. Now his voice is heard; now his hand put forth;

and now through a sudden rift the brightness of his presence shines.”<sup>9</sup> The suggestion is that what Jesus began to accomplish in the Gospels He would be continuing to work out in the life of the Church in the person of the Holy Spirit. Acts describes the activity of the Spirit of God producing the fruit of multiplied blessing, conversions, and church planting, to the ends of the earth to Christ’s glory.

Acts depicts the growth and multiplication resulting from the Holy Spirit’s activity through the preaching of the gospel, the universal mission (“unto the ends of the earth”), and the role of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). Acts records the unfolding of this mission. Acts reports seven steps toward the universal mission: First, the persecution of the church (Acts 8:1b-3); second, the Gospel to the Samaritans (Acts 8:4-25); third, the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40); fourth, Saul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-4); fifth, Cornelius’ conversion (Acts 10:1-48); sixth, Antioch church as the first Gentile church (Acts 11:19-30); and seventh, the conversion of Sergius Paulus as the first non-God-fearing Gentile (Acts 13:4-12).<sup>10</sup> In the varied use of terms, Acts distinguishes between Church growth and Church multiplication.

Luke describes the spreading of the gospel and the growth of the Church by the Holy Spirit’s activity with the words *auxanein* (to grow, spread, increase) and *prostithesthai* (to add, increase). Both words describe qualitative and quantitative

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas Dehany Bernard, *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1867), 107.

<sup>10</sup> Grant Osborne, “The Book of Acts,” lecture, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL, 1984.

growth.<sup>11</sup> Examples of *prostithesthai* include: “Those who accepted his message were baptized and about three thousand were added to their number that day” (Acts 2:41); “And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47); “Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number” (Acts 5:14); and “a great number of people were brought to the Lord” (Acts 11:24). Occurrences of *auxanein* include: “So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly” (Acts 6:7); “As the time drew near for God to fulfil his promise to Abraham, the number of our people in Egypt greatly increased” (Acts 7:17); and “But the word of God continued to increase and spread” (Acts 2:24).

Luke uses the term *plethunein* (to increase, multiply, spread) to identify multiplication. Examples of *plethunein* include: “In those days when the number of disciples was increasing” (Luke 6:1), and “It [the Church] was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord” (Luke 9:31). This reference is not simply a comment on the growth of one fellowship, but of multiple churches. I. Howard Marshall stated: “It is interesting that Luke speaks of *the church* throughout this whole region. The church could think of itself as one organism, or as a set of local groups in union with one another (cf. Galatians 1:22; 1 Thessalonians

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<sup>11</sup> The terms *pleonazein* (to increase, grow, become more) and the comparative *huperpleonazein* (to overflow, be present beyond measure) are not used in Acts, but are used a total of nine times by Paul and Peter. Where these are used they always refer to the quality of faith or character, never of numerical growth. See; Gust Ledergerber, *Das Wachstum der Gemeinde* [The growth of the church] (Dresden: Sächsisches Digitaldruck Zentrum, 2001), 60 (my translation).

2:14).”<sup>12</sup> Acts demonstrates how individuals entrusted themselves to Christ, and how the rapid planting of churches multiplied to plant more churches.

*Plethunein* is used in combination with *auxanein* in Luke 6:7, 7:17 and 12:24. The term is also used in the Septuagint in Genesis 22:17: “I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore,” and in Exodus 1:7, “but the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became exceedingly numerous, so that the land was filled with them.” The terms of covenantal multiplication used for the Jewish nation are the terms used in Acts for the multiplication of believers and churches in the Church age.

Luke emphasized growth both through addition and by multiplication influenced and encouraged by the Holy Spirit. George Peters stated:

The book of Acts presents both emphases and practices, not necessarily as alternatives but as ideals. Twice the word *added* appears immediately following Pentecost in Acts 2:41 and 47. Luke mentions it again in 5:14 and 11:24. This concept seems to indicate an enlargement of the local group and increasing it in size and number. However, the word *multiplied* soon follows and is used in Acts 6:1, 7; 9:31; 12:24. It is recorded that disciples multiplied, churches multiplied, and that the word of God grew and multiplied. The concept of multiplication seems to point in the direction of an increasing number of groups and churches rather than an expansion of existing ones. Thus both practices prevailed in apostolic times.”<sup>13</sup>

Acts 16:5 summarizes church multiplication: “So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew [*perisseuein*] daily in numbers.” The number of churches in Galatia and Asia Minor grew daily, and not the number of Christians in the churches. The term

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<sup>12</sup> I. Howard Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1980), 177.

<sup>13</sup> George W. Peters, *A Theology of Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), 193.

*perisseuein* appears only in this passage in Acts. The word means “to flow over the bounds” and can be used in reference to either quality or quantity.<sup>14</sup> The internal strengthening of faith in the believers produced faithfulness, which led to the overflow of new churches planted.

Paul refers to churches planted in the book of Acts and located them in the regions of Galatia, Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia. In doing so he describes church planting multiplication. During their first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabus witnessed the effect of the Gentiles who believed the gospel: “The word of the Lord spread through the whole region” (Acts 13:49); from Antioch to Iconium “a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed” (Acts 14:1); and in Derbe the Apostles “won a large number of disciples” (Acts 14:21). During the second missionary journey, Acts describes what transpired in Asia Minor in a statement concerning church planting multiplication: “So the churches were strengthened in the faith and (the churches) grew daily in numbers” (Acts 16:5).

After being in Ephesus for two years teaching in the school of Tyrannus, Paul realized “that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord” (Acts 19:10). The Apostles were accused in Ephesus of disrupting the social order of the entire region with their message. “And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia” (Acts 19:26). The apostles generously preached the gospel,

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<sup>14</sup> Wolfgang Reinhardt, *Das Wachstum des Gottesvolkes: Biblische Theologie des Gemeindegewachstums* (The growth of the people of God: a biblical theology of church growth] (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), 248.

vast numbers of Jews and Gentiles became disciples of Jesus Christ, and multitudes of churches were planted.

Revelation expresses Jesus' vision of all nations being reached with the gospel becoming a reality: "After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count [*arithmesai*], from every nation, tribe, people and language standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb" (Rev 7:9). The Bible often refers to the prominent theme of the glory of God covering the entire earth among His creation. "Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen" (Psa 72:19). Isaiah hears the Seraphim calling out the same message: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isa 6:3). Jesus tells His disciples: "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory" (Matt 24:30).<sup>15</sup>

The parable of the mustard seed (Matt 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18-19) has eschatological meaning. Jesus contrasts the smallest mustard seed and the largest of garden plants. Carson suggests: "The point is the organic unity of small beginnings and mature endings. . . . He [Jesus] is saying that there is a basic connection between the small beginnings taking place under his ministry and the kingdom in its future glory.

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<sup>15</sup> See also Numbers 14:21, Isaiah 40:5, John 1:14, 2 Corinthians 3:18 and 4:4, and Revelation 1:6-7.

Though the initial appearance of the kingdom may seem inconsequential, the tiny seed leads to the mature plant.”<sup>16</sup>

### **Multiplication Principles**

Based upon the biblical evidence for multiplication, the following conclusions on multiplication serve as guiding principles for reflection and behavior in relation to CPM.

1. Multiplication begins with God, not with human begins: A poignant contrast exists between Genesis 11 and Genesis 12. In Genesis 11, people disregarded God and took their destiny into their own hands. They attempted to build an edifice unto themselves that would reach the heavens “so that we may make a name for ourselves” (Gen 11:4). God looked down in dismay upon their rebellion, confounded them, and scattered them over the face of the earth. This incident contrasts with the call of God to Abraham: “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing” (Gen 12:3). This contrast reveals that human effort will never manufacture God’s blessing, and God opposes such efforts.

Many scriptural examples demonstrate that multiplication comes from God’s blessing and His initiation. Only God’s speaking, vision, promises, and empowerment of His subjects can reveal the undreamed. A leader who seeks such multiplication, therefore, must first and foremost seek God and His mind. Blessing is a gift from God, and it cannot be earned, manufactured, engineered, but only received. Blessing transfers the life of God

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<sup>16</sup> Donald A. Carson, *Matthew*, Expositor’s Bible Commentary, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), 318.

to His children, and God communicates this blessing in word pictures of His preferred future.

2. Multiplication is fuelled by an astounding vision: The picture of God's preferred future is grand, and it is usually incomprehensible to the human agent. To count sand granules on the seashore, to count the stars in the sky, or to measure the dust of the earth confounds the human imagination, and yet it is precisely the impossibility of these images that instils a divine quality to this mission and thus deeply moves human hearts.

3. Multiplication presumes humility: Each person chosen by God to fulfil His vision of multiplication expressed surprise. The patriarchs, Moses, David, and Peter responded with a surprised gasp, and as in the words of David: "Who am I, O sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? . . . Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign Lord?" (2 Sam 7:18-19). This statement expresses the tension of multiplication. Although human agents are involved, only God can make growth possible (1 Cor 3:7). The body of Christ "grows as God causes it to grow" (Col 2:19).

4. Multiplication is the activity of the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work to which He called them (Acts 13:2). The power became evident when the Spirit empowered believers to do ministry in the name of Jesus. "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). The Lord's hand was with them and as a result "a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord" (Acts 11:21). These passages parallel Jesus' initial statement concerning the Holy Spirit and multiplication: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes

on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

5. Multiplication is rooted in worship and prayer: “While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting” the Holy Spirit called the Apostles to the work of church planting multiplication (Acts 13:2). The unleashing of the Gospel’s impact at Pentecost was predicated upon the disciples’ praying together in the upper room in Jerusalem (Acts 1:14). For the early followers of Jesus, prayer was central to their lives and the way they lived.

6. Multiplication flows from the fear of the Lord: As the Holy Spirit strengthened and encouraged the early Church, it grew in numbers and lived in the fear of the Lord (Acts 9:31). Church growth related directly to the fear or awe of the Church in the Lord. “Everyone was filled with awe” was the ethos of the Church (Acts 2:43, cf. 5:5, 11; 19:17). Needless to say, righteous living was an unmistakable and natural consequence of such awe because faith always manifests itself in faithfulness.

7. Multiplication involves dependent activity: The context of multiplication creates key questions: With the overriding initiative for multiplication residing with God, is it appropriate for followers of Christ to seek a multiplication movement? Is it not in the prerogative and sovereignty of God for Him to decide where multiplication occurs and where it does not?

The evidence suggests that no human agent set out to seek a multiplication movement. They sought the Lord, and having met them, the Lord gave them the vision and empowerment to initiate multiplication. No biblical evidence, however, demonstrates

that Christians should not seek such a movement. The author of this paper believes the only caution is that Christians should emphasize the pre-eminence of Christ in their worship, petitions, and living, and only secondarily seek multiplication.

8. Multiplication feeds on the dissemination of the Gospel: The proclamation of the word of God brings about increase. Acts emphasizes this point six times: “So the word of God spread. The numbers of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7); “But the word of God continued to increase and spread” (Acts 12:24).<sup>17</sup> The only way the word of God could increase and spread is through dissemination by its adherents. The axiom holds: the more that is sown, the greater the harvest.

9. Multiplication varies in speed: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David did not fully realize God’s vision of multiplication in their lifetimes; it took hundreds of years for the mission to unfold. In Acts, however, churches grew rapidly. While some may realize multiplication in their lives, others may not.

### **Conclusion**

Church planting multiplication is not a contemporary phenomenon, but it is seminally described in Jesus’ growth parables, inherent in His command to disciple all nations, and operative in the church planting behavior of the early Church as reflected in the book of Acts. Multiplication principles appear in the Old Testament as God’s design in the creation motif and in the birth and development of the nation of Israel. It is an

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<sup>17</sup> See: Acts 9:31, 16:5, 19:20, and 28:31.

outgrowth of blessing and part of the covenantal relationship between God and His people.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CHURCH PLANTING PRINCIPLES AND THE LIFE AND TEACHING OF JESUS

The ultimate issue in the universe is leadership.  
Who you follow and what directs your life  
is the single most important thing about you.

Hettinga, *Follow Me*<sup>1</sup>

God extends His life and rule to a needy humanity through His kingdom. From the creation of the world and the creation of Israel, the Lord intended multiplication growth for the expansion of His kingdom. The building of His Church through the planting of local churches demonstrates the expansion of God's kingdom and His desire to reach people in every nation.

The eternal God sovereignly, mercifully, and surprisingly chooses individuals through whom He produces the miracle of redemptive multiplication. From the beginning, God used this method to fulfil His divine plans for humanity and for His universe. Believers can find the pinnacle of God's multiplication pattern in Jesus. Jesus Himself serves as a model for the church planter in His desire to see multiplication spread into regions of darkness and transform lives.

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<sup>1</sup> Jan David Hettinga, *Follow Me: Experience the Loving Leadership of Jesus* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1996), 17.

Often church planting principles derive from Paul's missionary work.<sup>2</sup> While Paul's example has much to teach the discerning church planter, Jesus was the basis of Paul's message. "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 3:11); "It was [Jesus Christ] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Eph 4:11-12).

The author of this paper believes that Jesus intended to build His Church (Matt 16:18) and showed His followers how to accomplish this mission. The book of Acts supports these ideas because the risen Lord triumphant resides behind the acts of the Holy Spirit in the early Church. Acts implies that Jesus' followers continued the ministry from "all that Jesus began to do and to teach" (Acts 1:1). Jesus modelled and taught His followers the principles of church planting that would lead to multiplication, or as David Hesselgrave states: "Both the early mission and the early church had already been prophesied, prescribed, and promised in the Gospels."<sup>3</sup> An examination of the nature of these principles can help contemporary church planters apply them to their ministries.

An inductive study of the life and teaching of Jesus in the Gospels illuminates many principles relevant to church planting brought together in this chapter under eight

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<sup>2</sup> See: the "Pauline Cycle" outlined in David Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980).

<sup>3</sup> David J. Hesselgrave, "Essential Elements of Church Planting and Growing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 36, (January 2000): 25.

headings. The descriptions begin with the inner life of the church planter and move outward to those through whom he or she ministers.

