

The SBJT Forum

Editor's Note: Readers should be aware of the forum's format. Gregg R. Allison, Hershael W. York, John Folmar, and Brian Vickers have been asked specific questions to which they have provided written responses. These writers are not responding to one another. Their answers are presented in an order that hopefully makes the forum read as much like a unified presentation as possible.

SBJT: WHAT DOES IT mean for a church to be missional?

Gregg Allison: If you have listened much to contemporary conversations about the church, you realize that one of the most intense and wide-

spread discussions is the *missionality* of the church.¹ The church is *missional* in that it is identified as the body of divinely-called and divinely-sent ministers to proclaim the gospel and advance the kingdom of God. Key to understanding and embracing this attribute is the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus to his disciples recounted in the Gospel of John:

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy

Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld" (John 20:21-23).

After demonstrating to his fearful followers that it was genuinely he, the once-crucified-yet-now-resurrected Lord, Jesus commissioned his disciples with the same commission with which he had been commissioned by the Father. Now, what is this commission?

The *missio Dei*—the mission of God—on which the Son was sent by the Father (John 3:16) and which was accomplished by the Son through obedience to the will of the Father (John 4:34; 5:30) was saving rather than condemning the world (John 3:17), giving eternal life to those who embrace the Son (John 10:28-29; 17:2), executing judgment for those who reject the Son (John 5:22, 27), and raising some to the resurrection of life and others to the resurrection of judgment (John 5:29). What Jesus had been sent to accomplish would be announced by the disciples as their mission: when empowered by the Holy Spirit, they

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would offer the words of forgiveness extended and forgiveness withheld, based on the response of people to their witness of the gospel.

Other biblical passages emphasize this missional characteristic of the church: Jesus' "Great Commission" (Matt 28:18-20); Paul's commendation of preaching the good news (Rom 10:14-17) and ambassadorial charge (2 Cor 5:18-21); Luke's portrayal of the rapid expansion of the church (see discussion below); and the like.

This missional attribute expresses itself in three ways: the church is expansive, contextually sensitive, and (potentially) catholic or universal. The expansion of the missional church is vividly portrayed in narrative form in the book of Acts, which Luke punctuates with this (or a similar) expression: "And the Lord added to their numbers day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47; 5:14; 6:7; 9:31, 42; 11:24; 12:24; 13:49; 16:5; 19:26; 28:30-31).² The "unfinished" ending itself propels all churches—including the contemporary church—toward finishing "the Acts of the Apostles" through expansive efforts.³ This expansion of the missional church extends to church planting endeavors around the globe today.

The sensitivity to contextualization of the missional church is also rendered narratively in the book of Acts. One need only compare three Lukan narratives to gain a strong sense of this emphasis: (1) Peter's proclamation to his (largely) Jewish audience on the day of Pentecost—a message that is replete with Old Testament quotations (Acts 2:14-41); (2) Paul's simple words to the unsophisticated peasants of Lystra to dissuade them from offering sacrifices to Barnabas and himself (Acts 14:8-18); and (3) Paul's address to the philosophically sophisticated Athenians at the Areopagus—a message that only alludes to Old Testament truths (e.g., God is not and cannot be confined to humanly-constructed temples; the whole human race traces its ancestry to Adam) while quoting from Epimenides of Crete and Aratus's poem *Phenomena* (Acts 17:16-34). This comparison enables us to observe the contextualization of the

gospel by the church as it moved into different arenas of ministry, a contextualization that is still demanded today.⁴

Moreover, the missional church is (potentially) catholic or universal. Certainly, the divine goal for the church in terms of extension is that one day it will exist among all people groups throughout the entire world. To state the obvious, Jesus' Great Commission is "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:18), and Jesus' promise of empowerment by the Holy Spirit was so that his disciples will be his "witnesses ... to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This is the goal of the church in terms of its extension—complete universality.⁵ Thus, the missional church indiscriminately preaches the gospel and, when people respond to its message, expands into every corner of the humanly-populated earth.

