

DISCIPLING THE NATIONS: TEN REASONS WHY YOUTH WITH A MISSION PLANTS CHURCHES

■ What happens when young people from a short-term mission agency find themselves among the least evangelized peoples? They begin long-term frontier missions work! Read a fascinating account of this evolution and the convincing rationale behind it.

By Floyd McClung, Jr.

In 1980 a pivotal conference for Youth With a Mission was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand. After two weeks of discussion and prayer, both the International Council of Youth With A Mission and the 120 YWAM leaders present concluded that God was calling us as a mission to plant churches among those who are unevangelized and unreached with the Gospel. Before this conference, we had no clear vision of reaching the unreached. We had seen ourselves solely as a youth evangelistic organization that was an outreach arm of existing local churches.

GOD'S PLAN AND OUR MISSION MANDATE

At Chiang Mai we were reminded of God's plan for the ages. This same theme was emphasized at YWAM's International Staff and Leadership Conference in Manila in 1988 when the Target 2000: All Nations-All Peoples project was launched. In Genesis 12 God gave Abraham a covenant that promised "all the peoples of the earth will be blessed." This throbbing theme unifies the Bible into a single book on redemption, beginning in the promised land and moving out to the ends of the earth.

It is crucial to note that the key work, blessing, refers to a relationship with the living God and membership in the covenant community of God's people. It is not speaking of a worldly material type of blessing that ends with ourselves. It is a concept which not only links us with our Father in heaven, but also with our earthly brothers and sisters. Ours is not an individual salvation; we are members of God's family.

God's plan of redemption is expanded in the New Testament. Jesus commissioned His followers to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). The Greek in Matthew 28:19 literally says "as you are going, teaching and baptizing—make disciples of all peoples." The emphasis on discipling and peoples in this passage makes it clear that to obey the command given by Jesus we must focus on more than just proclamation of the Gospel. We must concern ourselves with what Jesus commanded: baptizing and teaching those who become disciples through our "going." In other words, converts must be formed into communities of believers.

Paul takes up this mandate. He is commissioned by the Lord Jesus in Acts 26:17-18 to take the Gospel to the unreached (the "Gentiles"). In Romans 15:20 he says he has made it his ambition to preach the Gospel where Christ has not already been named. Wherever Paul went, he followed the model of the Jewish synagogue, forming his converts into fellowships of believers. It is inconceivable that Paul would have been satisfied with winning individuals and not forming them into churches. The forming of believers into fellowships was not an afterthought for Paul. He labored until the church was established, and then commissioned the church to reach all those in the surrounding region with the Gospel.

Some basic definitions having to do with "making disciples of all nations" are important for us at this point.

1. The term "nation" in Matthew 28:19 comes from the Greek "ethnos," and means a "people" or "ethnic

group." A people is an ethnolinguistic group with their own language and ethnic distinctiveness.

The term "people group" is frequently used, but does not just represent population segments based on ethnicity or language, but primarily those based on sociological factors. There exists, for example, political, economic, religious, cultural and geographical people groups. "People group" serves generally as an umbrella term. It is virtually impossible to ascertain the names and numbers of all people groups in the world. The list would run into the tens or hundreds of thousands.

A well-accepted definition of a people group is "a significantly large grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity for one another because of their shared language, religion, ethnicity, occupation, class or caste, situation, etc., or a combination of these."

2. An **unreached people group** is "a people group within which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize their own people group." It is a people group without adequate numbers and resources to evangelize their own people without requiring cross-cultural assistance. To reach a people or people group means to plant an indigenous movement of churches that is multiplying and evangelizing their own people. Using these definitions, individuals are evangelized and groups are reached.

3. The phrase **discipling a nation** is taken from Mt. 28:19, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all

nations ..." This term is used by Jesus to refer to the knowledge of Christ as Lord and Saviour, and then forming them into congregations of believers. This follows on from the command given by Jesus to baptize and teach those we make into disciples. Because this term is used in the context of Jesus' command to "go" and is followed by His instruction to baptize—clearly understood by the Jews as an initiation rite for unbelievers into God's covenant community—it is clear what Jesus has in mind is the establishment of communities of Christians in all nations of the world.

This term may also be used to refer to the process of teaching people to bring every dimension of their lives under the lordship of Christ. Jesus said "...all authority has been given to me..." He is the King of the nations. Every sphere of life belongs under His rulership.

Used in these two ways, "discipling the nations" is an inclusive term that integrates church-planting evangelism and bringing the gospel to bear on all aspects of society. It is a helpful term to show the scope of YWAM's commitment to world evangelization and proclaiming and demonstrating the Kingdom of God.