## **Eight Principles of Church Planting**

### Personal Holiness

The successful church planter will cultivate personal holiness. An examination of the inner life of Jesus, as articulated through in the Scriptures, reveals a soul in a constant state of being “fully integrated under God.”<sup>4</sup> Jesus nourished His soul with the love of His heavenly Father. The Father’s love strengthened and motivated Him to press on at pivotal moments in His ministry. At His baptism, “a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased’” (Matt 3:17; Mark 1:11); during His preparation in the wilderness and in answering the temptation of Satan, “It is written: Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matt 4:4); at His transfiguration, “While he (Peter) was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him” (Matt 17:5; Mark 9:7); and in teaching His disciples concerning the greatest commandment, Jesus said: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength” (Mark 12:30). These crucial moments illustrate how God’s love fed and sustained Jesus’ inner being.

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<sup>4</sup> Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2002), 31.

Jesus does not begin His ministry with the task itself, but with nourishing His soul with God's love. Living in the Father's love ensures a sense of belonging, security, and quiet confidence that inspire the peace, joy, and expectancy regarding God's will. This rich relationship with His Father allows Jesus to exemplify virtue and holiness, and made Him courageous, compassionate, humble, prayerful, and confident.

The encouragement and nourishment Jesus received from God gave Him the courage to overcome barriers of unbelief, opposition, and to endure the crucifixion. Jesus often displayed courage and fearlessness throughout His ministry. He dared to heal the man with the crippled hand on the Sabbath while His legalistically minded accusers stood before Him (Mark 3:1-6). He exhibited determination as He "set his face toward Jerusalem," and the torture and death awaiting Him (Matt 20:18-19). He upset the tables of the money-changers in the temple courts and chased out the merchants with a whip (Matt 21:12; Mark 11:15-19).

Jesus demonstrated His compassion many times. When He encountered the widow whose son had died "his heart went out to her" (Luke 7:13). He also showed compassion for the crowds (Matt 9:36), for the blind (Matt 20:34), and the population of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44). Jesus looked on the rich young ruler and "loved him" (Mark 10:21), and He taught His disciples to be merciful "just as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:34). Life in the *eschaton* is predicated on an authentic life of compassion (Matt 25:35-40).

Scripture depicts Jesus as humble. Contrary to the popular opinion of the day, the Messiah came to serve people and not to reign as a conventional king. "For even the Son

of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). Walter Wessel remarked on this verse: “In the kingdom of God humble service is the rule, and even the Son of Man is not exempt from it. He is in fact par excellence the example of it, especially in his redemptive mission.”<sup>5</sup> He entered Jerusalem “gentle” riding on a donkey (Matt 21:5).

Jesus prayed often: “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed” (Mark 1:35). He prayed wherever He went, the desert (Luke 5:16), up on a mountain (Luke 9:28), and in the temple (Luke 19:46). He taught His disciples “that they should always pray and not give up” (Luke 18:1). Jesus’ disciples asked Him to instruct them in prayer (Luke 11:1), and Jesus submitted Himself completely to God through prayer.

Sangster describes unction as a result of Jesus’ devotion to prayer. He asserts: “Unction comes only of praying. Other things precious to a preacher come by prayer *and* something else. Unction comes only of praying. . . . Able preaching can often reveal the cleverness of a man . . . Unction reveals the presence of God.”<sup>6</sup> Such unction was palpably present in Jesus’ ministry and allowed Him to inspire devotion in others. After Jesus healed the paralytic, “Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, ‘we have seen remarkable things today’” (Luke 5:26).

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<sup>5</sup> Walter W. Wessel, *Mark*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary vol. 8, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), 720.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted by Ajith Fernando, *Jesus Driven Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2002), 43.

Jesus possessed the necessary confidence to do His work. He knew that the Father sent Him, and to receive Jesus was the same as receiving the one who sent Him (Mark 9:37). Jesus thrived on doing God's will (John 4:34; 6:38); His works and miracles served as a testimony that God sent Him (John 5:36); and He sent His disciples into the world as the Father had sent Him (John 17:18).

Successful church planting must begin in the church planter's soul and personal holiness. Being is more important than doing. The author of this paper believes those who invite others into the dynamic of a loving relationship with God must live out His character. A large-souled disposition toward God makes a person large-souled toward others.

#### Trusting the Power of Christ

The successful church planter will trust the power of Christ. Jesus ministered with great and evident authority no matter where He travelled, and God's power and presence were visible in His life. Contemporary church planting often confuses this authority for efficiency, quality, hard work, goals, and strategies. Spiritual authority cannot be engineered or learned, but it develops slowly in those who surround themselves with God's presence. The presence of spiritual authority comes from deeply experiencing God's presence, and becomes clear when believers ask: What is so out of the ordinary in this church planting experience that it can only be attributed to the work of God?

The way ministry is done for God can preclude the power of God in that ministry. Church planting is much more labor intensive than pastoring an existing church, and the

sheer workload can cause many problems. Church planting always includes pressure to make things happen and get things started, and danger resides in the energy level given to the outward aspects of ministry such as evangelism, training, preaching, and counselling. Often the time and energy that goes into successfully planting a church leaves little strength to shape the soul, which can lead to a sense of powerlessness as God's role and inspiration become minimized.

Beyond emotional intelligence, learned behavior, theological wisdom, and ministry experience, God's people possess God's authority. Jesus was full of God's presence and, therefore, full of divine authority. The Greek word for authority is *exousia*, which literally means "out of the midst of being."<sup>7</sup> Jesus amazed people by demonstrating a life different from contemporary renowned Jewish teachers because "he taught as one having authority" (Matt 7:28-29). The Great Commission is predicated upon Jesus having "all authority in heaven and on earth" given to Him by the Father (Matt 28:18). True disciple-makers make disciples through the empowerment of Christ's authority.

Jesus performed many varied miracles. Jesus miraculously fed 4,000 people from seven loaves and a few small fish (Mark 8:1-9); He healed the blind man at the entrance to Jericho as a harbinger of the Messianic age to come (Luke 18:35-43); and He healed people wherever he journeyed. "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people" (Matt 4:23). People responded in awe and praise to God and Jesus' demonstrations of compassionate power.

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<sup>7</sup> Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 277-278.

Jesus' power overcame demons. The gates of hell could not withstand Jesus' offensive into demon territory. Witnesses proclaimed in amazement: "He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him" (Mark 1:27). Jesus travelled throughout Galilee, preaching in synagogues and driving out demons (Mark 1:39). When the demonized saw Jesus they fell down before Him proclaiming: "You are the Son of God" (Mark 3:11). Jesus conferred the authority to face and drive away demons upon His disciples and sent them out to continue His work (Mark 3:15).

Jesus' life and ministry reveal the keys to unleash His limitless power. Scripture reports that only two instances amazed Jesus and both refer to faith. The first instance came from the faith that the centurion placed in Jesus' ability to heal from a distance. Amazed, Jesus replied: "I have not found such great faith even in Israel" (Luke 7:9). The other instance refers to Jesus' amazement at the unbelief of His townspeople (Mark 6:6). Jesus attributed His disciples' inability to cast out a demon to their "little faith" (Matt 17:20). He referred to His contemporary society as an "unbelieving generation" (Mark 9:19), and referred to the humanly impossible condition when He said: "Everything is possible for him who believes" (Mark 9:23). Faith can unleash divine power.

The way of the Lord is the way of His disciples, and is the life lived in and under divine authority. Church planting is a supernatural undertaking and requires church planters to believe in and wait upon God's power to work. Jesus' disciples began to live as He did at Pentecost. Jonathan Goforth wrote: "My conviction is that the Divine power, so manifest in the Church at Pentecost, was nothing more nor less than what should be in

evidence in the Church to-day. Normal Christianity, as planned by our Lord, was not supposed to begin in the Spirit and continue in the flesh.”<sup>8</sup>

### Focusing on the Harvest

The successful church planter will focus on the harvest. Jesus made His disciples a priority, but He also sought out those who were not yet with Him in the kingdom. He constantly moved among the lost: “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matt 9:37-38). Jesus realized that the future of the Church depended upon the gathering the lost. While His learners tended to look inward, Jesus looked outward and challenged them to do the same.

Jesus went to the places where people lived and worked. He summoned Simon and Andrew to leave their occupation as fishermen in order to follow Him (Matt 4:18-29); He journeyed to surrounding towns and villages of Galilee (Matt 11:1; Luke 8:1, 9:6); He told the parable of the wedding banquet when the king enjoins his servants to go to the street corners and invite people everywhere, both good and bad to the banquet (Matt 22:8-10); and Jesus even invited Himself to dine at the home of a notorious tax collector although the people responded: “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner” (Luke 19:7). Jesus wanted to reach many different kinds of people, particularly the sick, the poor, sinners, and the otherwise marginalized (Luke 19:10). Malphurs wrote: “The evangelical church will not survive unless it aggressively pursues unchurched lost people

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<sup>8</sup> Jonathan Goforth, *By My Spirit* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1930), 11.

outside its 'four walls.' It must adopt an 'invasion' or 'penetration' mentality. The days have long passed when the church could sit back and wait for lost people to come to it."<sup>9</sup> The parables in Luke 15 of the lost sheep, lost coin, and lost son reveal Jesus' longing to find and save lost people.

Jesus worked toward a large harvest. The fourth soil in the parable of the sower yields a crop thirty, sixty, and one-hundred times greater than the seed that was sown (Matt 13:1-9; 18-30). The parable of the talents underscores the value of faithfulness and results (Matt 25:14-30). Jesus said: "The harvest is plentiful" (Luke 10:2), and He likens the kingdom of God to a small mustard seed that matures to produce a tree so large that birds perched in its branches (Luke 13:18-19).

Jesus saw the world as His harvest field: "Go and make disciples of all nations" was His last injunction to His disciples (Matt 28:19), and they were to serve as His witnesses locally, regionally, and "unto the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The harvest parables addressed the issue of the effectiveness of faithfulness. Jesus longed for someone who could get the job done and with high yields.

Jesus never grew tired in His missional outlook and activity. Church planters and the churches they plant often become sedentary in a relatively short period of time, and they take on the posture of a church that has existed for many years, predominantly interested in internal affairs. Jesus ministered in the manner of His calling and always acted as a missionary. Sometimes He was a shepherd, but He was always a missionary.

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<sup>9</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992), 117.

Contemporary church planters are often shepherds who sometimes exercise the role of the missionary, but Jesus demonstrates the importance of an unrelenting missionary role.

Jesus allowed himself to be primarily moved by the misery of lost people, not by the wishes of the already found. In this vision He exhibited God's vision to redeem humanity. Anderson asserts: "Vision gives hope. Vision gives the impression that someone is in control."<sup>10</sup> People remain lost without Christ, and God wants them to be found so He empowers and sends His servants to reach them. God's mission and vision for His children can provide an incredible source of joy and power.

#### Proclaiming the Whole Gospel

The successful church planter will proclaim the whole gospel. Jesus' mission was to proclaim the good news and invite people to join Him in His kingdom. While the miracles, healings, exorcisms, signs, and wonders inspired awe, they served to reveal Jesus to be the Messiah. Jesus sought primarily to proclaim God's kingdom: "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent" (Luke 4:43), and Jesus Himself was the content of the good news. Jesus revealed Himself as the redeemer from sin (Mark 10:45; Matt 20:28); restorer of *shalom* (John 14:27, 16:33; Rom 5:1); imparter of life (Matt 19:17; John 10:10), and king of an eternal kingdom (John 18:36; Matt 3:2). Origen suggested Jesus was the *autobasileia*, the kingdom in person.<sup>11</sup> Jesus preached this message in synagogues (Luke 4:44), in the

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<sup>10</sup> Leith Anderson, *Leadership that Works* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1999), 191.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1970), 51.

temple (Luke 20:1), in all the towns and villages in Galilee (Matt 9:35), in homes (Mark 2:2), on the seashore (Luke 5:1), and on the mountainside (Matt 5:1). He intended it to be preached by His followers in the entire world (Matt 24:14).

### Priority to Relationships

The successful church planter gives priority to relationships. Scripture indicates Jesus spent much personal time with His disciples: “He appointed twelve – designating them apostles – that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach” (Mark 3:14), and He developed special relationships with them. He sought privacy from the crowds in order to instruct His disciples (Mark 9:30-31). Jesus spent time with His disciples on the mount of transfiguration, in the Garden of Gethsemane, on the journey through Samaria, during the week-long wedding celebration in Cana, in Bethany, and during His visits to the Temple. As Jesus drew His disciples closer to Him, the more His presence and teaching transformed them.

Jesus and contemporary church planters differ greatly in the weight they place on the worship service. For Jesus, synagogues, the temple grounds, open spaces, and homes adapted into meeting places to cultivate relationships with God and each other. By contrast, contemporary church planters emphasize the worship service in such a way that little energy remains for deep interpersonal relationships and transformation. Disproportionate time and energy given to the preparation of worship services can also send the message that high attendance counts more than quality of worship. Furthermore,

emphasis on the worship service can produce an unhealthy “come-mentality.” Dallas

Willard stated in an interview:

If we’re really concerned about reaching the world for Christ, we have to bring the church which is the people of God to permeate society. You can’t tie it to a building. That’s where we started. We went to buildings, but it was about community. It was Christ coming upon preexisting community and redeeming it where it was.<sup>12</sup>

Without a set place of worship, Jesus and His followers had to think and act missionally while established church buildings can effectively reduce missional force.

### Working through Others

The successful church planter will work through other people. The gospels describe the life of Jesus as the in-breaking of the kingdom of God among humans. As the king of the kingdom, Jesus transmits His life and will through the life and will of His followers. As His followers work in His name, Jesus works through them to redeem others. Jesus empowers others to carry on His work so that He does not have to impact people directly. Empowerment thus becomes a significant element in expansion by multiplication.

Jesus influenced and encouraged His followers to influence others. He initially called the disciples by the sea to be “fishers of men,” to do for others what He did for them (Matt 4:19). Later Jesus gave the twelve the power to cast out unclean spirits and heal the sick (Matt 10:1); He delegated the task of the feeding of the five thousand: “You give them something to eat” (Matt 14:16); He sent out ministry pairs (Mark 6:7; Luke

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<sup>12</sup> Agnieszka Tennant, “The Making of a Christian: Interview with Richard Foster and Dallas Willard,” *Christianity Today* 49, no. 10 (Oct 2005): 44.

10:1); He sought workers to be sent into the harvest (Matt 9:37-38); and shortly before ascending, He commissioned His disciples to make disciples among all peoples (Matt 28:18-20).