How does the missional identity of the church differ from what the church has practiced, more or less, from its inception in terms of evangelism, sending and supporting missionaries, and other types of missionary endeavors?⁶ Two key differences are to be noted. First, Moltmann emphasizes the importance of understanding "not that the church 'has' a mission, but the very reverse: that the mission of Christ creates its own church. Mission does not come from the church; it is from mission and in light of mission that the church has to be understood."⁷ This notion contrasts with missions being seen more as an activity of the church rather than in terms of the church's essential image of itself. *Missional* is a matter of identity first, then function.⁸ Furthermore, this emphasis underscores that the missional task of the church has been given to it; it is a divinely given mandate, not a responsibility the church takes to itself.⁹

Second, *missional* is a matter of corporate identity first, then individual engagement. Hunsberger offers this criticism of many churches:

If, for evangelicalism, Christian faith and identity are first personal and individual, its sense of missions tends to be the same. The responsibility to

give witness to Christ is one each person bears. The accent rests on personal evangelism, therefore. Any sense of a church's mission grows from this ground. It is the aggregate of the individual callings to be witnesses. Identity and missions are first and foremost individual matters. Missions is not conceived to be first of all the "mission of the church," to which every member is joined. First it is the mission of the Christian, which in the church becomes a collective responsibility.¹⁰

Accordingly, missions is commonly relegated to the domain and responsibility of the Christians—or, in many cases, committees—in the church, which itself is "mildly irrelevant" to the whole matter; thus, "missions in the end does not belong to the church."¹¹ This entrenched trend must be reversed, and an emphasis on the missional identity of the church helps in this regard.

Practically speaking, missional churches are characterized from their inception by an emphasis on church planting (rather than waiting years/decades for their own development—hiring staff, building expensive facilities, producing successful programs—before turning to starting other churches), giving sacrificially for missional endeavors (from the moment of its launch, Jacob's Well, a church plant in New Jersey, has given 30% of its receipts to missional work), inviting their church planters to "raid" their membership and take with them the best people available to launch other churches, providing training and internships

for church planters, and being on mission through their community or missional groups.

SBJT: HOW SHOULD PASTORS lead in creating a heart for international missions within the life of a local congregation?

Hershael York: In 1818 a band of hearty Kentucky Baptist pioneers founded a new congregation between Georgetown and Frank-

fort, Kentucky, building a rough log sanctuary by a little creek from which the church drew its name, Buck Run. In 1885 the church relocated a few miles up the road to a much more convenient location at another place no one has heard of—called The Forks of Elkhorn—not far from Frankfort, the state capital. The church, which I now serve as pastor, still meets at that idyllic location, surrounded on three sides by gushing streams that nurture blue herons, mallard ducks, Canada geese, and many species of fish.

It's the kind of place and history with which one can be content and satisfied while the rest of the world goes to hell. Illustrious history can masquerade as mission, and continuous church activities can deceive us into believing that we are fulfilling the Great Commission.

Understanding how that happens is not difficult. After all, when we plan our annual calendar or budget, each of the various committees and church ministries inform the proper entities of the resources they need in the coming year. They submit budget appeals and resource requisitions. The budget committee or the church council, in turn, tries to work those needs into an annual ministry plan. Everyone is trying his or her best to use resources wisely and meet the legitimate needs as they emerge.

But there's a problem with that way of doing business. The 14.6 million Azeri Turks of Iran did not submit a request, reminding our committee structure that if we do not provide the funds, time, and effort to reach them, they will perish in an eternal hell. The chief of the Asheninka-Kampa in the Amazon basin totally ignored our deadlines and did not fill out our paperwork. Though we will not fail to budget for the church picnic, the 536,000 Pasemah of Indonesia will simply have to understand our established priorities if nothing is left over for them.

I suspect that we are not alone in this tendency to focus on ourselves. In fact, many churches do not even evaluate their Great Commission involvement to gauge their effectiveness as a body.

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They measure baptisms, income, and attendance, but if those things are going well, they consider their efforts successful and blessed by God, all the while forgetting that Jesus commanded us to go into all the *world*.

As much as the heart of God delights when we reach people in our community and make disciples of them, we cannot ignore that Scripture explicitly teaches that the name of Jesus must be made great among the *nations*. Whether fighting our own battles or delighting in our own blessings, our concern often stops at the boundaries of our property. Self-centeredness is the default condition. Churches who have great strategies to minister to the sick may never think about those who are dying in Uzbekistan. Though we may have a great desire to grow the church, we seldom have the same excitement for reaching those whom we will neither baptize nor add to our membership.

