**MentorNet #78   
Can Church Multiplication Happen in the West?**January 8, 2011

We in the West often ask ourselves this question, and we who write and teach about reproductive, group disciple-making hear this question everywhere we go. Given the invisibility of church multiplication within Western societies, we tend to answer the question in two ways, no and yes. No, because of how things are, and yes, if we can agree to change a few things. The phrases below are given “tongue-in-cheek”, so, please, do not cringe with pain.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Can Church Multiplication Happen in the West?** | | |
| **NO, because…** | | **YES, if…** |
| ***Audience*** | Families have disintegrated | Church happens within existing networks |
| ***Authority*** | Questioned and resisted | Visionary, passionate and complied with |
| ***Baptism*** | Public profession of faith | Induction into the Body of Christ |
| ***Bible*** | Fodder for sermons & lessons | Handbook for group action in the world |
| ***Christ*** | Far away in heaven | Active in our midst |
| ***Church*** | Bodies, building & budget | Experiencing together the Presence of Christ |
| ***Church planting*** | Start a congregation some day | Multiply gatherings continually |
| ***Clergy*** | Rule over churches | Leaders empower their equals |
| ***Discipleship*** | Learning right doctrine | Learning how to obey Christ |
| ***Eucharist*** | Administered by the ordained | Breaking bread together |
| ***Evangelism*** | Occasional, ineffective effort | Normal conversation with willing hearers |
| ***Expansion*** | Violation of others’ choices | Reclaiming Satan’s captives |
| ***Faith*** | Historical doctrine | Obedience to Christ’s commandments |
| ***Gifts of the Spirit*** | Platform talent | Everyone ministering with God’s help |
| ***God*** | Basis of a theistic worldview | The King who is conquering his enemies |
| ***Healing*** | Medical assurance policy | Praying the mercy of God into others |
| ***Holy Spirit*** | My engagement ring | GOD working powerfully in his disciples |
| ***Hope*** | Material comfort | Eternal reward |
| ***Jesus*** | He loves me and hates legalism | I love him and obey his commandments |
| ***Love*** | Carnal knowledge | Seeking others’ eternal benefit |
| ***Mentoring*** | Advice and counseling | Making disciples of leaders |
| ***Miracles*** | Happened a long time ago | Normal outcomes of Christian spirituality |
| ***Mission*** | Salaried theologians go overseas | TAKING Christ into households and markets |
| ***Prayer*** | Wishing for more ease & comfort | Pleading with God for souls and churches |
| ***Religion*** | Private, individual preferences | Public identity and convictions |
| ***Spirituality*** | self-gratification | Power to bless others |
| ***Stewardship*** | Others supporting my budget | Sharing with those in need |
| ***Theology*** | Abstract ideas about God | Explaining how to experience God’s power |
| ***Training*** | Educating scholars in classrooms | Passing on everything to the faithful anywhere |
| ***Warfare*** | Political lobbying | Despoiling demons |
| ***Wealth*** | Personal possessions & prestige | Meeting needs and financing mission |
| ***Word of God*** | Biblical exegesis | Hearing from God via the Bible & prophecy |

Copyright © 2010 by Galen Currah, George Patterson, and Edward Aw.  
Permission is granted to copy, translate, post and distribute freely.