

Assignment 13

What is the importance of ministry to the cities and migrants? Write an article for your church magazine, on the importance of focusing on church planting efforts in the city and among ethnic populations.

In the next decade, over 750 million people will migrate from rural areas into cities, five million people are moving into sizeable cities every month, essentially a new San Francisco every month. People migrate to the cities, increasingly diverse types of people and communities are migrating there, Cities will have ethnic and cultural diversity.

Along with cities grow, the economic growth has severe disparity. There are increasing of homelessness, unemployment. There are all types of poverty: lack of means and/or means of finding resources for stability and sustainability. This includes not only financial poverty, but also knowledge capital, resulting in a poverty of hope. There followed a sense of powerlessness, in contrast to empowered. Especially those immigrants, are facing more challenges in the cities than their country of origin.

Due to the increasing of population, urban people have to face more pressure from work, and culture. Especially when they're in crisis like unemployment, sickness, broken relationships, sense of meaning in life, unconditional acceptance, hope for life, etc. become very important for them. Normally people in urban centers are considered stiff-necked for their unbelief, but actually the reason is that the churches has isolated themselves behind the wall, they don't have the sensibility of the need for the urban people.

Meanwhile, immigrants have to face even more challenge than those urban people. Besides the culture and language barriers, they have to deal with the shifting of identities, plus the sense of belonging, sense of unsettlement, sense of powerless and meaningless, and lack of hope for the future.

Among urban people and immigrants, Church planting is the most crucial strategy right now. Urban centers are the very best possible places to plant churches.

Because the increasing of diversity in culture and people, new churches should be extremely culture sensitive, it's not people coming to comply to the rules in church, but churches should have open dialogue with people from different culture and religion background, not to judge or condemn, but to understand and proclaim.

For working people, new churches should be places where they could find spiritual guidance and support for their work and home.

For immigrants, new churches should be their homes where they get accepted, understood, and supported. And they could know Jesus in the faith community.

Church planting in cities is a new way today, in which God calls us to come out of our church zone, to go out reach more people geographically in the centers of cultures, but spiritually marginnized and isolated by the world. And it's a calling of unity also, to let all the churches work together under one mission, despite their denominations.