

***Near the dawn of Christianity,  
being a follower of Jesus  
meant serious, all-out commitment  
to His ambitious plans  
to impact the world.***

—Dale Galloway



***As people on the front lines,  
laity have a remarkable opportunity  
to make a difference in their own mission fields  
—their workplaces, neighborhoods,  
and communities.***

—Bill M. Sullivan

# A NEW IDEA THAT HAS WORKED FOR A LONG TIME

Lay Christians have been starting churches since the dawn of Christianity. The mandate for lay participation is implied even if not explicitly stated by Paul in Ephesians 4:11-12: “It was he 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 might be built up.”

In the Book of Acts, people with varying backgrounds were effective church starters. Their drive for this ministry came from their upper room experience. Lloyd John Ogilvie, Presbyterian chaplain of the Senate, described it like this, “When He (the Holy Spirit) enters a human being, the mind is transformed, the computer of the brain is given new data, the will is released from bondage, and the nervous system becomes the channel of supernatural energy” (*Acts*, in *The Communicator’s Commentary*, 57).

After what happened in them in the upper room, their main prerequisite for starting a new church was a conviction that God had “sent” them to a place to bear witness to Jesus. They soon discovered that whenever anyone believed their witness, a fellowship of believers was needed to strengthen, instruct, and encourage the new converts. Then as now, churches were needed to conserve the fruits of evangelism efforts.

As they started congregations for discipling the new believers they discovered a wonderful serendipity of new church evangelism—new churches conserve converts but they also attract new people who do not know the Lord.

Notice there is no mention of any difference between clergy and laity in the Ephesian passage.

Eventually, however, as the Early Church continued to expand, “professional clergy” were needed to preserve the work so they were commissioned and given authority to do “full-time” ministry.

That development produced many benefits but also encouraged or even inhibited some degree of lay participation. Ministry roles became blurred that prompted some laity to opt for spectator status and move from the sweat and passion of the playing field to the bench or the sidelines. But that was never the intent of developing the full-time pastor.

Adding the professional clergy was planned to stimulate increased lay involvement through the training and equipping of the people of God for ministry. The Early Church grew because the ministry of the church was considered to be the responsibility and normal expression of all believers. They had found spiritual transformation and the news was too good to keep.

# MISSIONS HAS COME HOME TO YOUR CHURCH

The recognition of the United States and Canada as a mission field represents an inclusive shift for Nazarene global missions. The circumstances inspiring missions have expanded dramatically. In the past churches in Western nations, primarily the United States, sent thousands of missionaries and millions of dollars to evangelize other world areas. Now Christianity in many of those world areas is growing faster than in the Western countries.

At the same time growing secularism and religious pluralism compete with the church in the western world. Society is no longer conducive to authentic evangelical Christianity. The new challenge for the church in the United States and Canada is much the same as in distant countries described as mission fields. The whole world is now a mission field.

The missionary sending church in the United States and Canada is learning what it means to be a sent church—sent on a missionary journey to unreached people in nearby neighborhoods and cities. Unprecedented immigration to the West from nearly every country in the world provides the Church an opportunity as well as the need to engage in a new kind of cross-cultural mission at home.

The Great Commission can now be implemented in any city or even in any neighborhood. In Matt. 28:19, Jesus directs His followers to “make disciples of all nations.” The imperative in the verse is not the word “go” but rather “make disciples.” It might be better translated as “In your going . . .” or “Wherever you go . . .” Jesus knew that eventually His followers would disperse throughout the world.

Previously, the “go” has been so emphasized that some have been led to think that it is only in going to somewhere else that one can be obedient to the missionary call. Jesus instructed His followers to make disciples among all people regardless of where they might find themselves.

We are a missional church and we know that the missional mandate begins for us where we live—in our Jerusalem.

Now missional congregations are seizing opportunities to sponsor new churches in neighboring communities and sometimes within their own buildings.

The need to start new churches in the United States and Canada is far from over. With a missional foundation the church here will do what it has always done on every mission field—start new churches!



***Lost people are just as lost in the United States  
and Canada as they are in any  
area of the world.***

# DO YOU KNOW YOUR NEW NEIGHBORS?

## At the end of the '90s . . .

- T F More Jews lived in the U.S.A. than in Israel.
- T F More persons of African descent lived in the U.S.A. than any country except Nigeria.
- T F More Samoans lived in the U.S.A. than in Samoa.
- T F More Hispanics lived in the U.S.A. than any country except Mexico or Spain.
- T F More Cubans lived in Miami than any other place except for Havana.
- T F More Armenians lived in Los Angeles than any city in the world.
- T F Asian population grew by 107 percent.
- T F Hispanic population grew 53 percent.

