

Are We Ready To Continue Starting New Churches?

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In a recent study carried out by the SBC, it is appreciated that Hispanic churches have been growing and multiplying in percentage terms throughout the United States, as well as African American churches. However, this does not mean that you have to stop accelerating. Rather, we must take advantage of this move of God and join Him in what He is already doing. As Hispanics we can make a difference in the Church Planting Movement.

WE HAVE A HUGE DEMOGRAPHIC NEED

The Hispanic people in the United States have experienced accelerated demographic development in recent decades. Hispanics are one of the fastest growing groups in the US Here is a very general picture of that growth in round numbers:

1980—14 million

1990—22 million

2000—35 million

2007—45 million

2015— 56 million

2017—58,838,000 (This amount according to <https://www.pewresearch.org>)

How has the growth of Hispanics been in the State of Arkansas?

1990—19,876

2003—100,379

2010—186,050

2014—205,000

According to the Bible, God wants "no one to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3: 9).

THE NEED IS GREAT, BUT OUR GOD IS GREATER

God has been characterized by showing his greatness throughout the ages. He can do everything.

God has the power to commission us

The people of Israel were enslaved in Egypt for over 400 years (Exodus 3: 9). They cried out to God for deliverance. So, He decides to seek a leader to free the Israelite people from their slavery. He appears in a theophany to Moses on Mount Horeb and says: "Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring my people out of Egypt ..." (Exodus 3:10). God commissions Moses for said deliverance. God is the God who sends!

God sent Moses with a commission, that is, with a specific commission or task; just as Jesus did with his disciples and by extension with each one of us. We are sent to make disciples! And what better way to make disciples than through new church planting! ... But, maybe let's say how do we do it? We are not ready!

God has the power to equip us

In the encounter with Moses, God equipped him to carry out the commission entrusted.

First, he equipped him with his presence.

Moses did not feel competent to fulfill the commission. Like many today, he wondered "Who am I to ...?" (Exodus 3:11). Many times we focus on our limitations and weaknesses; we do not see that we are not alone. God is with us! His presence is indispensable for church planting as well as for any task He entrust to us.

God responded to Moses, "Go, for I will be with you" (Exodus 3:12). Was the promise of the divine presence exclusively for Moses? Of course not! The Bible has many, many references to this promise applied to other servants of God and to Christians in general (Joshua 1:5; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 28:20). According to the quote from Matthew, discipleship takes place in a tension between the power of the Lord Jesus and his presence.

New church planting is possible because of God's constant presence with us.

Second, he equipped it with the least obvious resources.

When we see the need to start churches, we are scared to think of such a tremendous task, but has God changed? Isn't the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses the same God we serve? Resources may seem insignificant and insufficient, but in God's hands, they become the opposite. God adds value to them and multiplies them.

What resources did God equip Moses with? Let's read Exodus 4:1-9. It is interesting to note that God used three things that Moses already possessed, he did not give him something extra like an army and powerful weapons. God used the resources that were always there in front of Moses' eyes: a rod that turns into a snake and vice versa, his hand that turns leprous and then heals, and a little water from the river that turns into blood. These three things might be considered of very little value from a human perspective, but God looks at what He can do with them. Many times we do not start new churches because we believe we do not have the necessary resources, yet God can use what we already possess in a mighty way for His glory.

God has already been working in new church planting. Are you and your church willing to join God in this task?

If you want to personally start a new church, or want your church to be a sponsoring church or to support another sponsoring church, please contact Francisco by emailing fgomez@absc.org.