



Center for United States Missions

Mission Moments



August, 2010

MOVING BEYOND ADDITION

Kingdom Growth by Multiplication

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My pulse quickened while walking into the huge conference center at the *Exponential* national church planter conference in Orlando, Florida. Resisting the urge to pinch myself as a reality check, the rush of amazement was granted free flow as it swept over me. The Spirit of God was in the process of gathering 4,000 church planters into a single place, all of them bursting with hope, joy and passion to start new Christian churches in these United States of America.

There was a new theme that was woven into the myriad of speakers and breakout learning sessions: *The real mathematics of the Kingdom of God is MULTIPLICATION - and not simple ADDITION.*

The Scriptures begin with the command to MULTIPLY. God urged Adam and Eve toward multiplication in the Garden of Eden: *Be fruitful and MULTIPLY and fill the earth ...* (Genesis 1:28a). The Apostle Paul reminds the Corinthian Christians that *... God who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and MULTIPLY your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness* (2 Corinthians 9:10). And the Great Commission itself to *... GO therefore and make disciples of all the nations ...* (Matthew 28:20) is also rooted in MULTIPLICATION - not simple addition.

Unfortunately the vision of many congregations is limited to simple addition. The saints in those churches do reach out faithfully to the unsaved people in their community and share the good news of Jesus Christ with them. That is most commendable. But all too often the vision in many of those churches is still rooted in simple addition. New and previously unsaved people are converted to faith in Christ by the Holy Spirit and then ADDED ONE SOUL AT A TIME to the Body of Christ (church).

But when a church MULTIPLIES, it moves into new church reproduction. As new churches are planted by the Mother Church, more new disciples are made in multiple locations which results in *exponential Kingdom Growth*. That is always

the result when the Holy Spirit moves a congregation beyond simple addition to embrace the miracle of MULTIPLICATION.

Some years ago, well-known missiologist C. Peter Wagner made an enduring comment: *The single, most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches.*

Can you join us in suggesting a modification of that classic comment? *The single, most effective strategy under heaven for reaching lost people is ... planting new churches which in turn MULTIPLY by reproducing themselves.*

God grant that all of us are empowered by the Spirit of God to lift our eyes from the sidewalk of status quo and survival, even if we have to "pinch ourselves". May we rejoice in the striking discovery that, for the first time in many years, the current pace of 4,000+ new church plants in USAmerica now exceeds the number of Christian churches which close their doors and die each year (3,500 - 3,999).

That amazing statistic was announced by Rev. Dr. Ed Stetzer from *LifeWay*.

We pray that the American church continues to move beyond simple addition to the miracle of MULTIPLICATION ... all for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

Moment Extras

Questions and Comments for Reflection

1. Why do so many Christians and churches cling to ADDITION as the primary mathematics of the Kingdom of God? What factors restrict this vision of mission?
2. What "means" has God already provided to move churches beyond simple addition to MULTIPLICATION?
3. Where do you see MINISTRY MULTIPLICATION taking place in your church?
4. What specific Scripture references point to MULTIPLICATION as the ultimate mathematics of the Kingdom of God?
5. How are you modeling MULTIPLICATION in your calling as a Missional Leader?

Links

Church Multiplication Network: www.churchmultiplication.us

Church Multiplication Associates (CMA): www.cmaresources.org

New Church Initiatives: www.newchurchinitiatives.org

Ed Stetzer, The LifeWay Blog: www.edstetzer.com

Book: *The Multiplying Church: The New Math for Starting New Churches* (Bob Roberts)

News From The Center

- **Church Planter Coach Certification Training** in Romulus, Michigan on October 18-19, 2010
- **Church Planter Assessment Center** in St. Louis, Missouri on November 14-16, 2010
- **Daughter Church Planting Training** in Kansas City, Kansas January 7-8, 2011

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