

# THE GROWING NEED FOR CHURCH PLANTING IN THE UNITED STATES

*Church planting is one of the most effective methods of reaching the unbeliever, unchurched and de-churched in the United States. With over 100 million in these categories, church planting is imperative.*

## Why Plant Churches?

**N**ew churches have outreach in their DNA and are more effective at reaching the lost than established congregations.

**"Among evangelical churches, those [churches] under three years old will win ten people to Christ per year for every hundred church members; three to fifteen year old [churches] will win five people per year. After age 15, the number drops to three per year."** —Ed Stetzer

So who are today's unreached and unchurched in America? They're your neighbor and mine and they're a rapidly increasing percentage of the 313 million people in the United States. Multiple studies confirm the numbers of unchurched have doubled since the 1990's.

**Some studies estimate 20-37%, or as much as**

**116 million people, now disavow any religious affiliation.**

A 2013 research study on *Religion in America* by the Pew Forum revealed **"more than one-quarter of American adults have left the faith they were raised in..."**

### SHRINKING NUMBER OF CHURCHES

The church to population ratio is declining rapidly.

- In 1900 there were **27** churches for every 10,000 Americans.
- In 1950 there were **17** churches for every 10,000 Americans
- In 1996 there were **11** churches for every 10,000 Americans.

### FAST GROWING UNCHURCHED SEGMENT

One of the fastest growing groups in the unchurched or de-churched category are



the Millennials, those in the 18-29 age range.

A Barna study found that **"between high school and turning thirty, 43% of these once-active Millennials drop out of regular church attendance—that amounts to eight million twentysomethings who have, for various reasons, given up on church or Christianity."**

**"Religious affiliation in the United States is at its lowest point since it began to be tracked in the 1930s,"** —

Newly released (2013) survey data by University of California, Berkeley researchers

Church plants reach the Millennial generation who often prefer a fresh take on church, a smaller congregation with closer relationships and opportunity for involvement.

Why plant churches? To live out the Great Commission calling here in our Jerusalems. We long to reach those who might not otherwise find the door to faith.

### FOUR MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO CHURCH PLANTING SUCCESS

1. Assessment—having participated in one.
2. Coaching—having a church planting coach.
3. Training—receiving church planting training.
4. Support Network—having a peer group.

## Church Planting Centers Help Churches Survive and Thrive

In 2007, Leadership Network did a study on 200 church planting churches, 100 leaders from 40 denominations and 45 church planting networks looking for what makes for long term sustainability of a church plant. **"The most important conclusions were that... The assessment, preparation and coaching processes for the pastoral leader have a dramatic impact on both the well-being of the planter and the vitality and survivability of the new church."** Another study of 601 church planters, showed **planters with a coach reached twice as many people as those without one.**

Church planting centers are an effective tool for discovering, developing and deploying planters to launch healthy reproductive churches that survive, thrive and reach their communities for Christ.