4. A fourth term very helpful in identifying and prioritizing our corporate objectives as a mission is **people group movement**. It is important to ask, what is the minimum objective of our evangelistic efforts among any people group, city or nation? It is not enough to do evangelism or to plant a single congregation. We have not done our job unless a movement of fully indigenous, mission-minded, multiplying churches is planted within a people group. Then they can evangelize their own people, city or nation. Dr. Donald McGavran calls this a "people movement to Christ."

5. It is important that the churches we plant be **indigenous** to the culture of the people God calls us to reach. An indigenous church is one that cannot be rejected on the grounds that it is culturally foreign. If we catch the vision for church planting, but end up exporting a cultural model of the church that is foreign to the people we are called to, our efforts to see a people group movement started will have serious limitations built into it from the outset.

A key issue to wrestle with then, is ethnocentrism. To quote Jim Mellis, one of our YWAM leaders, "Our strategies have too often been governed by the limited world view given us by the cultures we come from, rather than a revelation of God's purposes for the nations (the 'ethnos')."

The process of planting movements of multiplying churches raised up by God to evangelize their own people and other peoples requires new levels of servanthood and humility. To quote Mellis again, "Ethnocentrism is to cultures what egocentrism is to individuals. In a small child, egocentrism (to a certain degree) is a good and natural thing. It helps the child differentiate between himself and those around him; it enables him to begin to get a handle on the world of persons from within the boundaries of himself.

When God made the nations, he set boundaries for them (Acts 17:26), and gave them specific territories (Gen. 10:5, 20, 31) from which to begin to get a handle on the world, through obeying the 'cultural mandate' to subdue that part of the world (Gen. 1:28). Hence by God's design, the world view of each nation is limited, just as each individual's perspective is limited.

Egocentrism becomes sinful when it goes past simple differentiation of self from others, and the self becomes the measure of all things. Likewise, ethnocentrism becomes sinful when one's own culture (worldview, beliefs, values, behavior, products) becomes the measure of all things."

As mentioned above, new levels of humility and servanthood—and understanding—are required if we are to plant indigenous movements of mission-minded churches among all peoples. The challenge of cultural sensitivity can seem overwhelming. We must not allow the fear of failure to hold us back from going to the nations. The key is humility. If we go as servants, taking time to listen and learn, God will enable us. It is comforting to be reminded that He has all authority. He will enable us as we obey His call to make disciples of all nations.

God has created the diversity of culture and language in our world. It is His plan to bring all the rich ethnic and linguistic diversity together in one great family. Church planting among the unreached peoples of the world

involves fulfilling God's plan. It is His longing to bring every people into their spiritual inheritance: a multicolored, multi-cultural family that someday will gather around the throne and worship the Lamb of God.

6. There is a difference between **objectives** and **strategies**. This paper is primarily concerned with mission objectives, that is, *what* we should achieve qualitatively. Strategies have more to do with the "how to." Having said that, it is impossible to consider the objective of fulfilling the Great Commission without developing effective strategies.

Because most of the countries, peoples, and cities that are unreached have restricted access to traditional missionary personnel and are sometimes antagonistic to the gospel, the question of strategy is a very important one. The engaging process is the time to do research, listen, seek counsel from wise and godly leaders, and prayerfully discern God's strategy for reaching the people He has called us to serve. If we are sensitive and have faith, these countries become "creative access" countries.

Further, most of the unreached people in the world are poor. Though not an unreached people group by the definitions given above, the poor are the largest "people group" in the world. Any strategy to share the good news with the poor must deal with poverty.

Seeing fruit for our efforts will not happen automatically as a result of caring for the poor and needy or entering a restricted country as a tentmaker. Without the clear objective of planting churches we may not make disciples. For these reasons, YWAM's mercy ministry and tentmaking strategies take on greater significance if we partner these activities with church planting objectives.

TERMS

The following terms were also agreed upon as a series of reasonable steps in the process of reaching a people group by YWAM in 1988 at our International Staff and Leadership Conference in Manila:

Target - to prayerfully choose a city, nation or people group with an objective of planting an indigenous movement of churches.

Engage - to set aside resources, to

plan and send people with a view of praying, making contacts, developing a team, and determining a strategy in order to help disciple the targeted city, nation or people group.

Pioneer - to plant a movement of churches and/or strategically establish a YWAM base in the targeted people or area for the purpose of helping disciple that people, city or nation.

DIFFERENT STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENT WORLDS

There are different ways to look at the task of world evangelization. The task before us is referred to in the Bible variously as "making disciples of all nations" and "being His witnesses to the ends of the earth" and providing a "testimony for all nations" and "preaching the Gospel to every creature" and being sent "as the Father has sent me" (Mt. 28:19, Acts 1:8, Mt. 24:14, Mk. 16:15, John 20:21).