Paul's description of the five-fold ministry in Ephesians 4:11-13 reflects the apostolic nature of Jesus' ministry: "It was he (Christ) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." Wolfgang Simson defined the ministry functions of these gifts as "the self-organizing powers of the church. They are part of the built-in `biotic growth potential', an internal structure, part of the spiritual DNA of the church, which forms itself within the body of Christ just as a human body forms its own lymphatic system."<sup>13</sup>

The apostles' function is central to church planting multiplication. Simson writes: "Apostles are very much like generals in an army. They carry the main burden and responsibility for the advancement of the cause. The apostolic ministry is a founding ministry: it can create something out of nothing, create a foundation in the desert. In many ways it unites all other gifts in itself."<sup>14</sup> Jens Kaldewey summarizes the function of

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<sup>13</sup> Simson, *Houses that Change the World*, 110.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 115.

the apostle as “establishing, calling, sending, multiplying, seeing the big picture, long-range strategic thinking and planning.”<sup>15</sup>

Jesus trained His followers, but did not wait until leaders were fully trained before He sent them to serve. For example, early in their ministry, Jesus sent the twelve disciples to Israelite towns to proclaim the God’s kingdom, heal the sick, and raise the dead (Matt 10:5-6). Shortly after having been freed of demons, the Gerasene wished to travel and learn more from Jesus, but instead Jesus sent him out as a missionary: “Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you” (Mark 5:19). In a similar manner, Jesus sent out the seventy-two in pairs to minister in the towns (Luke 10:1).

Jesus integrated discipleship and evangelism. He led people to Himself and then led them to others who were often just as lost. In the process, Jesus found them and empowered them to find others. He oriented them, sent them off to minister, and taught them when they returned with questions. In many cases only after these followers had experienced something did they understand spiritual truth.

Church planters often shepherd people in a linear manner, while Jesus had a more eclectic approach. The linear approach suggests that disciples should gain character and competency growth in certain areas before they can move on to the next step. Jesus’ approach, however, could challenge and energize new believers to discover and grow in unexpected ways.

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<sup>15</sup> Jens Kaldewey, *Die Starke Hand Gottes: Der fünffältige Dienst* (Emmelsbüll, Germany: C & P, 2001), 50. (My translation).

### Preparing for Challenges

Successful church planters will expect and teach others to expect difficulties.

Jesus faced many challenges in His work, and human and demonic opposition met Him at every turn on His journey to redeem the world and to build His Church. These hindrances certainly tested His mission-mindedness. For example, the Spirit of God led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the devil (Matt 4:1). Jesus faced the same temptations church planters face such as the gratification of selfish desires, doubt in God's power, and the lure of wealth, power, or fame. Later Satan used Peter, one of Jesus' most trusted followers, to stop His sacrifice on the cross (Matt 16:23). Church planters must expect to have their faith and trustworthiness be tested as Jesus was tested.

Jesus communicated the cost of discipleship to His followers. While other people had the safety and security of a home, Jesus did not: "The Son of Man has no place to lay his head" (Matt 8:20). The Lord sent His disciples out as sheep among wolves (Matt 10:16). Jesus warned them of arrest, betrayal, persecution, and death, and reminded them that following Him could entail leaving behind community, family, and property (Luke 18:29-30). The disciples were to deny themselves and take up their crosses daily and follow Him (Luke 9:23).

Pain and disappointment were common to Jesus' ministry and the ministries of His followers. Sri Lankan Ajith Fernando commented: "We are not used to experiencing frustration and pain. So when we face such, we tend to shrink from it. But frustration and pain are essential features of incarnational ministry."<sup>16</sup> Archibald Hart suggests that

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<sup>16</sup> Fernando, *Jesus Driven Ministry*, 22.

surviving ministry is all about surviving depression.<sup>17</sup> Jesus expected disappointment and knew how to cope with it, and in planting churches, His followers must learn to do the same.

### Employing Wise Strategies

Successful church planters will employ wise strategies. Definite purposes and goals guided Jesus in the way He ministered. Personal holiness and strategic planning complimented each other for Jesus and He possessed an all-encompassing vision to build His Church (Matt 16:18). Jesus uses three specific principles for effective church planting: ministering to partial believers, seeking social centers, and seeking the receptive.

#### *The Partial Believers*

Jesus began to disciple people before they believed. The Galilee fishermen trusted to follow Jesus (Matt 4:20; 9:9), but only over time did they truly come to know Jesus and commit their lives to Him (Matt 16:16). The man healed of blindness in stages (Mark 8: 22-25) connects to the disciples slowly coming to fathom the true person of Jesus (Mark 8:27-33) and suggests a progressive understanding that occurs as one comes to believe. Jesus did not hesitate to work with people with partial insight and guided them to complete knowledge and faith.

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<sup>17</sup> Archibald Hart, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, September 2003.

### ***Social Centers***

Jesus proclaimed the good news in social centers of great influence. He frequently preached to Jews in the synagogues (Matt 4:23) and purposefully sought out people in high society such as the Pharisees (Luke 7:36, 11:37, 14:1) and low society such as tax collectors and sinners (Matt 9:9-13; Luke 19:1-10).

### ***Receptivity***

Jesus was sensitive to receptivity and learned a prophet is not honored by His own people (Luke 4:24). The prophet's people are low-receptivity people, and staying in one place could lead to death. Jesus urged His followers to look for worthy people, or people of peace in the towns they travelled to (Matt 10:11-15) because peaceful people were more likely to receive the good news. Those people who were inhospitable were to be avoided (Mark 6:11).

### **Conclusion**

The author of this dissertation believes that, with the exception of the growth parables, contemporary church planting movements rarely use multiplication principles from the life and teaching of Jesus. Jesus' life and the way He lived is, however, the seedbed for multiplication. Church planting leaders can learn to borrow from Jesus, whose example is like a grain of wheat that can ultimately produce an abundant crop (John 10:24). These principles precede multiplication and give life to a church planting multiplication movement.

The next section, Part Three, describes the creation and sustaining of a church planting multiplication movement in Germany. This is in support of this paper's thesis that Germany can support a church planting multiplication movement. The movement is based on a bold action plan and a restructuring and reconsideration of current methods.

PART THREE:  
CREATING AND SUSTAINING A CHURCH PLANTING  
MULTIPLICATION MOVEMENT IN GERMANY

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CHAPTER SIX  
VALUES AND DISTINCTIVES OF HIGH IMPACT CHURCH PLANTING

If you can dream it, you can do it.

Walt Disney<sup>1</sup>

The first part of this dissertation described the German ecclesial situation, both in the established Protestant Church and the Free Churches. Despite the Protestant Church's twenty-seven million members, it has experienced rapid decline for decades with no sign of improvement. While the Free Churches have, in some cases, grown in membership and number of churches, their social impact has been marginal at best.

Part Two of this study explored the theological underpinnings of a church planting multiplication movement as presented in the Bible. God's kingdom and its active in-breaking into the human situation supports God's will for humanity. God placed multiplication at the heart of His work among the Jewish nation and in the early Church. Part Two also studied the seedbed for a church planting multiplication movement in the life and teachings of Jesus. The proclamation of the gospel exploded into phenomenal growth beginning at Pentecost and continued into the next several centuries. Rodney Stark wrote about how an "obscure Jesus movement became the dominant religious force in the Western world for a few centuries." Stark estimates that Christianity

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<sup>1</sup> Bennis and Nanus, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*, 31.

grew at a rate of 40 percent per decade for several centuries, making it the dominant religion of the known world.<sup>2</sup> Church planting multiplication was a fact in the first two centuries of Christianity.

Part Three will address the practical requirements to plant multiple churches in Germany and promote a movement. This chapter explores the principles of church planting that would make Christianity highly visible and relevant to secular Germans. This chapter provides a highly visible approach while chapter 8 demonstrates low visibility church planting. The author of this paper believes that both methods are valid, necessary, and do not have to be mutually exclusive.

This study asserts that Germans desperately need a hearty, vital, and attractive gospel witness. They need communities of loving followers of Jesus Christ who live out their devotion for God and one another. The hope for German Christianity lies in the planting and growth of thousands of new vibrant churches that, in turn, plant churches.

North American missionaries have been at the forefront of establishing new churches in Europe. Their efforts have been valiant, but too often the experience results in slow growth, low impact, high frustration, and minimal reproduction. Leaders must re-examine and transform the way church planting is carried out in postmodern Germany.

The following sections describe ten distinct features to measure the effectiveness of church planting, based upon the author of this study's research, values, and experience.

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<sup>2</sup> Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1997), 6.

The author of this paper believes faithfulness can serve as the starting point, but faith alone cannot accomplish the task at hand.

**1. Create an Image of Ministry That Is Greater Than Present Reality**

Or: "*One Has No Second Chance to Make a First Good Impression*"

The author of this paper believes the size of the church planting team determines most European church plants, and the group's size often contributes to the team's strategy. These small groups traditionally rely on their own resources and undertake small evangelistic forays into a target area such as friendship evangelism, book tables, literature distribution, survey work, or door-to-door visitation. In time, such groups generate home Bible studies and hold services in the largest available living room.

This type of missionary work can cause a variety of issues both inside and outside the group. Outsiders can perceive the new work as cultish because they meet in private homes and are not part of the State Church, irrelevant because they lack visibility and clout, and suspicious because fear of what these people might expect of others. The group itself can develop phobias and identity issues, team members lacking robust personalities and a great sense of God's calling can quickly lose heart and leave, an "us versus them" mentality can set in, cultural shyness about being foreigners and language barriers can inhibit church planters from asserting themselves, and in attempts to legitimize their presence, timid missionaries can undertake low-risk activities.

German church planters must change their methods so that early-stage church plants create an image of a strong and vibrant ministry. Church plants must make a dynamic first impression that is highly visible, relevant, and accessible to the target

audience. The church planters must present a positive image of themselves and their ministries to garner curiosity in the minds of nationals.

For example, in September 1998 the author of this paper, his family, and two single Germans moved to Kaiserslautern, a city in the south west of Germany to begin a church. At the time of the move, the team of four adults had no contacts to residents of the area, and set the start of public services in March 1999. With six months of preparation time, the group's goal was not to be overlooked by anyone in the city of 100,000 residents.

The group members utilized many resources to maximize their visibility in the community. First, they called the local newspaper, which ran a photograph of the author and a significant article about the new church start. As a result, six people from the community called to find out more information, and they eventually came to a vision night. The author visited the chief mayor, deputy mayor, and the Lutheran superintendent. The group surveyed 500 people between the ages of twenty and forty-five living in Kaiserslautern, which resulted in obtaining 200 addresses for future mailings. The group also made radio, newspaper, and video board advertisements in the initial stages.

Later, a twenty-three member black Gospel choir from Boston travelled to the town at their own expense to minister with the team. The choir sang on the street and on four successive evenings in a public hall, and a German evangelist preached each evening. An average of 100 adults attended each evening during this program. The group held its first service two days later in a downtown cinema, 164 adults attended, and one

young man committed his life to Christ afterwards. Two and a half years later, the church moved out of the cinema and presently occupies a former cafeteria building on a major street, and has ample parking, high visibility, and a big sign out in front.

This example demonstrates how a successful project can grow from an enthusiastic and highly-visible strategy. Group members utilized their own personal gifts as well as the community's resources to reach a new potential congregation.

## **2. Diversify Evangelism Venues**

Or: "*He Who Sows Bountifully, Will Also Reap Bountifully*"

Frequently missionaries offer their community as a one-item-evangelism such as personal evangelism, a tent campaign, evangelistic sermons, or tract distribution. Limited sowing, however, limits the response from the outside community. Concern for the lost behoves church planters to diversify their evangelistic efforts in order to win more people for Christ and His kingdom. The greater the evangelistic inroads into the community, the greater the potential for harvest. The author of this paper believes church planters must seriously consider the following areas as they pertain to evangelism:

1. Easy Access: Church planters must overcome barriers between the people and the church as much as possible. The church plant must be accessible to potential congregants. The time of the worship services must be amicable to the sleep habits of the target audience, the meeting place must be centrally located and feel comfortable for non-Christians to enter, and the order of service must be easy to follow with no hidden cues for the initiated.

2. Felt Needs: Although the content of the message remains the same, the packaging must be variously attractive. Different people have different needs and interests based on their gender, age, or economic status, and church planters should anticipate these needs. Personal conversations with non-Christians, survey work, demographic and psychographic studies, and reading about current trends in magazines and newspapers can aid church planters in assessing the needs of their potential congregants.

3. Relational Ties: Community is a significant factor in successful church planting. The more Christians that non-Christians get to know, the greater the chances that they will return and become believers themselves. Love, acceptance, fun, and caring can attract people starving for these seminal qualities of Christian community. Kennon Callahan suggested: “Increasingly, unchurched people will be drawn to churches that care. High-compassion, high-community congregations will thrive in the coming years.”<sup>3</sup>

When attending a Free Church in Germany, many non-Christians ask: “Are these people credible?” Only after they have answered this question in the affirmative will they open themselves up to the message of the community. Ralph Neighbour points out that people have to hear the Gospel before they will listen to it, just as one first hears the music of a song on the radio before one hears its lyrics.

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<sup>3</sup> Kennon Callahan, “Horizon Watchers,” *Leadership* 20 (Fall 1999): 32.

4. Time Factor: Communication experts Norton and Engels demonstrated that evangelism is a process.<sup>4</sup> In order for people to reach the point of making a whole-hearted decision for Jesus Christ, they must be given the gift of time, the freedom to hear the Christian message, process new information, ask questions, and evaluate its implications for their lives. In the German context, conversion can be a long journey and encompass months and years as new believers process from one point to the next. It is like the journey to Emmaus, rather than the journey to Damascus.

5. In-House Resourcing: Evangelistic diversification can spring forth out of the expertise, knowledge, experience, and ability of the new congregants. These people often have resources that are attractive to non-Christians and can be harnessed for the gospel. For example, a paediatric nurse in the congregation might offer a series of evenings on the topic of caring for new-borns, an amateur magician might hold a seminar on magic tricks and end it with his testimony using his illusions, or a tax expert might devote an evening to interesting tax issues. Each person could relate his or her unique gifts to the journey to knowing Christ.

Before beginning with public meetings in Kaiserslautern, the missionary team surveyed 500 people in the community. Among other questions, they asked those surveyed what time they got up on Sunday mornings, and these answers helped plan a worship time for 11:00 A.M. Some of the people in their late teens and early twenties said that they did not go to bed at all on Saturday night, so they would prefer to meet at

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<sup>4</sup> James F. Engel and H. Wilbert Norton, *What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975), 45.

