

LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community.
The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups
as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- How can you (as an individual, or as a community group) pray for the Riverview-Brandon church plant as well as the St. Petersburg campus?
- What are some ways that church planting costs those who go and those who stay? Why should it seem normal to us that the God's mission to reach the world is going to come at a cost?
- How might you explain to a friend why we are planting a church in Riverview-Brandon?
- In what ways was your faith for this plant affected by walking through the truths from scripture in this message?
- In what ways do you see our local church fulfilling the call to make disciples of people to the ends of the earth?
- In what ways do you see our local church fulfilling the call to those who are like sheep without a shepherd, to give them something to eat?
- How Genesis 18:17-19 demonstrate that God has always intended to reach all nations of the world and not just one?
- How does it demonstrate the principle that God's election is for the purpose of reaching others and not an end in itself? Can you think of other scriptures that demonstrate this principle?
- Do you think people today (inside and outside churches) are often like sheep without a shepherd? If so, explain how.
- Explain how the local church is implicit in the great commission of Matthew 28:18-20.

Why Do We Plant Churches?

Jerry Cisar — January 17, 2016

Introduction

We plant churches because local churches are the primary means through which God fulfills His promise to restore the nations of the world to Himself.

I. Because God has always purposed to reach all peoples by means of His people discipling others into the right and just ways of God. (Genesis 18:17-19)

A. God has always purposed to reach all peoples. (12:3; 18:18).

B. By means of discipling others (disciple-making) (18:19)

C. *...into the right and just ways of God.*

i. *"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?"*
(18:25)

ii. Discipling others is all about teaching them to be followers of *"the Way"*.

II. Because the Church is God's chosen means for making disciples. (Matthew 28:18-20)

- A. These verses are the conclusion to Matthew's Gospel.
 - i. Disciple making involves teaching other disciples to put the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7) into practice.
 - ii. Jesus is exercising His authority to build the church. (Matthew 16:18)
 - iii. The church is implicit in the command to baptize.
 - iv. Additionally the book of Acts demonstrates the fulfillment of this commission with believers going everywhere sharing the Word and everywhere the Gospel was preached and received, a church sprang to life.
- B. The only way to accomplish true disciple-making is to do so in the context of a local church.
 - i. Elmer Towns wrote, “...one of the reasons why so much foreign missions work is fruitless is because great effort is spent on winning people to Christ **apart from** identifying them with a New Testament church.”
 - ii. God's primary method of reaching a new community is through sent preachers (Romans 10), and where the word is believed a Christ-centered church is planted.

III. Because we inherit the command to “give them something to eat”. (Mark 6:34-37)

- A. Jesus' response to the people being *like sheep without a shepherd* is that *he began teaching them many things*.
 - i. Not only does Jesus shepherd them through teaching, but he tells the apostles to give them something to eat.
 - ii. Acts 2:42
- B. People today are like sheep without a shepherd.
- C. We inherit from the apostles this instruction to give them something to eat.

Conclusion

We plant churches because God has always willed to reach all peoples by means of His people discipling others into the right and just ways of God, because the Church is God's chosen means for making disciples, and because we inherit the command to give wandering shepherdless people something to eat.