We sometimes speak of this great task glibly, but it is an awesome responsibility. The magnitude of discipling whole nations is a task that should produce in us both great humility and great faith. Jim Montgomery, founder of the DAWN movement, says, "where else in the pages of history is such an incomparable challenge given to so few, to so weak, to so inconsequential a people? May we never lose the wonder and majesty of our calling. May its very magnitude continue to call forth from us bold faith, daring plans, eager obedience."

If this is the commission, how are we to fulfill it? We could look at the task of discipling the nations through the challenge of the cities. There are so many unreached peoples of the world living in cities that we could consider finishing the task in the light of urban evangelism alone. A rather complete strategy for the fulfillment of the Great Commission could be developed just from the viewpoint of the world's cities.

World evangelization could also be discussed from the viewpoint of unreached people groups. Since Ralph Winter and Donald McGavran gave their presentations at the Lausanne Congress in 1974 on people groups, the church worldwide has been captured by the strategic importance of people group movements.

Still another way to look at the

world is the concept of "whole countries." Such an approach takes into account the reality of geo-political boundaries and the entities we call nations. There are practical realities about countries that draw us to them. We are born in them, have residence in them, and pay allegiance to them in a variety of ways. They are the "containers" of cities and peoples. One of the fundamental ways to naturally divide up facts and statistics about the world is in terms of nation-states.

We could also look at the world through language groupings, particularly since languages know no political boundaries. This is helpful especially when we focus on reaching a particular people group. It is also a strategic way of looking at mobilizing a missions force from a language grouping, such as Portuguese speakers or Francophones, into the world.

These four ways of looking at the Great Commission—cities, people groups, nations, and languages—are not competing views, but complimentary. Plans for fulfilling the Great Commission must emanate from all four of these perspectives. Whatever approach we take, we must have the whole picture. We need those in the church who think in terms of the *whole world* and what must be done to *complete* the task the Lord Jesus gave to His church.

The world map masks the tremendous cultural and ethnic diversity of planet earth. Our world is made up of about 12,000 ethnolinguistic peoples, which can be further broken down to tribes, sub-cultural groups, clans and families. Other cultural and political boundaries could also be considered. Experts still argue over how many people groups there are and how to determine if we have reached them with the Gospel.

A simpler and perhaps more helpful way to look at the world has been suggested by David Barrett and Patrick Johnstone. To summarize what they have said, we could divide the world into three worlds. We can depict it as in diagram 1.

The Christian World is comprised of those affiliated or baptized in a recognized denomination, confession or church. It includes both Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants, but not cults, and is estimated to be about 32% of the world's population. People in The

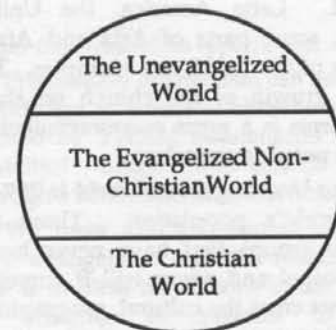


Diagram 1

Christian World may have been baptized as infants but no longer attend church. Many of them need to be evangelized and challenged to make Jesus the Lord of their life.

Fellowships must be planted in The Christian World. One strategic way to do that is in partnership with existing denominations and local churches. YWAM teams start scores of churches and communities every year in cooperation with traditional churches. One team in Brazil has targeted three hundred towns and cities in which to plant churches, and has agreed to do this in partnership with four different denominations.

Another way to establish communities in The Christian World is to start Bible studies, fellowships, brotherhoods, and prayer groups under the auspices of existing denominations and churches. Though these new "wine skins" are not called a parish or church, they often meet the biblical criteria of a church in that they have a life and structure of their own. Many church leaders welcome assistance in evangelizing inactive church members, as long as it is done in a manner that is not disruptive to church structure and doctrine.

The Evangelized Non-Christian World is made up of those who have access to the Gospel. Researchers estimate that the Gospel is available to about 42% of the world's non-Christian population. The church of Jesus Christ continues to proclaim the Gospel in word, signs and deeds among the evangelized. Some plant, some water and God gives the increase. New local churches must continue to be planted among those who are already evangelized.

In some places there is a great harvest taking place in The Evangelized

World. Latin America, the United States, some parts of Asia and Africa (south of the Sahel) are examples. The rapid growth of the church on these continents is a great encouragement to God's people everywhere.

The Unevangelized World is 26% of the world's population. These are people groups that have never heard the Gospel and never will if someone does not cross the cultural, geographical and linguistic barriers that separate them from those who can tell them the Good News. They are isolated from believers and Satan is determined to keep them that way.

There are pockets of unreached people groups in almost every nation of the world—like the 5,000 Kurds in Nashville, Tennessee and 35,000 North Vietnamese in Prague, Czechoslovakia—but The Unevangelized World is primarily found on a geographical belt that stretches across North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, the Indian sub-continent, Soviet Central Asia and South East Asia. In other words, the Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist worlds. Half of all the unreached people groups in the world are in the Indian sub-continent.