6:00 P.M. on Friday evening. This research enabled the team to know their target audience and accommodate their services to attain the best possible results.

### **3. Spare Almost Nothing to Provide Quality and Excellence**

Or: "*People Expect Quality from the Business Community But Not from the Church, Therefore Surprise Them!*"

In *Deep Change* Robert E. Quinn wrote:

If you perform beyond the norms, you disrupt all the existing control systems. Those systems will then alter and begin to work to routinize your efforts. That is, the systems will adjust and try to make you normal. The way to achieve and maintain excellence is to deviate from the norm. You become excellent because you are doing things normal people do not want to do. You become excellent by choosing a path that is risky and painful, a path that is not appealing to others.<sup>5</sup>

The design, building, and maintenance of both tabernacle and temple indicate that God places a premium on quality. Quality and excellence convey to people that the church cares about them and is serious about its mission. While excellence can never substitute for the dynamics of Christian community, it can give voice to its innate values. Living for Christ entails giving Him the best of who the community is and what it can offer.

In pursuing quality and excellence, the author of this paper believes church planters should exercise caution. First, quality does not necessarily mean expensive. Quality and excellence have more to do with the way people do things than with the things themselves. Even where funds are plentiful, quality goods do not guarantee quality

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<sup>5</sup> Robert E. Quinn, *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 176.

of implementation. Excellence requires hard work and dedication. Church planters should not be content to let good enough alone, but realize that the good and the satisfactory can keep people from attaining the better and the best.

In Kaiserslautern, even before the first service was held, the team had a graphics artist design three different brochures including the introduction and overview of the new church, church values, and the Christianity 101 course. The team conducted all worship services with Power Point and projected onto a large screen by an LCD projector, distributed a welcome packet to first time visitors, printed up-coming sermon topics to distribute, made tapes of each message available for a reasonable price at the close of services, displayed a large well-stocked book table each Sunday, meticulously set up and took down an excellent sound and lighting system each week, and linked the church's homepage to that of the city of Kaiserslautern and the German Evangelical Free Church. The attention to detail promoted a sense of professionalism amongst the church and helped legitimize their mission to the greater community.

**4. Prayer and Fasting Open Closed Doors**  
Or: *"Hidden Sacrifices Secure Public Victories"*

The Gospel is extremely relevant to contemporary times. Although the kingdom of God is future, the kingdom of God is also present, because Jesus resides with humanity by His Spirit. "Realized eschatology" refers to when God's rule breaks into the present world, and prayer and fasting are the means by which God secures His victory.

The New Testament church prayed and fasted, and God's message worked as a result (Acts 13:2, 14:23). Though it is not attested in the best manuscripts, the passage in

Matthew 17:20 when Jesus tells His disciples that a particular kind of demon possession is only cast out through prayer and fasting, validates the early church's practice and confidence.

While contemporary Christians sometimes lack in time and intensity in prayer, they never regret a long intense prayer. The Lord said that He had come to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). The author of this paper believes Germany is most certainly one of the devil's strongest citadels, and only believing prayer and humble fasting will bring down his ramparts.

### **5. Create Your Future by Setting Challenging, Reachable Goals**

Or: *"The Most Important Step Is Not the Next One, It's the One after That"*

A church planting setting requires more than participating in ordinary, expected ministry activities. Many missionaries, however, believe if they just prepare and perform the expected functions of preaching, leading Bible studies, counseling, visitation, and evangelism, God will bless and the work will grow. Often church planters in Germany have been more reactive than proactive, and they have been faithful without being future-oriented and strategic in their actions.

Warren Bennis stated: "Goals are not ends, but ideal processes by which the future can be created."<sup>6</sup> To create the future, church planters need to be dreamers of what could be. They must dream God's dreams for His church and see what no one else can yet perceive. "Without a vision the people perish" (Prov 29:18). Hudson Taylor wrote:

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<sup>6</sup> Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1989), 163.

“Expect great things from God, undertake great things for God, experience great things with God.”

Church planters must set a vision and discover the reachable goals within the plan. Breaking down the vision into manageable segments reveals the path from vision to reality. Often goal-setting is too short-sighted, and planters should always look ahead to begin planning for the future. If one plans for evangelism, discipleship strategy must also be in place, or if one is wishing for small group leaders to come up through the ranks, then that person must find co-leaders.

During the author’s junior year at Columbia Bible College, God gave him a vision for planting five churches in Germany. He adopted the motto: “Five to grow before I go.” He also knew that he wanted to establish these churches in partnership with an existing evangelical denomination and thereby gain credibility and preserve fruit. With God’s help, planning, and setting goals, this dream has become a reality.

Entering the church planting situation in Kaiserslautern offered new challenges for the author of this paper. He considered the kinds of visions God gave His leaders and came to the conclusion that they were always above and beyond each person’s means and capacities. Abraham was in no shape to generate a great nation, Moses was alone when God called him to lead two million people into freedom, David did not have the credentials to become king, and Peter was more shifting sand than a rock upon which to build God’s new enterprise, the Church. The author then realized that to plant another church and then another was no longer a grand enough goal, and the Lord challenged him to dream about

planting multiple churches. Germany needed a church planting movement of multiplication, not just of addition.

The team has determined two different avenues to explore in order to begin multiple churches in Kaiserslautern, and one idea requires the team to periodically group its cell groups into clusters. Each cluster would plan, prepare, and execute its own worship service in different locations on the same Sunday. The ebb and flow between centralization and decentralization needs to be experienced until the clusters can sustain themselves.

A second path would establish a Saturday evening service in another location identical to the Sunday morning service. The group hopes a second service would create definable constellations of attendees and eventually each group would take on its own character and identity. In time, the Saturday evening service could become the seedbed for a wholly autonomous church.

**6. Enlarging the Leadership Base Will Lead the Way  
to Greater Quantitative and Qualitative Growth**  
Or: *"If You Want Height and Depth, Then Expand Your Width"*

The key to qualitative and numerical growth can be found in leadership development rather than programs and activities. A small leadership base has a limited growth potential, but a wide base allows for great growth potential. Church planters, therefore, must constantly seek out potential leaders, give new leaders a vision of how a certain ministry fits into the totality of church planting, equip them as they serve, encourage, and correct. Missionaries who do not constantly seek and train new leaders, or

who cannot delegate responsibility, run the risk of burning themselves out before attaining their goals.

Church planters should always ask the following questions: What am I doing that someone else can do? What is keeping me from spending more time on developing leaders? Who are those leaders that are sitting in the second row as untapped potential? What do my current leaders need to become more effective and to train up new leaders themselves? Who has strengths where I am weak that I need to compliment me?

### **7. Grow Big, But Remain small**

Or: *"Great Churches Have Great Community"*

The New Testament describes many admonitions about caring for people. "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers" (Acts 20:28). "They (leaders) keep watch over you as men who must give an account" (Heb 13:17). "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers" (1 Pet 5:2). "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God" (Rom 15:7). Such verses encourage loving communities where people can meet and know each other face-to-face and heart-to-heart. The author of this paper believes early churches created intimate communities by assembling in multiple small groups in homes, which enabled nurture, pastoral care, counseling, confrontation, and encouragement among members.

Contemporary growing churches can benefit from creating small groups with dedicated, loving leadership. In *Prepare Your Church for the Future*, Carl George

encourages establishing co-leaders to create an effective ministry.<sup>7</sup> Properly trained co-leaders meet the need for new leadership after a group has divided. By dividing the current worship attendance by fifteen, leaders can determine how many co-leaders must be trained to meet church needs.

### **8. Difficult People Disciple Congregations**

Or: *"Poor Qualities in People Bring Out the Best in Healthy Congregations"*

Every church setting has its share of difficult members. Quite often these people have been victimized, and unknowingly, their pain affects the lives of other congregants. Their pain can take on many forms of adverse behavior and attitude including: slander, bitterness, envy, impatience, self-centeredness, anger, or self-pity. These difficult members often cause others to recoil and treat them with passive neglect. This reaction, however, is a mark of lovelessness.

God disciplines His churches to health by gifting them with people with character flaws and through these people God teaches others what it means for a body to love. Love is never learned in loving the lovely, but in loving the unlovely, love grows in Christlikeness. Difficult members provide hidden opportunities from God for an entire congregation to learn to love. If church planters neglect reaching out to society's unlovable members, they could miss out on one of God's greatest means of discipleship.

Church planters must be cautious in the early stages of establishing a church. Often, missionaries make the mistake early on in church planting by seeking out anyone

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<sup>7</sup> Carl F. George, *Prepare Your Church for the Future* (Tarrytown, NY: Fleming H. Revell, 1991), 124, 135-148, 103-104.

who shows interest. If too many extraordinarily needy people join, the church's energy can be sapped and psychologically healthy non-Christians may be kept away.

### **9. Anticipate Growth Barriers and Induce Birth Pains**

Or: *"The Impetus for Current Growth Can Be the Blockage for Future Growth"*

Typically, church starts are attractive to newcomers because they tend to be small, personable, friendly, and have a family-like atmosphere. The average church in the United States has between seventy and seventy-five attendees. In Europe, however, many churches struggle to grow beyond thirty or forty people. One reason for this, the author believes, may be that the atmosphere of a church changes as it grows. After churches grow to a certain size, growth tends to stagnate or even decline. Members who happily committed to the family-size church no longer feel comfortable, because the influx of new people has made the community increasingly impersonal, distant, and uncomfortable. As a result, some members stay away or look for other fellowships, and the very reason for initial growth becomes the brake for further growth.

In order to cope with these barriers, church planters must first anticipate the phenomenon and accept it as normal and healthy. Leaders must educate members to expect changes as numbers increase and that it is normal to feel nervous. Members should be re-energized with a renewed vision and concern for the lost. A genuine concern for the lost can help a congregation open itself up to the discomfort brought on by change and growth.

### **10. Work Toward Initiating a Church Planting Movement**

Or: *"We Need to Move from Church Planting by Addition to Church Planting by Multiplication"*

A church planting movement results in exponential growth versus the incremental growth of church planting by addition. Often church planters have seen exponential growth on the level of small groups, and therefore, need to raise their sights to believe God will support the progress on a larger scale. This optimistic feeling must be present from the beginning of strategic planning and throughout the process. Growth produces new growth.

Early on in Kaiserslautern the team communicated to interested people its plans to start multiple churches in the city. Throughout the ensuing years this value was often reiterated, and in 2003 a first daughter church was birthed in the city of Ramstein.

### **Conclusion**

Germany has enormous needs; it lacks resources for planting churches and church planters often feel a great sense of inadequacy. This great task cannot be taken on successfully without great risk. Church planters must take a risk of faith and trust God to go before, to go with, and to supply all along the way. The country's desperate need for church growth can motivate missionaries to see the Lord raise up multiple churches through their efforts in Germany. This high risk can pay off through bold action and courage in the face of adversity.

CHAPTER SEVEN  
A STRATEGY FOR MULTIPLICATION

We must plant a new type of church that can think in terms  
of multiplication, not addition.

Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here?*<sup>1</sup>

Church planting with the power to influence individual lives and an entire society must utilize both high and low profile methods. Church planting multiplication depends largely upon effectively carrying Jesus' mandate to "make disciples" (Matt 28:19-20). This chapter describes leadership development for a church planting multiplication movement. A large ministry of multiplying churches must first concentrate on multiplying disciples. Neil Cole wrote:

If we cannot multiply churches, we will never see a movement. If we cannot multiply leaders we will never multiply churches. If we cannot multiply disciples, we will never multiply leaders. The way to see a true church multiplication movement is to multiply healthy disciples, then leaders, then churches, and finally movements—in that order.<sup>2</sup>

A transition from planting churches by addition to planting churches by multiplication demands a new means of growing leaders, who in turn, multiply leaders.

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<sup>1</sup> Ralph W. Neighbour Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church* (Houston, TX: Touch, 1990), 13.

<sup>2</sup> Neil Cole, *Organic Church: Growing Faith Where Life Happens* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 98.

### The Golden Arches Model of Leadership Development

Maxwell and Dornan define leadership as influence.<sup>3</sup> Leadership essentially entails two parties: the influencer and the influenced, and the influencer acts upon the influenced to transform them into influencers. From a biblical viewpoint, a leader influences others to love God and others (Matt 22:37-40). The following sections will address how leaders accomplish this task in church planting and ultimately create more leadership.

The letter “M,” or the “golden arches,” serves as a leadership model for church planting. Only when both arches come together and make a whole letter do they convey meaning. In this model, designed by this paper’s author, each arch represents a different role in relation to the process of leadership development.

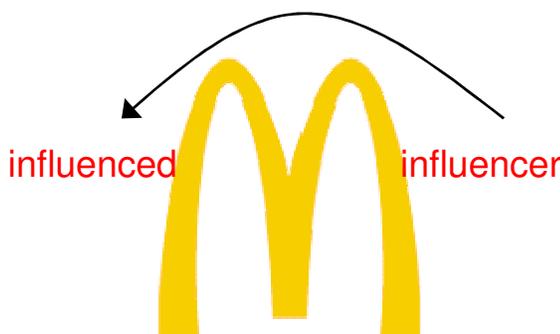


Figure 3: The Golden Arches of Leadership Development

Figure 4 illustrates a four-phase model of leadership development. Each phase is staggered in terms of the direct influence exerted by the primary leader, going from high

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<sup>3</sup> John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leaders around You* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1995), 49.

to low involvement. The Golden Arches of leadership development becomes the template to train leaders at all levels including: disciples, coaches, ministry leaders, and church planters. Each level serves as a platform to progress on into the next level based upon proven skill, not potential. In this model, the right side of the “M” represents the side of the influencer. The image unfolds as the right side slides into the left half and gradually slides back toward the right into position. Each time a new Golden Arch is completed, a new round of leadership development is set in motion.



Figure 4: Four Phases of Golden Arches Leadership Development

#### Four Levels of Golden Arches Leadership Development

The leadership development strategy outlined in this chapter functions along the lines of a 2x4 model. The two represents the two segments of leadership development: the influencer and the influenced. The four represents four levels of leadership and the four phases within each level. The four levels of leadership training include: disciple-making leaders, coaches, ministry leaders, and church planting teams. On each level, the same four-phase training system plays itself out: the facilitator (leader) provides 75

percent of the content during phase one, 50 percent in phase two, 25 percent in phase three, and 5 percent in phase four.