How paradoxical that Jesus would initially give his global mandate to a small band of disciples who had never traveled far, but he left no doubt about his meaning: make disciples of *all the nations* (*panta ta ethnē*). As audacious as that sounds today at The Forks of Elkhorn, Kentucky, it must have seemed more so in so out of a way place as Galilee. Those first disciples did not have much to help them fulfill their daunting challenge: no cars, computers, cell phones, mass marketing, direct advertising, satellite, or television—just a bloody cross, an empty tomb, and a risen Savior.

Our challenge today is to believe with every fiber of our beings that the same is all we need. Once we accept that, then we will realize that we have no excuse. No border must stop us, no cultural difference discourage us, no political regime intimidate us into ignoring Christ's command. Jesus did not politely ask us to take the gospel where we find it safe or convenient to do so, but commanded us to take our own cross with us wherever we go. This is inherently dangerous work.

My job as a pastor is to preach the gospel in such a way that it compels its beneficiaries to share it relentlessly with others, but also with a global

vision that does not allow them to see taking it to the nations as something that can be done merely by proxy. I must keep the world on their hearts as tenaciously as I preach the gospel for their sins. They must know that to receive the forgiveness of sins is to receive a mandate to go to the nations.

So from the Forks of the Elkhorn we are constantly sending teams to the world. We have a major ministry in Romania, have built church buildings in the Amazon jungle from lumber cut only with a chainsaw, have taught pastors in Nepal, have used agricultural techniques as a platform in Ethiopia, have adopted children from Asia, Africa, and eastern Europe, have had a partnership with IMB personnel in South Africa, and are currently strategizing to adopt one of the 3,800 unengaged, unreached people groups in the world. In addition, we have greatly increased our giving to the cooperative program and more than doubled our giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. We are keeping less of our money for ourselves and sending much more to the nations, to those who will not submit their budget and calendar needs.

To fulfill this mandate will not be without cost, and we had best prepare ourselves and our churches for it. To get the gospel to the world will cost us dollars, dysentery, and perhaps even death in some circumstances, but if we are followers of Christ, we must follow him to those for whom he died in places where he's never been proclaimed.

SBJT: HOW DOES GLOBALIZATION affect ministry and missions in a local church setting outside the West?

John Folmar: As the recent unrest spread throughout North Africa and the Middle East, across the Persian Gulf in Iran, and into the Gulf states, one thing was clear: the movements behind the unrest were feeding off each other. They were interconnected by Facebook and the web, and they knew what

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was happening with their neighbors. True, each country had its own unique set of circumstances and pressures, but the fact remains that even here in the Middle East the world is now inextricably intertwined.

On any given Friday morning, you will find more than fifty different nationalities represented at our church gathering. (Our church founders established the weekly meetings on Friday to accord with the Muslim weekend.) The United Christian Church of Dubai (UCCD) gathers in the midst of a sea of Islam and multicultural materialism in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, a small oil-rich nation that borders Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf. People come literally from all over the world to work in Dubai. Our members have come from Africa, throughout the Middle East, up into Central Asia, stretching eastward to Japan and Taiwan, then southward to Singapore and Indonesia, and still further south in Australia and New Zealand. Our westerners hail from South America, up through the Caribbean islands, then further north into Mexico, the U.S. and Canada, and all over Europe. The lure of lucre draws them from everywhere. You can imagine the challenges this poses to pastoring.

What have I learned pastoring a multi-ethnic church? Most importantly, I have learned that for all the cultural issues that divide us—and there are many—our shared knowledge of Christ Jesus as Lord transcends them all. We are, for all our diversity, sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, in need of the one remedy which only Jesus could secure—redemption, the forgiveness of sins. We have received Christ and together become “one new man” through the new creation begun in him (Eph 3:15). As a result, we share rich times of corporate worship and enjoy deep, cross-cultural relationships that only Christ could have secured. If the church is to be a “colony of heaven,” then we regularly experience foretastes of that “great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” (Rev 7:9).