The Unevangelized World embraces approximately 2,000 peoples, 1,000 towns and cities, 45 nations and many thousands of people groups. These groupings overlap, but the overlap need not worry us if some group of Christians target each major segment in The Unevangelized World.

If ever individual in The Christian World and The Evangelized World—74% of the people alive—became a committed Christian today, not one person in The Unevangelized World would hear the Gospel as a result. They are truly cut off from all believers. There is a barrier that separates them from

Christians. They will not hear the Gospel unless Christians go to them. We could illustrate this barrier as in diagram 2 below.

THE BARRIER: CULTURE, LANGUAGE, AND GEOGRAPHY

The distinction between home and foreign missions is no longer relevant in our modern world. One only needs to visit any large city to find "Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts" everywhere you look. We do not need to travel halfway around the world to reach the unreached. Cambodians, Vietnamese, Pakistanis, Syrians, Afghans, and many more peoples have traveled great distances to find refuge and new beginnings in our cities and nations.

Jesus said that we are to be witnesses to Him in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8). These four regions represent four distinct spheres, each one increasingly more distant from believers in terms of culture and language. One missiologist has called this E-1, E-2, E-3, and E-4 evangelism. E-1 stands for evangelism in our own Jerusalem, our own culture and language. E-2 evangelism stands for outreach in a similar culture and language, E-3 for evangelism in a culture that is remote and E-4 for reaching a culture that is foreign and separated from our own. Every YWAM base, and every local church for that matter, could infuse new life into its members by setting a goal of planting one church in each of these four spheres over the next ten years. This would mean planting one church in The Christian World, one or two in The Evangelized Non-Christian World, and at least one in The Unevangelized World.

To help facilitate this goal, lists of the least evangelized people groups and least evangelized cities and nations are available from the Research and Information Office of Youth With A Mission (Prins Hendrikkade 50, 1012 AC Amsterdam, The Netherlands). Reading lists on frontier missions and church planting and addresses for further training opportunities world wide are also available upon request.

These three worlds—Christian, Evangelized, Unevangelized—give us a grid with which to evaluate the focus of our mission and evangelistic endeavors.

By cross checking the target audience of the people we send out, we can readily tell which "world" we are focused on. Is most of our attention given to sending people into The Christian World? Are we seriously committed to reaching the unreached?

They are the most difficult to reach because they are so separated from believers. Great effort is necessary to reach them. Some tough questions must be asked to help us overcome the barriers that separate us from the unreached. Have we targeted least evangelized cities and nations, or an unreached people group? If so, who has taken ownership for this commitment to make sure it happens? Is it a high priority for our time, prayer and financial resources? Specific commitments will bring specific results.

By giving greater priority to those who are unreached with the Gospel (The Unevangelized World), we build momentum for world evangelization. Without this focus, we will lose our commitment to take up the really big challenges necessary for fulfilling the Great Commission. As we commit to the challenge of reaching the unreached, our faith will increase, our vision grow and our spiritual life take on a new meaning. Without a serious corporate commitment to reach the unreached, intercession for the nations will lose much of its meaning. Our training and education will lose a sense of direction.

Clear focus and continued commitment to reach the unreached will attract youthful, zealous world changers. YWAM has a full-time presence in almost 100 countries. Many of the countries we are not in are restricted access countries. They are located in The Unevangelized World. By moving forward in strategic church planting among the unreached we are sending a clear signal to thousands of young pioneers: come and join us!

Additionally, our commitment to evangelize and plant churches in The Evangelized and Christian Worlds allows us to model the church planting strategies we must use to penetrate the frontiers. We must demonstrate in The Christian World what we want to do in The Unevangelized World. We cannot train missionaries for The Unevangelized World with mere words. We must demonstrate in every nation where we work our commitment to win people to

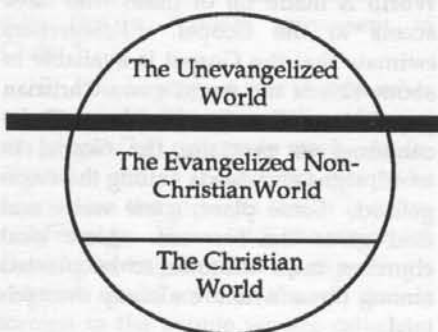


Diagram 2

Christ and form them into multiplying, mission-minded Christian fellowships. By our *actions* we will attract a vast army of radical world-changers.

We want to train and send church planters with a vision of the Kingdom of God. When they plant a church they must be able to recognize and disciple future leaders for media, government, education and commerce. Likewise, those who are doing the training must have a burden for church planting and the unreached. If they do not, they will fail to recognize the future Apostles Pauls sent to them by the Lord to be trained and sent to the unreached.