***Level #1: Disciple-Making Leaders***

Jesus' command to go and make disciples challenges contemporary believers to devise a biblically sound reproducible system to instruct people on how to obey Jesus' teachings (Matt 28:19). Jesus emphasized the actualization of His teaching and connecting with daily living. Based on this model, disciples would be able to "teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2) because the fruit of discipleship is not necessarily the individual disciple, but that person's disciple.

This model first uses what Bob Logan refers to as a "turbo group," which is a group intent upon raising leaders.<sup>4</sup> Ideally, two gender specific groups of three or four Christ-followers per group meet with the facilitator, or primary leader, every six weeks during weekend venues. Each venue emphasizes three aspects: orienting, experiencing, and learning. When considered together, these aspects train disciple-making disciples.

Leaders can help ensure the success of the initial turbo group by encouraging the right kind of people to participate. These initial participants should demonstrate love for God, a desire to progress in their walk with Him, a teachable attitude, the ability to interact well with others, and the discretionary time to meet regularly.

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<sup>4</sup> Robert E. Logan, "Raising and Multiplying Leaders in your Ministry" (seminar, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, October 27-November 7, 2003).

Table 3: Overview of The Golden Arches Disciple-Making Process

<b>Level of involvement by presenter</b>	<i>Phase 1: 75%</i>	<i>Phase 2: 50%</i>	<i>Phase 3: 25%</i>	<i>Phase 4: 5%</i>
<i>Orientation</i>	Demonstration: Disciple-making	Demonstration: Coaching	Learning teams	Coaching areas
<i>Experience</i>	Listening, Prayer, Disciple-making	Coaching one another; Prayer; Encouragement	Instructing one another	Problem-solving, Coaching one another
<i>Learning</i>	Listening to God, Discipleship, Easy system	Advantages of coaching	Leading disciples to instruct others	Reproducing system

#### Phase one of level #1: Leaders of disciple-makers

Facilitators invite participants to attend the first of four weekend training camps for disciple-makers. During the first session, the turbo group enjoys an evening meal together at a nearby retreat center, and then witnesses the disciple-making process in action. The facilitator guides a member of the turbo group through a session on disciple making, and participants watch, learn, and feel what it is like to mentor a new believer in the journey with Christ. A feedback session follows the activity and clarifies some of the major issues, benefits, and processes of making disciples without going into detail. The person having been discipled offers insight on the experience.

The first session should end with an orientation on listening skills. The facilitator gives a short introduction, emphasizes the importance of good listening in the discipleship process, and gives triads the opportunity to increase listening skill levels by

listening to one another and giving feedback. In this listening exercise, one member in the triad shares a childhood memory for three minutes, the second participant listens, and the third member keeps track of the time and offers insight on the listener's ability. The exercise challenges listeners to communicate the content of what was said along with the underlying feelings in their own words. The triad switches roles so that each member has the opportunity to speak, listen, and give feedback. After members have a turn, they reflect and discuss what they learned from the exercise.

The second day begins by teaching participants the process of learning to conduct a disciple-making session. The facilitator leads the group in discovering the make-up of a disciple by asking questions such as: "What is the outcome of the process?" and "What does a disciplined individual look like?" The facilitator records the answers on a flip chart under three headings: spiritual disciplines, character issues, and skill development. Participants then categorize their own lists under the three headings. The facilitator makes copies of each participant's list for all group members.<sup>5</sup> The facilitator emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is actively involved in the disciple-making process, the disciple-maker is an ally of the Spirit, and the Spirit's curriculum is often observed to be random rather than linear.

Next, the facilitator presents a simple process of guiding new disciples during the disciple-making sessions.<sup>6</sup> Each session commences with prayer, for God alone shapes

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 1.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 2.

His followers into the image of Christ. The leader reads Hebrews 12:1-2 and shares with the protégée where God works in everyday life to lay aside hindrances. The mentor explains to the new disciple that looking unto Jesus means putting off sin, for sin encumbers individuals in becoming like Christ, but the Holy Spirit lives within the believer and gives that person the power to overcome sin. Then the mentor asks the disciple: “What hindrance or sin is the Holy Spirit wanting to overcome in our lives and how can we cooperate with Him?” In order to foster an open posture, the facilitator shares personal issues that impede his or her own walk with Christ. As the disciple answers the question, the response reveals what issues he or she must address. The leader provides relevant Scripture passages and secondary literature to discuss and study for the next week.

Finally, the leader reads Acts 1:8, suggests that Jesus has called His followers to be His witnesses to a fallen world, and asks the new disciple: “Who do you know that needs to hear about Jesus from you?” The leader should record pertinent responses, important issues, assignments, and new discoveries for future reference and to monitor progress. In order to better aid the learning process, turbo group participants role-play disciple-making sessions with one another in their triads.

In a last combined session, the facilitator asks participants what they have learned about disciple-making. At this point, the facilitator provides the group with more insight and presents some of the assumptions behind the process of disciple-making, such as: Jesus made disciples by proactively approaching and inviting individuals to follow Him;

He began in the harvest and led His disciples back into the harvest; submission is the test of love and maturity for it mirrors what is in a person's heart; and learning is achieved in the doing, not simply in the hearing of truth.

The disciple-making process begins at the end of the weekend, and new believers come and join the turbo group for refreshments. The facilitator carefully selects, invites, and prepares these new believers to join in the process and pairs them with turbo group members. The turbo group members begin their own mentoring process and lead their disciples at the retreat center that evening. For the next eight weeks, members of the turbo group spend time weekly with their disciples in the disciple-making process.

#### Phase two of level #1: Leaders of disciple-makers

The second training camp for disciple-making occurs at a local retreat center. After the Friday evening meal, the facilitator leads the turbo group through sharing feedback on the issues that surfaced during the intervening six weeks of discipleship. Participants share positive change, which flows into a period of celebration in prayer. The evening serves to focus on both the successes and the challenges in the disciple-making process.

Saturday morning is dedicated to introducing the turbo group to coaching as a means of surmounting challenges. The facilitator acquaints the group with the five key steps to effective coaching as outlined by Logan and Reinecke in the *Coaching 101*

*Handbook*: relate, reflect, refocus, resource, and review.<sup>7</sup> Triads then use this tool to discuss the important discipleship issues raised during the previous evening, and the triads share their conclusions with one another. Each of the six disciple-makers will receive personal coaching attention by the facilitator twice during the next phase of mentoring their disciple. In the ensuing six weeks they will continue to meet with their disciple weekly and receive coaching.

In preparation for phase three the facilitator assigns homework to the group, which includes reading from *The Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster<sup>8</sup> and *Too Busy NOT to Pray* by Bill Hybels.<sup>9</sup> From the reading, group members identify one spiritual discipline, practice it, and come prepared to teach it to the others with a handout.

#### Phase three of level #1: Leaders of disciple-makers

Phases three and four take place on a Saturday at a local retreat center. In phase three, the turbo group experiences what it is like to be involved in a learning community. The day begins with the facilitator leading them to teach one another from their experience and their reading.

The second half of the day provides feedback from both the coaching and the ongoing discipleship of group members. The triads discuss challenges and share their

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<sup>7</sup> Robert E. Logan and Gary B. Reinecke, *Coaching 101 Handbook* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1998).

<sup>9</sup> Bill Hybels, *Too Busy Not to Pray: Slowing Down to be with God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988).

responses with the entire group. During the last segment of the day, the facilitator aids group members in guiding their disciples to begin discipling their own disciples. The facilitator will address issues such as: believer/non-believer, how to identify a good prospect, and motivating the disciple to disciple someone.

In the ensuing six weeks before the final phase of disciple-making, the turbo group continues to meet with their disciples, provide coaching for disciples as they disciple, and they continue to benefit from being coached by the facilitator. The facilitator assigns them to choose another spiritual discipline to practice and on which to report, and to work on another character issue.

#### Phase four of level #1: Leaders of disciple-makers

The turbo group meets for the last time on a Saturday, and during this session the facilitator gives little input. The facilitator leads the group to teach spiritual disciplines and character development allowing time for sharing feedback and reflection. The facilitator encourages group members to invite their own disciples to join the next Golden Arches Turbo group and to sign on for the next level of leadership training. One or perhaps two of the group members will be asked to facilitate the next process of leading another turbo group to become disciple-makers. The facilitator and the turbo group celebrate the goodness of God in making disciples over a meal.

Over the six-month process these six individuals make great progress, new skills, grown in their own walk with the Lord, and experienced what it means to make disciples. They become acquainted with a reproducible method of disciple-making, benefited from

the power of triads and learning communities, learned rudimentary coaching techniques, become skilled in problem-solving, and the facilitator invites individuals to participate in the next level of coaching.

***Level #2: Coaches Helping Leaders***

Coaches enable others to do what they could not do on their own. Many disciples and ministry participants either lose their way or lose heart if they go it alone. In many ways Jesus coached His disciples: He showed them the way, kept them on the path, and helped them to reach specific goals. In this phase of discipleship training, a coach will teach new leaders and keep them on the right track.

At this point in the process, turbo group members have successfully become disciples who train new disciples and have proven themselves to be leaders. They next face the challenge of aiding ministry leaders in reaching their goals by coaching them through their personal and ministry development.

## Phase one of level #2: Coaches

This phase follows the same sequence as in level one: six months of training interspersed with four training phases. The training takes place at a nearby retreat center with the first two sessions on Friday and Saturday, and the last two on Saturdays.

The process begins as the facilitator coaches a ministry leader in front of the new turbo group. Afterwards, the facilitator asks the group to share the insights gained by observing the coaching encounter and records the information on a flip chart. The facilitator then assigns triads to discuss the benefits of coaching within a church ministry setting. After a period, the entire group meets and shares findings. The Friday night session ends as the group brings itself and the coaching process before the Lord in prayer.

After breakfast on Saturday morning, the facilitator introduces the participants to the first part of the coaching process and emphasizes the present. The facilitator coaches an individual through the first two segments: relate and reflect. Figure 5 outlines the questions coaches use to guide themselves through an efficient and results-oriented session. Triads explore the today-phase of the coaching process and participate in a feedback session with the entire group to address the process and relevant issues.

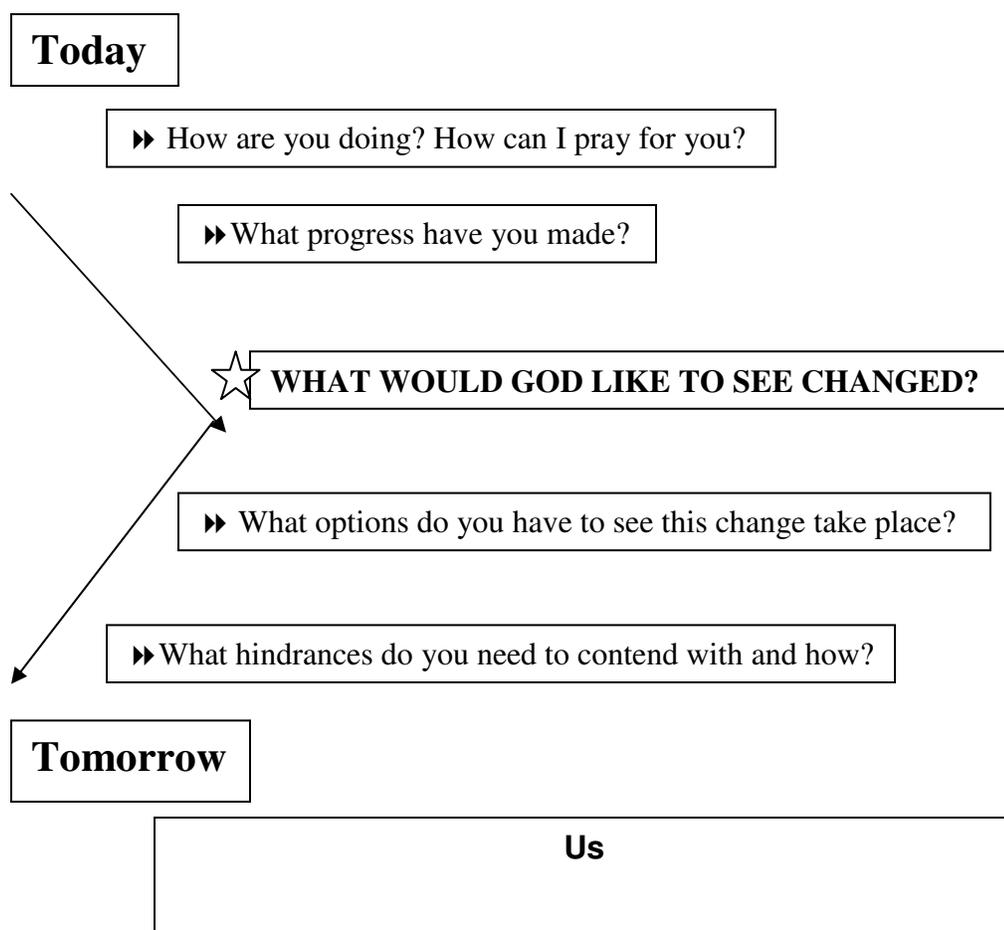


Figure 5: The Coaching Process

In a second round of triad-based coaching, participants practice the latter half of the coaching process, which pertains to refocus, resource, and review. This part of the coaching process emphasizes tomorrow and the future. An open feedback session follows the exercise, and participants share their insights and struggles.

During a final session, the facilitator addresses some of the assumptions and the benefits of coaching. In the afternoon, six leaders who are willing to be coached join the

turbo group for refreshments. Coaches pair up with their leaders and conduct their first coaching session on site at the retreat center. In the ensuing six weeks before the next phase of the coaching training, participants conduct two coaching sessions with their leaders.

#### Phase two of level #2: Coaches

After six weeks, the turbo group shares a Friday supper and meets with the facilitator to share feedback on coaching process. The facilitator should anticipate challenges and introduce the group to the G.R.O.W. model of strategic planning.<sup>10</sup> Each triad discusses two problems or issues that surfaced during the coaching process, and uses the G.R.O.W. model as a guide to discover solutions. At the end of the exercise, the triads share their solutions in a large group.