Our multicultural congregation has the potential to be a potent witness for the power and truth of Christianity. In the Muslim world, “Christianity” is strongly associated with the West, and particularly the U.S., and more particularly Hollywood. Christians are morally suspect, to say the least. Therefore, when I tell local Muslims that our congregation consists of Middle Easterners, South Asians, Central Asians, East Asians, and more, they are surprised; which is fine. But my hope is that their surprise will become intrigue and interest in the truth that binds us together as they experience the fellowship among believers who share nothing in common except Christ. That’s why we emphasize church membership in our diverse congregation. To the extent that we self-consciously commit together in covenant with one another, we have the potential to be a 3-dimensional display of God’s glory. Nowhere else in the Middle East do fifty nationalities come together like this. It only happens in the churches of Jesus Christ. Evangelism in the Middle East—and everywhere else—should not occur only through the individual, but through the congregation as a whole. Our church’s goal is to be a catalyst for revival in our region through our gospel proclamation and through our corporate witness of love, rooted in the forgiveness we’ve received in Christ (John 13:35; 1 John 4:11).

To be sure, multiculturalism in the Middle East presents unique challenges. First, there is the issue of maintaining a rigorously biblical ministry. In a multi-ethnic context, with believers coming to us from so many different denominations and cultural backgrounds, whose expectations should govern? Whose ministry philosophy do we adopt? It is extremely difficult for a number of reasons to maintain a biblical ministry in multicultural contexts. Below I will list a couple concrete examples of why this is the case.

Difficult Doctrine. I fear that many “international churches” have earned the reputation of being lowest common denominator ministries. The level of diversity leads many of these churches or their leaders to dumb down doctrine. We don’t

have a church on every corner in Dubai, the argument goes, and so we must pursue a policy of theological rapprochement and avoid controversial truths. For example, I was preaching on election from 1 Peter 1:1, and someone commented afterward that our church should avoid doctrinal controversies and “stick to the basics.” I could not accept that advice, though. Not only does the text contain the doctrine of election, but also, if God is not sovereign in everything from election to glorification, then I’m packing up and going home! The obstacles to evangelism in the Muslim world are simply too great. If Paul had not been convinced of individual election, he too would have left Corinth (see Acts 18:9-11).

Membership. Another example is church membership. Among our congregation, neither our Sydney Anglicans, nor our African Pentecostals, nor our Indian high-churchmen have historically practiced church membership, which admittedly has been a Baptist hallmark. So, what should we do? We should search the Scriptures and conform our practices to biblical norms. Everywhere church discipline is mentioned in the New Testament, there (by implication) is church membership. It was practiced in the first century (2 Cor 2:6), and we should practice it today.

Multi-ethnic ministers must seek, by God’s grace—not the latest fashion in market-evangelicalism—but the Bible’s guidelines on how to conduct ourselves in the household of God (1 Tim 3:15). The New Testament actually has a lot to say about how we should conduct ourselves corporately. To be sure, we must exercise wisdom to know when an issue of governance or church order is culture-bound, and when it is normative for the Christian life according to the Scriptures. But this argues for more rigorous adherence to the text, not less.

Second, in thinking through ministering in multicultural contexts, one must also resist the prevailing winds of evangelicalism. From my perch in Dubai, I am shocked at how widespread the superficial, nominal evangelicalism is that

takes its soundings from outward success and seeker sensitivity. David Wells in *No Place For Truth* targeted the “marketing ethos” prevalent in American evangelicalism. But his thesis could now easily be applied globally. A quick look at the books on display in the Bible Society in the Persian Gulf will amply prove the case. Benny Hinn, Brian McLaren, T. D. Jakes—they are all right there for the taking. People around the world are increasingly reading the same books. In a multicultural environment, it is easy to be blown along with the prevailing theological winds. In the West, we benefit from generations of denominational reflection on theological issues. But in Arabia, where we do not possess such a pedigree, we must carefully evaluate the latest fads.

Third, one must make sure to keep the main thing the main thing. The sheikhs here in the United Arab Emirates have not yet authorized further church planting in their country. Therefore, since only a relative handful of churches meet here, we at UCCD are forced to grow together amid many cultures and even denominational backgrounds. This is potentially a good thing for the gospel. Yet it’s also wise to learn how to distinguish between primary and secondary issues. Primary issues concern the gospel. Secondary issues are of lesser importance, and we must allow some leeway in a multicultural church setting, especially one in a restricted access country where church planting is not allowed legally. It is a matter of wisdom, of course, to distinguish between what is a primary versus a secondary issue.

In my experience, a gospel-centered, expositional ministry is the key to vital ministry in the Middle East, or anywhere else. Our multicultural setting presents many challenges to building churches and spreading the gospel, but God’s people—wherever they are from—will listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd.¹²

SBJT: HOW CAN SHORT-TERM missions be an effective way of doing theological education on the field? And what are some important things

to keep in mind when thinking about short-term missions?