PRELIMINARY EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING EVANGELISM

Evangelizing individuals is not a sufficient mission strategy. Jesus commanded us to *make disciples* of all nations. Of course, winning people to personal allegiance to Christ is foundational to Biblical Christianity. It is the unshakable platform on which all other endeavors must be built. In the last few decades, an awareness of the importance of making disciples of all nations has grown in the church. Christians have begun to recognize that an initial decision to follow Christ is merely the beginning of a process that is as important as the first decision itself.

To give a person an opportunity not only to "say yes" to Jesus Christ but also live out that "yes" requires the availability of a church fellowship. It is obvious that this requirement defines an important goal for our evangelism. We cannot say we have given a person an opportunity to fully embrace the Gospel of Christ if that person does not have the opportunity to become incorporated into a live, caring fellowship of Christians, a structure we call a "church" (or Bible study, prayer group, community, brotherhood, fellowship, etc.).

We recognize that we can approach this goal through an intermediate step we may call "preliminary evangelism." As part of an overall strategy for world evangelization, often the best way to evangelize the unchurched and unreached is to begin a Bible study or prayer group within a group of people with an affinity for one another—such

as women washing at a stream, businessmen at lunch, college students living in dorms, new arrivals in the big city from a particular tribe or rural group, nominal Christians from a particular denomination, or miners separated from their families. (If we are working with the unreached, this preliminary step may not be necessary if people are ready to form a church.)

Let's take an example of preliminary evangelism that Ralph Winter tells about in his paper "Momentum Building in Global Missions" (see *IJFM* Vol. 7 No. 2, April 1990). In Korea, as a supplement to direct, intentional church planting evangelism, there has been a powerful mechanism exemplifying preliminary evangelism, leading indirectly to thousands of churches being planted in the nation. Virtually all the male population is required to spend a

To give a person an opportunity not only to "say yes" to Jesus Christ but also live out that "yes" requires the availability of a church fellowship.

certain period of time in the Korean military. For at least 40 years, such military experience has brought young men from all over Korea into an environment where close to 50% of army personnel, including almost *all the officers*, are committed Christians! Preliminary evangelism in the Korean military has resulted in thousands of small group Bible studies and prayer meetings. These meetings helped pave the way for church planting in the nation.

It is clear that targeted preliminary evangelism of this kind leads to forming small groups within affinity groupings. While preliminary to full-blown church planting, it is nevertheless a highly strategic activity. It would be very unfortunate if YWAM missionaries did not recognize the powerful tool that God has given us in armies of dedicated young people who are already participating in preliminary evangelism all over the world. *To not be aware of the potential to start groups that directly or indirectly lead to churches being planted is to miss a God-given opportunity to disciple the nations. Much thought, prayer and preparation needs to be given to*

exploit this tremendous opportunity.

Preliminary evangelism can and has already led to scores of churches being planted by YWAM missionaries "accidentally." Much more can be done through a commitment to this objective.

We must also go beyond preliminary evangelism. God's redemptive plan is to bless the nations of the earth by bringing all peoples to the knowledge of Himself and into fellowships of redeemed people. This is the plan He revealed to Abraham and the Apostle Paul. It is the same plan Jesus passed on to His church when he commanded the twelve to "make disciples of all nations." That is why all those who say "yes" to Jesus must also be introduced to a living church, no matter what it is called. The image of salvation in the Bible is the creation of a "family." It is extending the covenant that God gave to Abraham in Genesis 12, in order that He might have a people for Himself through whom He might bless all the peoples of the world.

Thus we must uphold the significance of church planting and all that implies.

It is important to realize that such a church-planting goal is one of the most essential concepts in world evangelization.

CHURCH PLANTING AND REACHING THE UNREACHED IN YWAM SINCE THE SPECIAL CONFERENCE IN CHIANG MAI IN 1980

Since 1980, growing attention has been given to reaching the unreached in YWAM. "Frontier missions" has grown in importance in our understanding as a mission. The International Staff Conference in Manila in 1988 galvanized our attention and helped us understand that reaching the unreached was not the responsibility of a few in the mission but of *every leader and staff person*.

Target 2000: All Nations-All Peoples, a special plan for YWAM's part in world evangelization, was adopted at the International Strategy Conference in December of 1988 to set specific goals for discipling the nations. We committed ourselves to target, engage and pioneer a people group movement in 500 world class cities, 150 large unreached peoples and every nation of the world by the year 2000 and beyond.

Approximately 130 churches a year were planted by YWAM missionaries between 1983 and 1988. YWAM's annual survey of operating locations revealed that at the end of 1988 there were 230 church planters in the mission. In June 1990 there were almost twice that number. Although this is a commendable beginning, much more has to be done. Many more pioneers are needed who are called to reach the unreached with the Gospel. The future of the mission will be greatly affected by our commitment or lack of it to reach the *whole world* with the gospel.