On Saturday, the facilitator presents information on how to access and use more tools for better coaching. The facilitator addresses issues such as: the use of open versus closed questions, guided questions given to the person to be coached before the session, tracking coaching progress, and problem-solving. As the facilitator introduces concepts, pairs or triads work through the information.

Over the next six-week period participants continue to coach their leader. The facilitator assigns them to read either Dennis C. Kinlaw's book, *Coaching for*

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<sup>10</sup> G.R.O.W stands for "Goal-setting, Reality, Options, What will you do?" See: John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance: GROWing People, Performance and Purpose*, 3<sup>d</sup> ed. (London: Nicholas Brealey, 2003), 57-96.

*Commitment*<sup>11</sup> or John Whitmore's *Coaching for Performance*.<sup>12</sup> At the next phase of coaching training, the participants prepare to teach others one of the topics presented in their reading.

#### Phase three of level #2: Coaches

The turbo group meets together on Saturday morning and afternoon. After a short devotional and a prayer time, participants share what they can celebrate about the coaching they have experienced thus far. The facilitator leads the group in teaching one another from the assigned reading, and participants share results. Each participant reflects individually on how he or she will teach his or her leader to coach someone else. The triads share their future plans and participants pray for one another. The facilitator instructs the turbo group to continue coaching while leading their leaders to coach another person.

#### Phase four of level #2: Coaches

Coaches and leaders meet together for several hours on Saturday morning, and coaches and new leaders gather together in separate triads. The facilitator assigns triads to discuss what they learned from the coaching process and to share their discoveries with the other group. In a second round of questions, triads discuss how the coaching process could be improved in the future. At the end of the session, the facilitator invites the new

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<sup>11</sup> Dennis C. Kinlaw, *Coaching for Commitment: Interpersonal Strategies for Obtaining Superior Performance from Individuals and Teams*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, 1999).

<sup>12</sup> Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance*.

leaders to participate in the next turbo group for coaching training and the coaches to participate in the next level of leadership training, which encompasses the training of ministry leaders. After a time of prayer of gratitude, the facilitator and the coaches celebrate their coaching journey together over dinner.

### ***Level #3: Ministry Leaders***

Exercising leadership over a ministry area differs from coaching or disciple-making, so it requires special training in the leadership development matrix. Ministry leaders often carry heavy responsibilities, but because of their position of authority, their own needs for training often go unrecognized. Ministry leaders must learn to be healthy leaders who lead healthy teams who contribute to healthy ministries.

#### Phase one of level #3: Ministry leaders

In preparation for the process, participants read Maxwell's *Developing the Leader Within You* and *Developing the Leaders around You*,<sup>13</sup> Logan and George's *Leading and Managing your Church*, and the *DISC Profile*.<sup>14</sup> The format for this experience includes six months of training for ministry leaders with the first two venues occurring on a weekend at a local retreat center.

After the Friday evening supper, the facilitator presents the simple model of ministry health to the turbo group. Each triad will generate a list of issues pertaining to

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<sup>13</sup> John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader within You* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1993); Maxwell, *Developing the Leaders around You*.

<sup>14</sup> John G. Geier, *DISC Profile* (Minneapolis: Performax Systems International, 1984).

each of the three areas of ministry health and share their responses with the entire group. The training process addresses the needs and challenges of the three areas of ministry health, and the facilitator gives each participant three folders to organize their recorded insights.

The facilitator presents an overview of the *DISC Profile* and asks participants to share their personal profile, and underscores the descriptions that pertain to them uniquely. The facilitator provides more insight by highlighting both how the different behavioral styles can irritate others and how participants can better adjust to the behavioral styles of others. The facilitator outlines a scenario in which a volunteer with a high I style has demonstrated unacceptable behavior such as poor preparation or missing assignments. Triads work together to find ways of deal with the individual in the scenario, and then do the same for high D, I, and C behavioral styles described in the *DISC Profile*.

On Saturday, the facilitator reminds the group that leadership is influence and that Jesus influenced people toward greater love for God, one another, and toward accomplishing God's purposes. The facilitator distributes four sections of Matthew and asks teams of two to identify the ways Jesus influenced others. The teams share their discoveries with the broader group and discuss the many ways Jesus' leadership contrasts with secular leadership.

The author of this paper believes discovering a ministry's direction and impact is a matter of hearing from God. German philologist and theologian Friso Melzer asserted

that if one does not know the goal, that person cannot travel down the path. If one cannot travel down the path, one will not reach the goal. The goal is God's vision for His ministry given to those whom He has called to attain His vision. According to this model, the facilitator helps ministry leaders aid their teams in discovering God's vision for their ministry. Using Nehemiah as a guide, the facilitator underscores the need for prayer, asking God for His vision, seeing the need and what can be accomplished through meeting it, and what competencies and skills are required.

The facilitator assigns ministry leaders to lead their teams in the process of vision acquisition through prayer. Leaders meet twice with their volunteers in the ensuing six weeks and lead them through the discovery process. The leaders share their written results with each other at the next gathering.

#### Phase two of level #3: Ministry leaders

After the Friday evening supper, ministry leaders share the results of the vision discovery process. The facilitator helps the group discuss the benefits in ministry teams glimpsing their work through God's eyes, then presents material on goal-setting. Only through specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic, and time-phased goals (SMART) can a vision become reality. Ministry leaders generate three to five performance goals that contribute to the overarching vision. Leaders present their goals and the triads critique them according to the SMART model. Leaders shepherd their ministry teams through their own goal-setting process.

On Saturday, the facilitator helps ministry leaders gain skill in mapping out action plans based upon their goals. Using pertinent sections of *Leading and Managing your Church*, leaders develop action plans that translate into a waterfall diagram, beginning with target dates and working backwards. Ministry leaders present their results to the larger group and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their action plans in triads. Leaders aid their teams in crafting SMART goals and help them devise their own action plans.

#### Phase three of level #3: Ministry leaders

Ministry leaders convene on a Saturday morning in the church facility for breakfast. After a biblical word of encouragement by the facilitator and a time of combined prayer, leaders briefly share their teams' progress in defining performance goals and action plans. The facilitator reminds the group of the ministry health paradigm and leads into the topic of team-building.

Ministry requires sharing life together, enjoying and thriving in mutual acceptance and encouragement, and leaders must understand how a biblical community benefits from a covenant among its members. Covenants communicate the values behind the actions of the group. Two triads form and one lists the downside of not having a covenant, while the other explores the advantages of having one. The triads share their responses.

Ministry teams join the leaders for lunch, and the ministry leaders begin shepherding their teams through the covenant crafting process. Leaders continue this

process in two succeeding meetings with their teams in the next six weeks. Beyond this, ministry leaders are requested to define one or two persons in their current team they could train to become ministry leaders.

#### Phase four of level #3: Ministry leaders

On Saturday morning, the group shares breakfast and a devotional by the facilitator on God being a covenant-abiding God. Leaders share progress in the areas of performance goals, action plans, covenants, and future ministry leaders. After a time of worship and prayer, the facilitator teaches the importance of building into the individual lives of team members through coaching. To demonstrate, one leader coaches another leader who takes on the role of one of his team member, and leaders hone their coaching skills within the triad constellation leaders. The facilitator offers the group several new ways of structuring and recording coaching conversations, and encourages leaders to meet together with other leaders in triads for coaching as they continue leading their team members and ministries. Leaders begin coaching their team members regularly.

The facilitator ends the session by reminding the group that they have entered into a cyclical process including vision prayer, goal-setting, action plans, team-building, and coaching. The facilitator looks to these ministry leaders to become the core group for the last level of leadership development, church planting. At the end, the group shares a meal to celebrate progress and successes.

#### ***Level #4: Church Planters***

The author of this paper believes a truly healthy church can successfully reproduce itself. The New Testament describes a series of successful church plantings: The church in Syrian Antioch took root, originating in Jerusalem, and the Holy Spirit set apart Paul and Barnabas to plant churches in Asia Minor from Antioch. Roland Allen argues that Paul planted churches that spread out regionally.

In little more than ten years St. Paul established the Church in four provinces of the Empire, Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia and Asia. Before AD 47 there were no churches in these provinces; in AD 57 St. Paul could speak as if his work there was done, and could plan extensive tours into the far west without anxiety lest the churches which he founded might perish in his absence for want of his guidance and support.<sup>15</sup>

Healthy churches reproduce themselves regionally and cross-culturally. Successful church planting requires this optimistic vision and a modus operandi that facilitates the training of church planters. These church planters must come from the ranks of the non-formally theologically trained, and must be generated by churches which become training grounds for church planting teams. The Golden Arches leadership development model serves as a template in accomplishing this feat.

#### Phase one of level #4: Church planters

Those invited to this last level of training have proved themselves to be successful disciple-makers. Experience as coaches or ministry leaders is helpful, but not essential.

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<sup>15</sup> Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St Paul's Or Ours?* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1962), 3.

Ideally the group includes anywhere from five to eight people. This training aims to empower a team of dedicated Christ-followers to launch and sustain a new church.

Participants meet together on a Friday evening over a meal at a local retreat center. In preparation, participants read through the book of Acts and the first couple of sections in Logan and Ogne's *The Church Planter's Toolkit*.<sup>16</sup> The facilitator leads the group about what excites them about planting a church and any fears related to it. The group shares a time of worship and prayer, and focuses attention on Jesus, the Lord of the Church. The facilitator then presents two twenty-minute units on the principles from the life and teaching of Jesus for church planting and the Holy Spirit in church planting. A second prayer session follows these lessons.

After Saturday's breakfast and a worship time, the facilitator presents two teaching modules on the topic of church planting discussed in Acts and the Pauline Cycle presented in David Hesselgrave's *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*.<sup>17</sup> Participants share some of the highlights in triads. Before the group breaks for lunch, the facilitator presents Matthew 9:35-38 where Jesus directed the disciples' attention to the harvest, and the facilitator emphasizes the principle that the compassionate heart follows the seeing-eye. The lost must be seen before their lostness can be felt. After lunch, triads travel to the target area for church planting, spend two hours watching people, and ask the Lord to

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<sup>16</sup> Robert E. Logan and Steven L. Ogne, *Church Planter's Toolkit* (Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart, 1998).

<sup>17</sup> David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: A Guide for Home and Foreign Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980).

make known their needs. Afterwards, the group shares insights over coffee. The facilitator assigns group members to experience two half-day prayer walks together.

#### Phase two of level #4: Church planters

Following the Friday evening meal and a time of worship, participants share their insights of the harvest field produced by prayerfully being among the harvest. The facilitator leads participants through the *DISC Profile*, and helps participants better understand the behavioral patterns. The group becomes acquainted with the value of a group covenant and begins to identify two or three values to define team life.

After worship on Saturday morning, participants form two groups. Each group takes a stack of Post-it notes and a roll of newsprint. The facilitator gives groups an arbitrary date of one year hence upon which to conduct their first worship service. Their assignment involves generating all the necessary steps to start the church on the Post-it notes and order them on a segmented monthly time line. Each group shares the results with the other. The facilitator leads them through a SWOT analysis, and the groups share their insights.

After lunch, participants revisit the group covenant and possibly add one or two more values. The facilitator assigns them the rest of Logan's *Church Planter's Toolkit*, and to each interview three non-Christians friends. Participants should ask: Many people today do not attend church anymore: why not, in your opinion? What would a church need to be like in order for you to attend? With what issues are you most concerned in your every day life?

#### Phase three of level #4: Church planters

Participants meet together for breakfast on a Saturday morning. During that time they share the results of their surveys and what the interviewing process meant to them. After worship and prayer, the facilitator addresses the various roles represented on a church planting team: the leader, children's worker, speaker, musician, administrator, technician, and evangelist. Participants discuss which individual would be best suited for each role.

The group must understand the challenges of church planting and the inherent obstacles, so the facilitator ask triads to list five of the biggest obstacles to successful church planting. After sharing their results together, triads exchange lists and come up with possible solutions to these difficulties. The group then revisits its covenant and agrees upon five to eight values.

During lunch and through the afternoon coffee time, a church planting team from another area in Germany arrives and shares their experiences with the group. Based upon the insights provided by the visitors, the group generates a final church planting strategy, a time-line, and assigns individuals to each goal.

#### Phase four of level #4: Church planters

After worship, prayer, and breakfast, the group revisits their covenant and presents their church planting strategy. The facilitator leads the team through a SWOT analysis, and the team makes adjustments accordingly. The facilitator assigns a coach to

the team to support them and help them stay on the course. The team discusses ways in which to involve the mother church, gain prayer, and generate financial support. The team sets a commissioning date, team members pray for one another, and give glory to God. The team and facilitator celebrate their progress and God's goodness by enjoying a meal together.

#### Values Reflected in the Golden Arches Leadership Development Model

Values ultimately drive behavior, and the underlying assumptions that serve to make the Golden Arches leadership development model operative have to do with learning. The following values shape this leadership model:

1. Learning means doing: Contemporary western education tends to be knowledge-based, and students learn through understanding concepts, providing the right answers, and finishing a program of study. The Hebrew concept of learning, however, requires students to put into practice what they learn. In the Old Testament, the righteous and wise individuals actively pursue God-ordained behavior. While much of contemporary Christian training is knowledge-based, the Golden Arches model mandates that participants learn through engaging themselves. Jesus calls believers to "teach them to observe all that I commanded you" (Matt 28:20). Jesus wants His followers to practice what they learn, and obedience is the test for learning.

2. Learning means making progress without being overwhelmed by what is to be learned, Neil Cole suggests learners should take on challenges one at a time, always one

more thing. Learning means learning together in community.<sup>18</sup> Ministry and learning happens together, and no one individual has all the answers, is strong all the time, or is continually highly motivated and engaged. In learning together, however, team members can experience the spiritual dynamics of the many “one another” passages found in the Apostle Paul’s writings, which Bonhoeffer wrote about in *Life Together*.<sup>19</sup>

3. Learning means relating: The fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) grows out of healthy relationships. Only in relationship can one learn to forgive, love, be patient, not be envious, and help carry another’s burdens. Spiritual formation often takes place in a relational context. When God speaks clearly to His children, they will live His words among other people. God’s classroom is relationships (Matt 11:29).

4. Learning means learning to reproduce: Giftedness and intuition are not transferable. A person with a plethora of Christian leadership experience often cannot pass it on to others. The Golden Arches leadership development model is a systematic process that multiplies leaders and promotes healthy leadership skills. This model keeps learning flowing in the direction of another person that influences the person for Christ.