(Key to quiz—all true)

## Check out your neighborhood . . .

1. Who are the unreached people in your area?
2. What could your church do to gain credibility with these people?
3. Who do you know in the community that could help you get acquainted with members of this people group?
4. Ask teachers, social workers, or health care professionals what the great need is among these new neighbors?
5. How does God direct you as you pray for the needs you discover?

# LAYPERSONS—CHECK OUT THE BIG PICTURE

The big picture of NewStart is to win more people for Christ not to simply start more churches or grow the denomination. The Nazarene NewStart ministry is a well-designed program that has been field tested and approved by the denominational leadership that gives local churches—and the persons who attend those churches—permission to start new works.

The dream is for all laity to be involved somehow in starting a church.

Like our church's global missionary efforts, everyone will not go but everyone can give and pray and find some way to help. Some can build buildings. Some can become missionaries on loan to a new work. Some can give prayer, monetary support, or needed supplies to help start a new church. Some can become pioneers for starting new works. The Lord of the Church will surprise some with a call to become leaders for new churches. Some will become members of core groups who are the key personnel in starting new churches.

Risk takers are needed. People willing to think outside their comfort zone are especially useful. Or as one lay member of a core group said, "I am learning to think outside the box that I have been in all my life. It's frightening and fulfilling at the same time."

While the challenge of starting new churches is great, the rewards are equally as great—and often greater.



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starting a church.***

# A FRIENDLY QUIZ

Warning—some of these ideas could revolutionize your Christian life. You can take the quiz, grade yourself, and consider the ideas.

- T F 1. Lay involvement in starting churches goes back to the Early Church.
- T F 2. The Early Church's drive to win the world was an idea that started in a committee meeting where they discussed the needs of the world.
- T F 3. John Wesley used lay preachers to help him establish Methodism.
- T F 4. If new church evangelism is left only to the clergy, the world can be won within two centuries.
- T F 5. The term NewStart means local congregations starting new churches the right way in the right place with the right leader.
- T F 6. The Board of General Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene has declared that the United States and Canada are mission fields.
- T F 7. The word "missional" means extending the influence of Christ outside the church walls into the needy world around us.
- T F 8. The reason many laypeople have never been significantly involved in starting a new church is because they have never been challenged by the possibilities.
- T F 9. The term "missions has come home" means that people from lands where the church once sent missionaries are now moving to North America and they sometimes bring the church with them.
- T F 10. God welcomes creativity and vision in the possibilities of sharing our faith in new ways. NewStart may be the exact dream God has been giving you for a new challenge and a new achievement for Him.

Check the answers and score yourself: All are true except 2 and 4. As you reflect on the quiz, what new ideas did you glean from the quiz?

# NEW CHURCH EVANGELISM 101

To more fully develop the foundational ideas for new church evangelism, work through the following suggestions. Jot down your insights and new ideas as you work through the list.

- 1. Local church history.** Every church was once a new church. Inquire about the beginning of your own congregation. When did it begin? Who were the charter members? Who was the founding pastor? Why did those pioneers start this church?
  
- 2. Missional focus.** How is global missions like new church evangelism in the U.S.A. and Canada? Review accounts from missionary reading books about how churches are started on mission fields. What methods are used in other cultures? What is their motivation for starting new churches?
  
- 3. Get information.** Research what others are doing. Ask your pastor for a copy of *GROW* magazine. Review stories in any issue about the beginnings of new Nazarene churches.
  
- 4. Build awareness.** Check other cultural or language groups. Describe the different ways in which other cultural groups worship and organize their church activities. What can your church learn and benefit from the influence of the immigrant churches? What are the possibilities of sharing your facilities to start another church?

- 5. *Sent vs. sending church.*** What is the meaning of the term “a sent church”? Define the distinction between a “sending church” and a “sent” church. What missional activities would characterize a “sent” church?
- 6. *Diversity check.*** Does your local congregation reflect the cultural diversity of its neighborhood or city? Identify unreached cultural minority groups in your community.
- 7. *Check the record.*** Read Acts 1 and 2—Note the commissioning words of Jesus in Acts 1:8 and the description of the crowd on the day of Pentecost—Acts 2:5. The gospel message spread because Peter had the opportunity to witness to people from around the world visiting in Jerusalem. What does this example suggest for missions in a multicultural society?
- 8. *Study the biblical pattern.*** The church at Antioch—Acts 13. Note the influence this congregation had on the first missionary journey by the apostle Paul and the churches that were started as a result.
- 9. *Listen again to Jesus.*** Review the Great Commission—Matthew 28:16-20. Note that the mandate is to “make disciples.” Where and how are disciples to be made? The motivation for starting a new church is to make new disciples.