The numbers of those working long term among unreached people groups is increasing every year in YWAM. An annual conference is held in Thailand for representatives of church planting teams for mutual encouragement and fresh input from experienced church planters. Every YWAM base has the opportunity to contribute to completing the Great Commission by adopting an unreached people group and targeting at least one population segment of The Unevangelized World.

Living close to the imperfections of local churches can sometimes result in a loss of respect for the glorious purposes God has in mind for His bride. He has chosen to reveal Himself through the church. It is His channel of blessing to the world. He is the head over all things—for the church—which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. Through the church the manifold wisdom of God is made known. When we love God's people, His church, with His love, the privilege of planting new churches becomes clearer.

Below is a list of some of the reasons YWAM plants churches. More important than any other is the great privilege of helping bring to pass the redemptive purposes of God as revealed in a covenant people, a people brought into being by the Holy Spirit working through us.

WHY YOUTH WITH A MISSION PLANTS CHURCHES

1. It is the Biblical pattern. It was the primary objective of the apostle Paul's strategy for evangelism. Everywhere Paul preached the Gospel, he led people to Christ, and gathered them together in fellowships of believers.

It is essential that we recognize the New Testament does not speak of just

winning "sheep" but also forming them into "flocks." In the Bible we are called by various terms: God's people, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a living temple, the temple of God—all imply community or belonging to others. Church planting is a fulfillment of God's desire to gather us into kingdom communities. The Bible is not just concerned with individual Christians, but communities of God's people. Churches are not voluntary associations; we are the "called out ones."

2. Planting churches lays a foundation for discipling whole nations. God uses the presence of His people to bring every sphere of society under His Lordship. Nations without a significant presence of God's people do not have the resources necessary to see this happen. It is useless to think about Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu societies being changed without the salt and light of God's people being raised up first. The first step in discipling a whole nation is to work and pray for the emergence of an indigenous people movement to Christ.

3. Church planting is how unreached cities, nations and peoples will be reached with the Gospel. A movement of mission minded churches within the culture is launched through individual churches being planted and then multiplying throughout the society. This simple but crucial step is often overlooked by zealous Christians.

The presence of multiplying churches, a movement of churches, is the only way to measure progress towards the completion of the Great Commission. How close have we come to planting a witnessing fellowship within reach of every individual in all countries? Only when this goal has been accomplished can the ultimate objective of reaching every creature be measured.

4. We plant churches to reach all levels of society. A local church helps evangelize a broad spectrum of society because *the Gospel is spread primarily through family and relationship networks.* When a church is planted it gives a framework to reap a harvest among the natural contacts that people have. In contrast to specific strategies of evangelism, the local church has an ongoing ministry of equipping its people to reach those that it has natural relationships with: at work, in the neighbor-

hood, at school, etc. In this way a broad scope of society can be touched by a very small community of people.

Cities and nations are not just horizontal in nature, but they are also vertical; that is, there are various strata in a society piled upon one another. We need to reach every strata if we are to fully disciple the nations.

5. Churches are planted because it preserves the fruit of our evangelism. There is a danger of putting our spiritual children, those who come to the Lord through our evangelism, up for "spiritual adoption" before they are out of the cradle. It can minister rejection to those we have led to the Lord if we try to put them into other churches when God wants us to be building them into new local churches. Not only can it cause rejection to our new converts, in some situations it can cause spiritual abortion. (1 Thess. 2:6 and following).

Obviously it is important for us to continue to work in cooperation with local churches and to put our converts in these churches. But it is also important for us to plant new Churches.

If we continually do evangelism without planting churches, we risk the danger of being unfaithful to our converts. We must be prepared to care for our own disciples. Not to do so is to accept the joyful task of helping to conceive new believers, but avoiding the sometimes difficult task of giving birth to fellowships of believers and the ongoing responsibility of raising up these new Christians into maturity.

6. YWAM plants churches because they are a vital place of nurture for multi-generational believers. When we do not plant churches, we fail to develop an essential means of reaching all generations in a society. How would you like to live in a neighborhood made up entirely of 15-year-olds? It is a little narrow, isn't it?

Society by its very nature is multi-generational. YWAM often sponsors outreaches that focus on youth, or a particular social group in society. If our outreaches do not lead to planting a new local church, particularly among the unreached, we can miss an opportunity to touch all generations in the society.

Because churches are planted in a neighborhood, town, village, etc., they naturally have a focus on all generations

within that particular geographical area. Task-oriented mission endeavors may not have the same orientation that a local church does because of its geographical focus.

7. We plant new churches because it faces us with the responsibility to grow in evangelistic and missionary maturity. If we are to develop the missionary and evangelistic gifts within us we must mature to the place of planting churches. This is not true for every evangelist or missionary of course, because we are not all called to plant churches. But planting churches gives many the opportunity to believe God to raise up a church where there is none. This step of obedience requires faith and courage. New lessons are to be learned, new challenges overcome.