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<sup>18</sup> Cole, *Organic Church*.

<sup>19</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, trans. Daniel W. Bloesch and James H. Burtness (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress), 1995.

## **Conclusion**

Reaching more Germans for Christ necessitates generating more churches. These new churches must look and move outward and promote healthy growth continually. In order for them to multiply, they must have healthy internal systems of multiplication, and these systems must concentrate on making disciples that can make disciples. In this training system, only proven disciple-makers will be invited and trained as coaches. These will form the pool of ministry leaders provide church planting teams. Trained and motivated leaders can start a viable church planting movement in Germany and support this paper's thesis that such a movement is possible through radical action.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### LEADERSHIP FOR A CHURCH PLANTING MULTIPLICATION MOVEMENT

We are trying to organize life into being  
instead of being organisms imparting life.

E. Stanley Jones, *The Christ of Every Road*<sup>1</sup>

Churches rarely drift into multiplication; instead, multiplication occurs when leaders intentionally seek it, long for it, work hard at it, and are granted it by the Spirit of God. As the Apostle Paul worked with all his might to see Christ formed in his spiritual offspring (Col 1:28-29), the leaders of CPMs must exert their wills and wrestle for multiplication. Presently Europe has no precedent for leaders to follow, and the rules, principles, insights, and disciplines for successful church planting are often unclear. In many ways this challenge is like “travelling naked in the land of uncertainty.”<sup>2</sup>

Church planting multiplication requires deep change that leaves behind satisfaction with incremental change, casts all available resources toward the mission, and hopes God will bless exponentially. Based upon past behavior and current decline, the German Protestant church may be doomed to a slow demise. While the Free Churches, with few exceptions, have demonstrated slow growth, they have had little

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<sup>1</sup> E. Stanley Jones, *The Christ of Every Road* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1930), 248.

<sup>2</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, 12.

sociological impact. Multiplication challenges leaders to learn a new kind of leadership and disciplines to alter ministry practices radically.

God wants to accomplish things in the world beyond human capacity. Only through the blessing and power of the triune God can a church planting multiplication movement in Germany succeed. Leaders must, therefore, put faith and trust in God to guide them through the process. Church planting by addition is no longer an option because the need for growth in Germany is so great. For better results, leaders must seek better means, and these are reflected in the following multiplication principles, the gerunds of a church planting movement for Germany.

### **Church Planting Multiplication Principles**

#### Positioning

The title of this dissertation, *Creating and Sustaining a Church Planting Multiplication Movement in Germany*, is slightly misleading because only God can create. Human beings, however, can place themselves in a position before God so they can support God's work and message in the creation of a movement.

The biblical principles behind positioning include surrender and abiding. Surrender to Christ is the outward act of voluntary inward joyous submission. When individuals surrender themselves to God and His will, He can move them to serve His purposes. "The LORD sustains the humble" (Psa 147:6) and draws near to those who humbly draw near to Him (James 4:8-10). Ongoing discipleship requires surrender

because true disciples must take up the cross daily (Luke 9:23). In surrender, believers let go of personal goals and remember they serve God’s ministry.

The principle of abiding works alongside surrender. The vine in John 15 is meant to produce a product that is useful and delightful to humanity. “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). The “much fruit” relies upon one “remaining” in the vine. Jesus expects His disciples to be effective and produce something useful, but their fruit only grows through the power of the vine. Intimacy with Christ results in the “good works” to which He has ordained them (Eph 2:10). An intimate union with the Lord allows “the sheep to know his voice” (John 10:4).

So our union with God—his presence with us, in which our aloneness is banished and the meaning and full purpose of human existence is realized—*consists chiefly in a conversational relationship with God while we are each consistently and deeply engaged as his friend and colaborer in the affairs of the kingdom of the heavens.*<sup>3</sup>

Surrender and abiding must form the character of the church planter. Thomas Keller and J. Allen Thompson refer to this as one’s spiritual integrity, or the “one basic essential” of church planting leadership.<sup>4</sup> Leaders of church planting multiplication must seek retreat in Christ before they begin their work for Christ, or they will produce an ecclesiastical product without a true spiritual substance. A humble heart and bended knee allow church planters serve in terms of a God-sized multiplication. While planning to

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<sup>3</sup> Dallas Willard, *Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 56. (Italics Willard)

<sup>4</sup> Timothy J. Keller and J. Allen Thompson, *Redeemer Church Planting Center: Church Planter Manual* (New York: The Church Planting Center, 2002), 61.

create something new is good, listening and acting upon God's direction is better. Any movement toward church multiplication must take this into account and act on it.

Positioning for hearing God's call requires an upper room posture, and Pentecost occurred while they were "all joined together constantly in prayer" (Acts 1:14). In observing the histories of spiritual awakening, Jones noted: "To its cause and center [spiritual awakening] has always been found in a prayer life that was beyond the ordinary."<sup>5</sup> Leaders should set an example and spend their time purposely posturing to hear God through prayer. This behavior demonstrates the value of surrender and abiding. David Garrison comments on the great place prayer has in a CPM:

We pray because our vision exceeds our abilities. Prayer is the soul's deepest cry of rebellion against the way things are, seeing the lost of this world crying out, "This does not glorify God, and so, by God's grace, it must change!" Prayer comes from God and ascends back to God on behalf of those who do not know God. Extraordinary prayer lays a firm foundation for a Church Planting Movement.<sup>6</sup>

Leaders should begin a CPM at a place of indirection because the power of indirection is the power of the spiritual disciplines. Dallas Willard defines the spiritual disciplines as "any activity within our power that we engage in to enable us to do what we cannot do by direct effort."<sup>7</sup> No human being can create a CPM based upon his or her work, and Church planters must position themselves to carry out God's mission and God's will.

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<sup>5</sup> E. Stanley Jones, *The Christ of Every Road* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1930), 247.

<sup>6</sup> Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, 176-77.

<sup>7</sup> Willard, *Divine Conspiracy*, 353.

## Visioning

The future tense drives a CPM. Jesus had vision and saw beyond the present moment into the future. When He took His disciples to a place where they could glimpse vast multitudes of people, He was moved with compassion (Matt 9:36). Jesus introduced His followers to an important spiritual principle: the compassionate heart follows the seeing eye. God helps believers see human need and relate that need to the harvest through visioning, and need lets church planters glimpse the preferable future harvest. The Apostle Paul received a similar vision from Jesus when he said that in Corinth the Lord had “many people in this city” (Acts 18:10). In order to endure the rigors of church planting, Paul needed to see with God’s eyes and be convinced of a harvest waiting to happen.

The author of this paper believes church planting in Germany has not led to movements because traditional church planters are consumed by daily ministry work and cannot see the future. Ministering among the reached can blind one to the presence of the unreached. This principle is essential for German church planting multiplication.

A CPM requires a system to oversee, coordinate, and direct its activities. The system should facilitate a CPM, and not control it because control ultimately stamps out life generated by the Spirit of God. Facilitation, however, discovers what God is doing and encourages life so it spreads, grows, and leads others to discern God’s work. A team of leaders should be responsible to keep the vision for CPM constantly in front of churches and leaders. A CPM-Team (CPMT) is a group of leaders that casts vision and provides leadership for church planting multiplication through God’s movement. Besides

vision casting, the CPMT can also communicate church planting values, offer on-going training, evaluate church planters within a coaching system, communicate the vision, offer problem-solving, lead the way in prayer and inspiration, help raise finances, and rely on the dynamic of the Spirit of God as the power source. The CPMT is another term for Garrison's Strategy Coordinator. "A strategy coordinator is a missionary who takes responsibility for developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy – one that would partner with the whole body of Christ – to bring an entire people group to faith in Jesus Christ."<sup>8</sup>

### Rewiring

From a CMP perspective, the German Church is in desperate need of a radical ecclesiastical rewiring. Ecclesiastical tradition defines a church through its building, clergy, finances, and parochial structure. An examination of the early church in the New Testament, however, reveals a church of mostly non-professional leaders, absence of cultic housing, and hand-to-mouth finances. The disparity between these two visions can cause contemporary Germans to reconsider their definition of church.

CPMs should redefine their concept of church through a proximity to Jesus as Life-Source and Lord. The indictment of the religious protocol was actually a divine commendation: "When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men

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<sup>8</sup> Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, 17.

had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). Before Jesus sent His disciples out to minister to others, He called them to be with Him (Mark 3:14).

The ecclesiastical edifice and the necessity of professional theological qualifications for pastors in Germany complicates matters for a CPM. Spiritual authorities consider only a very small minority capable of spiritual leadership and believe church can only occur in specialized designated housing. A CPM, however, can break away from this tradition and focus upon who a person is rather than upon one’s credentials. House churches, are part of every CPM, and result from a rewired emphasis on non-professional leadership.<sup>9</sup>

### Networking

Successful church planting multiplication needs wisdom and encouragement from others, and a German CPM must humbly seek inspiration and insight from other movements around the world. The Kingdom of God is denominationally blind, so a German CPMT should also be blind to the theologies and politics that often prohibit learning from others. German CPMs must branch out cross-denominationally and worldwide to see the Lord generate fruitful church planting.

Proper networking can provide resources and stimulation for a movement, and this is especially crucial in a country in which a CPM has functioned. A German CPM has much to gain and learn through study and interaction with international planting

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 191-193.

leadership. Networking opens up new vistas of grace that God has given other nations and ministries in the hopes that He would do the same in Germany.

### Reproducing

Reproducible systems must be in place to facilitate true multiplication. Chapter 7 examined the reproducible system on the local level. Reproducing systems in the local church are the seedbed for multiplication of churches planted.

Reproduction is one way to overcome a stilted dependence upon giftedness, and Quinn refers to this dependence in corporations as the “tyranny of competence.”<sup>10</sup> The more unique an individual’s contribution to an organization, the more dependent the organization becomes upon such individuals. Many fine ministries are built upon the gifts of their leaders, but once the leadership leaves, the ministry may flounder and stagnate. Systems of reproduction integrate and maximize individual giftedness and compensate for inadequacies. They help the leader overcome an innate reliance upon his or her strengths to see the ministry progress into the future.

These systems must be measured by the health of the churches they generate and by the number planted, and quality will determine quantity. According to Garrison, churches that are four generations removed from their mother church have demonstrated the value of reproduction and are part of a CPM.<sup>11</sup>

Garrison warns of sequentialism as a hindrance to church multiplication. Multiplication is not a linear reproductive movement, but combines many steps that all

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<sup>10</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, 115-120.

<sup>11</sup> Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, 193.

occur simultaneously. Garrison writes: “When missionaries are yoked to sequentialism, they lose their sense of urgency.”<sup>12</sup>

### Empowering

“Staff and leadership team members must shift from seeing their role as performers to seeing themselves as developers.”<sup>13</sup> Those who have effectively planted churches should empower others. By helping others become successful, shepherding them toward greater effectiveness, and reducing their failure quota, proven church planters can support the movement in a new way.

After advising Steven Sample on using 10 percent of his time hiring and evaluating his staff George Clements suggested: “For the remaining 90 percent of your time you should be doing *everything you can* to help your direct reports succeed. You should be the first assistant to the people who work for you.”<sup>14</sup> The Apostle Paul adopted a similar method in his church planting work and rarely pastored the churches he planted. “Instead he focused on empowering the local believers to minister, who would as laymen carry on and expand the work after his departure. . . . With this model the question, ‘Who will replace the missionary pastor?’ never arises, because the missionary never becomes the pastor.”<sup>15</sup> A CPM should follow this apostolic church planting model and focus upon

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 244.

<sup>13</sup> Reggie McNeal, *Revolution in Leadership: Training Apostles for Tomorrow’s Church* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 91.

<sup>14</sup> Steven B. Sample, *The Contrarian’s Guide to Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 121.

<sup>15</sup> Craig Ott, “Matching the Church Planter’s Role with the Church Planting Model,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 37 (July 2001): 340.

the church planters rather than the work of planting churches.<sup>16</sup> “The innovative elements of the Pauline model . . . are the turning away from the traveling-missionary or mission journey approach and to the formation of ‘center missions;’ the development of a system of coworkers.”<sup>17</sup>

Chapter 7 outlines the means of empowering others as a proven coaching system. Realistically, in a CPMT of five members, each person could coach five church planters and influence the development of twenty-five emerging churches.

### Pruning

Jesus suggested that a periodic cleansing could increase the movement’s effectiveness when He referred to the pruning of dead or unproductive branches in His image of the vine. The Father as vinedresser “cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful” (John 15:2).

New responsibilities emerge as ministries develop, but often leaders do not thoroughly examine the validity of these new assignments. Periodic evaluation of a ministry’s real needs helps sustain the greater mission. Ministries are organic, changing, and constantly developing, and refocusing helps clarify God’s will.

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<sup>16</sup> See: Glenn Kendall, “Missionaries Should Not Plant Churches,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* (July 1988): 218-221.

<sup>17</sup> Roger W. Gehring, *House Church and Mission: The Importance of Household Structures in Early Christianity* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 181.

## Celebrating

John Adams told his Harvard-bound son, “Everything in life should be done with reflection.”<sup>18</sup> Reflecting requires more than evaluating, although it includes evaluation. Reflection is part of the Sabbath principle of ministry in which individuals rejoice and delight in what God has accomplished through His followers. Such rejoicing is celebratory and leads to thanksgiving. God encourages individuals through celebration because when they see the many good things the Lord has done, it encourages them to trust Him even more. As God’s followers celebrate, they anticipate His blessing.

### **Barriers to a Church Planting Multiplication Movement in Germany**

Identifying the many barriers to a church planting multiplication movement in Germany is the first step toward overcoming them. Major barriers include: adherence to conventionalism, lack of vision, lack of alternate models, and professional clergy.

Conventionalism refers to planting churches in the traditional manner with slow growth and limited or no reproduction. Conventionalism ties church planting to the past, and these unhealthy methods continue to effect new churches grown from an old process.

Garrison comments:

When you teach your first churches to labor for many years under a missionary pastor while waiting to receive their own seminary trained leader; then require the church to purchase their own property and building; fill it with enough tithing members to support all of the above, you can’t expect them to generate rapidly reproducing daughter churches.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> David McCullough, *John Adams* (New York: Touchstone, 2001), 259.

<sup>19</sup> Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, 195.