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Brian Vickers: This question could be answered in a variety of ways, but I'll address it from my personal experience as someone who regularly travels on short-term trips to teach in formal and informal settings. My experience is in South and East Asia so I can only speak directly to those regions, though I suspect the situation is similar in many other places. I will address what I see as the most significant factors of which we should

be aware when thinking about taking theological education to the field in short-term formats.

When most American Christians think about theological education on the mission field, they envision something similar to our seminaries and colleges—just in a different cultural setting. I speak to many people who are interested in either teaching full-time in an overseas seminary (assuming their presence is desired), or helping fund a seminary or two in order to provide resources like books. These are great ways of getting involved in theological education overseas, but if we think of theological education on the field only in terms of formal seminaries and schools then, at least in places like South and East Asia, we are thinking about training for probably less than 10% of the total population of pastors. That number is likely a liberal estimate. The fact of the matter is that most pastors and students in many places overseas who want theological education will never be able to attend a formal seminary for any significant length of time, if at all. There are various obstacles for pursuing formal theological training, but I'll address the three I've encountered most often.

The first is simply a matter of finances. As American students know, and know increasingly, seminary is expensive. It is even more so for the typical student in South or East Asia. Besides the money

needed for tuition and books, there is the issue of leaving one's livelihood and moving to wherever a seminary is located—usually a central city or town. Even if some money is available, it is likely not enough to move an entire family. It is often the case that a student who has the necessary finances must leave his family behind while pursuing his studies. That is obviously not ideal on a number of levels. For one, it splits up a family for months at a time. Even in cultures where that sort of separation is more common (I've met a few fathers in South Asia who for a time moved to a different location for a job and sent money back home) than it is for us, it is a real obstacle for formal training.

Secondly, there are cultural issues faced by the would-be seminary student in South and East Asia with which we may have little experience or awareness. Let's say a young man, 22 years old, wants to leave his town or village and go to seminary. He goes away to a city to pursue his studies, perhaps returning during breaks, and then when his education is over he returns home only to find he has no standing in his town. He's still young, he's been away to a city (which implies he likely has money and resources not available to others in his town—even though that is probably not the case), and now he is in his hometown trying to take on a position of leadership over people with whom he has not earned respect either in terms of his age or his experience.

Thirdly, there are too many instances of young men leaving their towns and villages to go pursue theological education and then not returning home after finishing their course of study. This phenomenon often takes place when students come to America for education then end up staying after earning their degree, but it happens just as frequently when students pursue theological education in their home countries. It's not difficult to see why. There are more opportunities in cities, better prospects for earning a living, and the student returning home may likely face the situation described above.

Given these realities—and I've only touched

the surface—what is the alternative to formal theological education for those unable to attend seminary or bible college? If students are not able to come to a seminary, then theological education should come to them. Of course this sort of approach to theological education in a missions context is not new; it's the way theological education was delivered in the early church. The Apostle Paul not only evangelized and planted churches, he returned multiple times to the young churches, sometimes staying for long periods of time, teaching and training leaders. This approach to theological education is just as viable today as it was in the first century. I am certainly not advocating that we abandon formal theological education on the field, and I believe we should support solid evangelical seminaries overseas by supplying teachers when needed (at least temporarily), resources, and finances. I myself regularly visit overseas seminaries and schools to teach intensive bible and theology courses to students enrolled in degree programs. But there are countless pastors and students we can help if we are willing to think about training outside a classroom. This is where short-term trips can play at least a small role in the larger program of providing biblical and theological training on the mission field.

For instance, a well prepared, small team can travel to a remote area and stay for a period of days, a week, or longer and provide basic theological training in any number of subjects depending on the strengths of the team and the needs on the field. Is this approach as thorough as formal seminary education? Of course not—but no-one would argue that it is—but if the idea is to provide some sort of training to people whose circumstances make seminary or college impossible, then the benefit should not be underestimated. Also, if there is a long-term goal of returning to the same area on many occasions, then short terms teams can accomplish a great deal over time. Moreover, if short-term teams work in concert with established workers in the field then they are taking part in fulfilling long-term goals.