8. We plant churches because God wants YWAM missionaries to build into local congregations the spiritual foundations He has given us as a mission. We are called to reproduce the life of Christ that is in us, in others.

There are varieties of gifts in the Body of Christ. Youth With A Mission has been given a spiritual anointing by God and we should pass it on to the congregations we establish.

We have a responsibility to teach others what God has taught us, not only through teaching and writing, but also by raising up new churches. When we plant churches, we pass on what God has given us. In this way a multiplication takes place. It is possible to see whole movements of mission-minded churches built on the same foundation of the ways of God that we have been taught. One example of this is a movement of almost 20 churches started by a YWAM convert in one South American country. They are now sending out their missionaries through YWAM.

9. God wants YWAM to be a channel to the nations for church-planting evangelists, pastors, and missionaries. We are to be a channel to the nations. If our "channel" gets blocked on the receiving end because we have no vision for church planting, we will not be releasing the men and women God wants to send through us. If we have no vision to reach the unreached, God will by-pass us by sending potential church planting missionaries

to other mission agencies.

10. We plant churches in order to train church planters. Church planting missionaries will not learn their trade in the classroom. Church planters are like doctors, they learn through hands-on experience. By planting churches we gain the experience necessary to multiply ourselves through others. We can only give to others what we know through first hand experience.

GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH PLANTING IN YWAM

• **Youth With A Mission is not called to be a denomination.** When YWAM missionaries are church planting in The Christian World, they can plant churches and church planting movements, but those churches must not be under our auspices so as to create a "YWAM" denomination. We are committed to work in partnership with established churches, or to plant indigenous fellowships. When we start

YWAM missionaries have the freedom to plant churches that reflect their own theological convictions. They are encouraged to serve the denomination they come from in partnership efforts of evangelism and church planting.

fellowships or Bible studies for new Christians, they can meet any time of the week but Sunday—until they are "set in order" with their own identity. They should not be called a church until they are ready to appoint leadership and the group is ready to be established as a local church.

Church planting among the unreached, however, requires a different approach. New churches may need to meet from the outset on Sundays. It may at times be necessary for a church planter to briefly assist in the leadership of a new group of converts. As soon as possible, indigenous leadership should be appointed over single churches and church associations formed to support the churches planted. Church planting statesman George Patterson says it is never advisable for a missionary to "pastor" a new church because that weakens the development of local church leadership

and inhibits its ability to multiply right from the start.

• **We are called to work in unity with existing local churches.** We must not start interdenominational worship meetings, seminars and programs, then switch mid-stream and turn these events into a local church. Winning the trust of pastors in the guise of running an interdenominational event to attract people, then planting a church, is wrong. This is unethical and a violation of relationship trust.

• **Every opportunity should be sought to assist existing local churches and denominations in planting new churches.** This requires seeking out men of vision who want to reach the lost and start new churches. YWAM has the resources of people: DTS outreaches, mobile outreach teams, gospel bands, drama groups and summer volunteers afford tremendous opportunities to be a blessing to missionaries, new churches, and pastors desiring to plant daughter churches.

• **The term "church planting" can cause misunderstanding, especially in nations where there are traditional churches.** Use the term carefully and with wise and patient explanation. We use it to mean reaching the unreached and evangelizing the unevangelized. We do not use it to mean that we are a denomination. Nor do we mean "sheep stealing." If you have a burden for church planting, keep local pastors informed of your plans. Send disgruntled church members back when they come complaining about another church. Do not make a lot of fanfare about your intentions: let God confirm your efforts, *then* share your joy.

• **Because we are an interdenominational mission, church planters may plant churches according to their own denominational background.** YWAM missionaries have the freedom to plant churches that reflect their own theological convictions. They are encouraged to serve the denomination they come from in partnership efforts of evangelism and church planting. One outstanding example of this is the work being done in England among the Anglicans by a YWAM missionary; because he is an Anglican he has helped plant several Anglican churches. This in turn has

inspired other Anglicans to plant new churches.

• **Cross-cultural church planting endeavors should be careful to use the local language and follow patterns of worship, training, leadership, gathering and witness that are socially acceptable to the host culture.** If wisdom and patience are not exercised, new churches may actually hinder a people movement to Christ. If they are not seen to be part of the local culture, the church may never be accepted by large numbers of people. ■

Floyd McClung, Jr. is the International Director of Youth With A Mission. He, with his wife Sally and two children, lives in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

OBJECTIVE: A statement of *what* we believe the Lord wants to achieve through us as an organization. It is a qualitative statement.