A lack of vision for church planting multiplication stifles the possibility of a major movement. The Apostle Paul thought in regional terms and longed for the gospel to penetrate entire territories. Often contemporary church planting in Germany has a myopic view. Church planters become too easily satisfied with a mother church having planted a daughter church, or seeing one church of its persuasion established in a large city.

Many church planters simply lack alternate models of how to plant churches for reproduction. These planters will never minister in a different fashion because they do not know any other means to plant churches. Church planters must be coached in multiplication methods, learn from the examples of CPMs on other continents, and network with CPM strategy coordinators to overcome the low-yield of planting through addition.

Valuing only the formally trained, ordained, and professional clergy limits church planting multiplication in Germany. Martin Luther's reforms did not reform the way ministry is done and by whom. The reformation brought the gospel back to the church, but the laity did not become ministers, and in the contemporary world, professional clergy dominate and shape the church. Greg Ogden advocates a "New Reformation" and asserts:

The traditional view of call and ordination restricts ministry to a few. But the New Reformation view through throws open the door of concrete call to all who have responded to the summons of Jesus Christ. There is not a few who have important things to do for God's kingdom, but it is the privilege and responsibility of all to cultivate God's voice in order to hear

the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit. What ministry can be released if only we believe in the full empowerment of God's people!<sup>20</sup>

Klaus Douglas also calls for a new Reformation to take hold in Germany. He suggests that the old Reformation transpired from the top down through the influence of strong leaders. The new Reformation, however, will not be personality-driven but will surface from the people of the church themselves.<sup>21</sup> Simply reforming the Church will be insufficient because that would only change one area of a complex system. A reformation, however, would radically change the entire entity of the Church.<sup>22</sup>

Christian Schwarz believes that a new reformation is in order that would apply the principles of the reformation to church life as it currently exists. "Our problem, however, is that the wonderful insights of the Reformation and Pietism are largely smothered in the mire of unsuitable structures. In the third reformation<sup>23</sup> we need to create structures which will be suitable vessels so that what the first two reformations demanded can be put into practice."<sup>24</sup>

Clergy-centered church planting is expensive. For example, in a Free Church it takes approximately fifty members to support a pastor and double that to support a pastor

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<sup>20</sup> Greg Ogden, *The New Reformation: Returning the Ministry to the People of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 214.

<sup>21</sup> Douglas, *Die Neue Reformation*, 41.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 37-38.

<sup>23</sup> Schwarz, *Paradigm Shift in the Church*. By Schwarz's definition the first reformation brought on by Martin Luther was one of doctrinal significance, and the second reformation, started by Philip Jakob Spener, was a reformation of piety and personal holiness. See: "Three Reformations" for further insight, 82-95.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 91-92.

and a building. Limited denominational funding leaves only enough resources to finance one or two new church planting projects annually.

In a country in with a high standard of living, property is expensive and even rental space for a fledgling church can be costly. Money that could be spent on evangelism and discipleship, the vanguards of church planting, is instead spent on facilities.

### **Initiating a Church Planting Multiplication Movement in Germany**

For the first 200 years the early Church met in homes and grew rapidly. The New Testament documents this phenomenon,<sup>25</sup> and Rodney Stark wrote: “Excavations of a Christian building show that during the middle of the third century a house church was extensively remodeled into a building entirely devoted to religious functions, after which all domestic activities ceased.”<sup>26</sup> The early Christian movement utilized private homes and valued worship spaces that enabled intimate communion. Germany must recapture this value to experience a church planting multiplication movement. Contemporary writers have advocated planting churches in homes, distinguishing between cell churches and house churches.

House churches differ from cell churches with respect to autonomy. Cell churches are groups of three to fifteen people that are connected to the larger church and support

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<sup>25</sup> Examples include: Acts 2:46, 5:42-46, 10:24, 33, 16:34, 18:8, 20:20; Romans 16:5; and Colossians 4:15.

<sup>26</sup> Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, 8.

its ministry. House churches, however, view themselves as the church, and are free from the constraints of financing either building or staff.

A general misconception of the concept of the church contributes to the lack of church being planted in Germany. Germans tend to consider a church in terms of European traditions rather than biblical understanding, and view the church as an institution rather than an organism. Ed Stetzer suggests a biblical definition of church:

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His word, and seeking to expand the gospel to the ends of the earth.<sup>27</sup>

This definition and New Testament texts omits references to buildings, size, and structure. While most Germans envision church in terms of a building and professional clergy, a CPM must work with a biblical concept of church in private homes with non-paid leadership where members are ministers.

Garrison asserts that a church planting multiplication movement must include the generation of house churches.<sup>28</sup> In a German context, cell churches are culturally more acceptable than house churches. The author of this paper believes generally Germans would be suspicious of house churches because of their low profile and lack of institutional recognition. Cell churches, however, benefit from a unified identity with a local church and a recognized national denomination. A German church planting

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<sup>27</sup> Ed Stetzer, *Planting New Churches in a Postmodern Age* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 172.

<sup>28</sup> Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, 191-193.

multiplication movement would purposefully foster cell-based church planting that emphasize mission, life transformation, reproduction, and territory.

### Mission

Home-based cell groups are naturally geared to the harvest. They begin with relatively new Christians as leaders and aim at gaining non-Christians as participants. These churches should not encourage believers to participate because the group's mission focuses upon reaching out to non-believers. The CPM team coaches the leaders for these cell groups and then seeks new participants who come to know Christ in the cell. The emphasis on new converts needing to become part of an existing church or "second conversion" has hindered missional church planting. Felicity Dale writes: "If new believers are added to an existing church, a great opportunity to spread the Gospel is lost. Never at any other stage will they have as many non-Christian friends and family as they do now. So why not teach the new believer how to witness to his friends and family and start a new church around him."<sup>29</sup>

### Life Transformation

Group discussions must focus upon a life changed by God rather than biblical information. The majority of Free Churches have in place small group structures. The weakness of many of these small groups, however, is an emphasis upon learning new biblical insights at the expense of not perceiving and experiencing Christ in their midst.

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<sup>29</sup> Felicity Dale, *Getting Started: A Practical Guide to Simple Church Planting*, 2d ed. (Calhan, CO: Karis, 2005), 134.

Culturally, Germans emphasize excellent education and task orientation, but this tends to cause an inability to foster and enjoy deeply fulfilling relationships with others. Cell groups must work counter to cultural impulses and be interactive, highly relational, and open to experience the presence of Christ. This value requires a biblically-based, relationally oriented curriculum that rests on two foundations: character development as seen in the life of Jesus and in the one another, and bondage issues due to sin and how to break free through Christ. Tying the groups to relational issues and ultimately to Christ as change agent transforms lives.

### Reproduction

Most small groups will never reproduce if left on their own. Bob Logan writes: “Multiplying is perceived as a potentially painful event, a split which severs relationships.”<sup>30</sup> Each missional cell group should be given an eighteen-month life-span. Leaders pray toward and expect growth that forms new groups from the existing groups. Those cells that have not identified a co-leader and have not grown must be disbanded after a year and a half. Not to disband would be to accept mindset of unhealthy non-growth at the expense of people yet unreached. Participants of disbanded groups will be encouraged to join more dynamic cells.

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<sup>30</sup> Robert E. Logan, *Beyond Church Growth* (Tarrytown, NY: Fleming H. Revell, 1989), 137.

### Territory

Paul thought in geographic regions and so do cell churches. Cell churches begin with the goal of seeing a missional cell established in each district of the church's city. Each district is summarily divided up into target neighborhoods. Groups begin where people live, and through reproduction, multiply and branch out to where Christ's presence and power are not yet known.

### Conclusion

The established Protestant Church in Germany has self-destructed due to its own deluded theology and spiritless leadership. The source of metaphysical reality in the Protestant Church is no longer ecclesiology. Martin Luther once referred to reason as a "whore," for when reason takes the place of revelation it entices the person away from God to idolatry. Matthias Horx labels contemporary German society as a "selfness-culture"<sup>31</sup> where people transgress through life with multiple identities, they do not possess any one and abiding identity, and vacillate between dependent and independent identities.<sup>32</sup>

Germans both thrive and suffer in such an ideological and spiritual vacuum. On the one hand, they thrive in a high standard of living, technology, longer life span, and greater mobility. On the other hand, they suffer from depression, unstable relationships, tenuous employment, diminishing social services, and fear of losing pensions and social

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<sup>31</sup> Matthias Horx, *Wie Wir Leben Werden: Unsere Zukunft Beginnt Jetzt* (How we will live: Our future begins now) (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2006), 306.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 300.

security. Followers of Jesus Christ, however, live in community with hope in uncertainty, joy in affliction, sharing in neediness, and faith in God where faith in man has proved utterly disappointing. The climate is ripe for church planting multiplication that will transform individuals and society.

“Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many church leaders wanted to see what you see but did not see it” (Luke 10:24). A church planting multiplication movement in Germany must be anchored in God’s heart and seen by leaders with the eyes of faith. To see with the eyes of faith requires that church leaders must avoid the ecclesial culture of the past and become sensitive to the spiritual and relational needs of contemporary society. This requires great courage and risk-taking, and demands that leaders re-learn how to minister Christ to others. As servants of the Lord and humanity, leaders must empower non-professional Christians to minister among their peers. Leaders of church planting multiplication in Germany should think in terms of generating healthy systems of reproduction.

Ultimately a CPM must trust God to do His own will, and this trust will be unshakable, indestructible, forward-looking, Christian-empowering, and engage in joyous behavior. This mindset will help realize God’s kingdom as His will and word spreads in Germany through a movement of rapidly planted and healthily growing churches. This dissertation has shown that drastic action must be taken in Germany and has offered a radical revision and new techniques to enable a successful church planting multiplication movement. Church planters who can see God’s kingdom in the future must promote it through bold action and faith in God’s plan.

## GLOSSARY

*Biblische Glaubensgemeinde*: The Biblical Faith Church, Stuttgart, one of the largest of a new type of independent charismatic church with a current membership of 2,300.

*Bekennniskirche*: Confessional Church, known for its creedal confession.

*Cujus regio, ejus religio*: The confession of the regent represents the religion of the subjects of his territory.

*Deutsche Evangelische Allianz (DEA)*: German Evangelical Alliance.

*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD)*: The established Protestant Church of Germany, a federation of twenty-three regional churches roughly corresponding to the geography of former kingdoms and counties.

*Gemeinde*: The word *ekklesia* is predominantly translated *Gemeinde* and refers to a fellowship of believers or to the local church.

*Grundgesetz*: Basic law or constitution.

*Iatrogenic*: A disorder, leading to illness or even death brought on inadvertently by direct medical intervention.

*Inland-Mission*: The church-planting arm of the Bund Freier evangelischer Gemeinden (Federation of Evangelical Free Churches).

*Kirche*: Derived from *Kyrios*, “belonging to the Lord,” it usually refers to the Church as an institution such as the Protestant or Roman Catholic Church.

*Konferenz für Gemeindegründung (KFG)*: Conference for Church Planting, an independent, non-charismatic, fundamentalist forum for church planting and church planters.

*Reichstag*: Legislative assembly of Germany made up of German princes and presided over by the Emperor.

*Staatskirche*: The State Church, or regional Church reflecting the confession of the regent.

*Vereinigung Evangelischer Freikirchen(VEF)*: Union of Free Church Denominations consisting of eight full member Free Church denominations and four guest member denominations.

*Volkskirche*: Church of the people; adherents of Christianity that had a common language, morals, and history.

*Volkstumskirche*: A National Church such as the German Aryan Church.

Appendix 1

Check List for Life Transformation

**Check List**

**The Holy Spirit moves where He wills—Growing in Jesus**

1. Spiritual Disciplines	2. Character	3. Competencies
1.1 Quiet time*	2.1 Love for God	3.1 Eternal security*
1.2 Repentance	2.2 Love for people	3.2 Bible study*
1.3 Service	2.3 Obedience	3.3 Victory over sin
1.4 Giving*	2. 4 Faithfulness	3.4 Praying with someone
1.5 Fasting*	2.5 Commitment	3.5 Oikos—Friends*
1.6 Meditation*	2.6 Humility vs. pride	3.6 Listening to someone
1.7 Being silent*	2.7 Honesty	3.7 Personal testimony*
1.8 Prayer*	2.8 Mercy	3.8 Explain the Gospel*
1.9 Memorizing Bible verses	2.9 Self-control	3.9 Spiritual diary*
1.10 In step with the Holy Spirit	2.10 Patience	3.10 Coaching*
	2.11 Friendliness	3.11 Delegating
	2.12 Generosity	3.12 Solving problems
	2.13 Gentleness	3.13 Leading a small group*

- In each area find fitting helps that provide these characteristics:
  - Easy to understand
  - Easy to put into practice
  - Easy to verify
  - Easy to reproduce
- \*Available helps



**Note:**  
**First things first!**  
**One thing at a time!**  
**Always one more thing!**

Appendix 2

# Transformation Stream

## Making Disciples Practically



*"Attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ"*  
Ephesians 4:13

<p><b>How are we doing?</b> Notes:</p>	<p><b>What is God saying to us in our Bible reading?</b> Notes:</p>
<p><b>What progress are we seeing in our relationship with Jesus?</b> Notes:</p>	<p><b>Read Heb. 12:1-2</b> <b>What should each of us lay aside?</b> Notes:</p>
<p><b>Read Acts 1:8</b> <b>How are we working to lead others to Jesus?</b> Notes:</p>	<p><b>What does Jesus want to change in us?</b> Notes:</p>
<p><b>What do we want to implement by the next meeting?</b> Notes: <b>S M A R T</b></p>	<p><b>How can we pray for one another?</b> Notes:</p>

Finished	Areas on which we need to work:	Next Bible reading:
O _____	O _____	Next appointment:
O _____		

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[www.vef.info/bgg](http://www.vef.info/bgg) (VEF - Free Church Federation of the Church of God).

[www.vef.info/gg](http://www.vef.info/gg) (VEF - Church of God, Cleveland).

[www.vef.info/heilsarmee](http://www.vef.info/heilsarmee) (VEG - Salvation Army).

[www.vef.info/menn](http://www.vef.info/menn) (VEG - Mennonites).

[www.vef.info/muehlheim](http://www.vef.info/muehlheim) (VEF - Churches of the Mülheimer Association).

[www.vef.info/nazarener](http://www.vef.info/nazarener) (VEF - Nazarenes).

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M.Div. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, IL, 1984  
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11/85 to present Church planter in Germany with the Bible  
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