# DOES GOD WANT YOU TO HELP START A NEW CHURCH?

- 1. *Begin dialogue with your pastor.*** Build a relationship of prayer and seeking the will of God for starting new churches. Your pastor will be well informed about the missional emphasis of the denomination.
- 2. *Do what needs to be done.*** Respond to needs you see around you and keep open to the possibilities that your efforts could lead to starting a new church. Examples might be language Sunday School classes, ESL, compassion activities, or home Bible studies.
- 3. *Start a small group.*** The idea of small or cell groups is not a new phenomenon. Many variations exist to nurture believers or start new congregations. John Wesley, a theological forebear of the Church of the Nazarene, implemented the principle of small groups as a vehicle for church growth and renewal. By the end of the 18th century, Wesley had developed more than 10,000 class meetings.
- 4. *Organize a mission focus group.*** Several decades ago, a Washington, D.C., congregation pioneered developing small groups, called “mission groups” or “task groups.” Group members focused on listening to God for specific nearby missional assignments, perhaps in their neighborhood or community. Their guidance for new expressions of Christian service came during prayer as they asked what God wanted done. Think of the hundreds of new churches that might be started if in every small group every meeting closed with a prayer request, “Lord show us what part you want us to have in new church evangelism?”
- 5. *Reach beyond your church—and even your city.*** Often new church evangelism can be stimulated by opportunities that are beyond the area around your church. Perhaps such an interest would lead to intercessory prayer, helping fund the opening services at a church, Work and Witness commitments, or even church members who would be on loan for a specific period of time who would either drive or even move to the new location.
- 6. *Use Work and Witness to stimulate new church evangelism.*** Laity can make a solid contribution to help new congregations develop facilities. Many laypersons have electrical, plumbing, and building expertise that can lead to the development of fledgling congregations. In the Work and Witness process the burden and possibilities of starting new churches will flourish.
- 7. *Ask God to give you new church evangelism eyes.*** The Scriptures are filled with examples of persons who recognized new realities and saw amazing possibilities for service after experiencing a life-changing encounter with God. Their own transformation prompted a desire to extend His kingdom into new frontiers in ways they had never previously considered. That inner drive can become a passion for starting a new church.

# LET'S REVIEW THE BEDROCK BASICS OF NEW CHURCH EVANGELISM.

List your answer as a check mark.

- ▷ God empowers all people to start churches.

New idea \_\_\_\_\_ Familiar Idea \_\_\_\_\_ Idea I can use \_\_\_\_\_

- ▷ No layperson can start a new church without the full support of their pastor.

New idea \_\_\_\_\_ Familiar Idea \_\_\_\_\_ Idea I can use \_\_\_\_\_

- ▷ Starting new churches is the most effective form of evangelism.

New idea \_\_\_\_\_ Familiar Idea \_\_\_\_\_ Idea I can use \_\_\_\_\_

- ▷ Churches starting new churches is the cornerstone of Newstart.

New idea \_\_\_\_\_ Familiar Idea \_\_\_\_\_ Idea I can use \_\_\_\_\_

- ▷ Laity are needed to start churches.

New idea \_\_\_\_\_ Familiar Idea \_\_\_\_\_ Idea I can use \_\_\_\_\_

- ▷ Laity bring a unique set of skills, gifts, and relationships to new church evangelism.

New idea \_\_\_\_\_ Familiar Idea \_\_\_\_\_ Idea I can use \_\_\_\_\_

- ▷ Laity have connections that enable them to become effective church starters.

New idea \_\_\_\_\_ Familiar Idea \_\_\_\_\_ Idea I can use \_\_\_\_\_

- ▷ Laity can make other laypersons aware of a need for a new church.

New idea \_\_\_\_\_ Familiar Idea \_\_\_\_\_ Idea I can use \_\_\_\_\_

- ▷ Laity can start small group ministries that can become the catalyst for a new congregation.

New idea \_\_\_\_\_ Familiar Idea \_\_\_\_\_ Idea I can use \_\_\_\_\_

## PLEDGE TO BE AVAILABLE

Jesus, faithful Lord of the church, will lead you in discovering your next step. Though you may not be able to do everything, you can do something. Ask God to direct your creativity and commitment to some worthy new church evangelism cause. Sign your name and date the statement below.

*I pledge to keep open to whatever God wants me to do to help in the missional thrust of new church evangelism.*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_