GOAL: A definable and measurable output statement to bring about the hoped for objective. Goals are steps of faith that take one from present limitations to future possibilities and can be measured by time and performance. Goals are S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Result-oriented, and within a period of Time).

STRATEGY: This is an overall plan of *how* the objective(s) will or can be achieved. Various strategies can be *evaluated* and a *preferred* strategy chosen. A strategy should include the activities to be performed, their sequence, and the people and resources to accomplish these activities.

TARGET: To prayerfully choose a city, nation or people group with an objective to planting an indigenous movement of churches.

ENGAGE: To set aside resources, to plan and send people with a view of praying, making contacts, developing a team, and determining a strategy in order to help disciple the targeted city, nation or people group.

PIONEER: To plant a movement of churches and/or strategically establish a YWAM base in the targeted people or area for the purpose of helping disciple that people, city or nation.

A CHURCH: By minimum definition there is a church when at least a small group of believers led by an elder meets on a regular basis for worship, instruction, the basic New Testament sacraments and for witness and service. (*Dawn 2000*, by Jim Montgomery)

CHURCH PLANTING: Involves

the discipling of households to Christ by partnering with the heads of these households so as to see them become local church leaders with the goal of helping these new churches multiply into an evangelizing movement of churches reaching into their neighborhood, city and nation.

DISCIPLING A WHOLE NATION: Mobilizing the whole body of Christ in whole countries in a determined effort to complete the Great Commission in that country by working toward the goal of providing an evangelical congregation for every village and neighborhood of every class, kind and condition of people in the whole country. (*Dawn 2000*)

UNREACHED: An urban or rural *people group* that has no basic and measurable Gospel witness or church of any kind in its midst. "Unreached" also refers to the fact that the *people group* is completely separated from the Gospel by barriers of culture, language, religion, geography or a combination of these. "Unreached" speaks of *people groups and not individuals* who do not have access to the Gospel and who need church planting in their midst.

UNEVANGELIZED: *Individuals* that have not heard and understood the basics of the Gospel. When the term is used in the context of "cities" (such as "Least-Evangelized Mega-City") this speaks of the number of individuals in that city (or "people group") who have not heard and understood the Gospel. "Unevangelized" speaks of *individuals* who have not heard the Gospel.

UNCHURCHED: *Individuals* who may or may not have understood the Gospel in societies where the Gospel is generally accessible, who do not attend any local church. Often (as in the case of most of Europe) church planting is needed to meet the many and various kinds of social needs of these people. "Unchurched" speaks of the need for hearing the Gospel and, in some cases, obeying its call to local church involvement.

EVANGELIZATION: The proclamation of the Gospel to all peoples involving a positive response and salvation. Effective evangelization serves the culture and is followed by church planting, discipleship training with a multiplication in the spread of the Gospel. A person has been evangelized when the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been communicated within their culture, and that person has been confronted with the necessity of making a personal decision to follow Christ as a believer (disciple) or reject Him. Effective evangelism results in strong indigenous churches multiplying the

message.

WORLD-CLASS CITY: (also megacity): Designates a city with at least one million inhabitants and/or of major regional or international significance.

PEOPLE: (Ethnic Group) An ethnolinguistic group with their own language and ethnic distinctiveness.

PEOPLE GROUP: A significantly large grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity for one another because of their shared language, religion, ethnicity, occupation, class or caste, situation, etc., or a combination of these.

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUP: A people group within which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize their own people group. It is a people group without a movement of multiplying churches in their midst. To reach a people or people group means to plant an indigenous movement of churches that will in turn evangelize all the individuals in their own group. Using these definitions, individuals are evangelized and groups are reached.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Fountain, Jeff, *The Final Frontier*, Kingsway, Eastbourne, U.K., 1986

Greenway, Roger (ed.), *Guidelines For Urban Church Planting*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980.

Hill, Monica (ed.), *How To Plant Churches*, MARC Europe, London, U.K.

Hopkins, Bob, *Church Planting*, Grove Books LTD, Books 4 & 8, Nottingham, U.K.

Johnson, Todd (ed.), *International Journal of Frontier Missions*.

Lingenfelter and Mayers, *Ministering Cross Culturally*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1986.

McGavran, Donald, *Understanding Church Growth*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980.

McGavran, Donald and Win Arn, *How To Grow A Church*, Regal Books, Ventura, California.

Miller, William, *A Christian Response To Islam*, Kingsway, Eastbourne, U.K.

Montgomery, Jim, *Dawn 2000*, William Carey Library, Pasadena, California, 1989.

Patterson, George, *Church Planting Guide*, Sean, Chile.

Robb, John, *The Power Of People Group Thinking*, MARC, Monrovia, California.

Wagner, Peter, *How To Plant A Church*, Regal Books, Ventura, California.

Yamamori, Teteunao, *God's New Envoys*, Multnomah Press.