In order to be most effective, there are several things that a short-term team should keep in mind when preparing a trip. First, the team should be aware of the needs of the people with whom they will meet. This is accomplished through close contact with a person (whether a missionary or a national) working in the field. Allow that person to play a key role in determining what will be most effective in terms of subjects and resources. I cannot express enough how important advance contact with people in the field is to having a successful trip.

Secondly, be prepared to teach Bible study methods and to give big-picture overviews of the Bible. In many areas the pastors and students who meet with my teams are relatively new believers who have not been trained to study the Bible or taught about how the whole Bible hangs together as the revelation of God's plan of redemption in Christ. If a team can spend several days introducing students to the Bible and how to study it, then that trip can have a lasting impact.

Thirdly, if more specific topics are on the agenda then be sure that team members are prepared and able to cover whatever the topics may be. The team does not have to be made up of experts, but it is vital to assess the strengths of the team and then play to those strengths. If a team has several people who are experienced in doing discipleship and practical ministry, then let that be their focus. If there are members with experience with preparing and delivering sermons then they should plan sessions on developing those skills. Ideally it is best to have an idea ahead of time about what the team is going to do in terms of training and teaching then recruit members accordingly, but that is not always possible to do.

Fourth, be flexible. Many times I've heard missionaries say, "you have to be fluid because flexible is too rigid." Short terms teams should be well prepared and ready to teach and train according to whatever is planned, but they should also be ready for plans to change at any moment, for multiple questions unrelated to the teaching topic, unfore-

seen logistical snags, and altered schedules. Short term teams should leave American, corporate-style, precise (perhaps even laminated) agendas at home. In addition, be careful not to assume that because you have some literature or ministry focus that is successful here at home that it will be successful, or relevant, everywhere.

Fifth, be realistic. A short-term team will not bring about the total biblical and theological transformation of a group of pastors in a week. Plan carefully and do whatever your particular team is gifted to do, but keep it all in a larger perspective. You are sowing seeds and passing on the knowledge and experience God has granted you to pastors and students who often have very limited opportunities—particularly in comparison to what we take for granted daily. Last year in South Asia, a pastor from a group I met with for a week came up to me on the last day of the training and said, “I pray that God will give me the opportunity to come to a school like yours and study ... that would be the answer to many, many prayers.” He may not be able to come to us, but we can go to him.

ENDNOTES

¹Some of this material is adapted from Gregg R. Allison, *The Assembly of “The Way:” The Doctrine of the Church* (Wheaton: Crossway, forthcoming). For further reading on missional churches, see: Darrell L. Guder and Lois Barrett, *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, (The Gospel and Our Culture Series; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); Craig Van Gelder, *The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007); idem, *The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000); Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2006); Ed Stetzer and David Putman, *Breaking the Missional Code: Your Church Can Become a Missionary in Your Community* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2006); Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2006); Alan J Roxburgh and M. Scott Boren, *Introducing the*

Missional Church: What It Is, Why It Matters, How to Become One (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009).

²Narratively, such comments function in Acts to indicate that, despite persecution and internal problems, God’s blessing was abundant on the church.

³Graham H. Twelftree, *People of the Spirit: Exploring Luke’s View of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 10.

⁴For example, see Martin Downes, “Entrapment: The Emerging Church Conversation and the Cultural Captivity of the Gospel,” in *Reforming or Conforming? Post-Conservative Evangelicals and the Emerging Church* (ed. Gary L. W. Johnson and Ronald N. Gleason; Wheaton: Crossway, 2008); Jonathan R. Wilson, “Practicing Church: Evangelical Ecclesologies at the End of Modernity,” in *The Community of the Word: Toward an Evangelical Ecclesiology* (ed. Mark Husbands and Daniel J. Treier; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005).

⁵Though this notion of catholicity took several centuries to penetrate the actual consciousness of Protestants, it existed conceptually in Protestantism’s early statements of faith. For example, according to the *Second Helvetic Confession* (17): “We, therefore, call this Church catholic because it is universal, scattered through all parts of the world, and extended unto all times, and is not limited to any times or places.” Furthermore, in answer to the question, “What do you believe concerning ‘the holy, catholic church?’” the *Heidelberg Catechism* responds: “I believe that from the beginning to the end of the world, and from among the whole human race, the Son of God, by his Spirit and his Word, gathers, protects and preserves for himself, in the unity of the true faith, a congregation chosen for eternal life....” *Heidelberg Catechism*, question 54 (my emphasis).

⁶Of course, this is not an absolute difference, as I will seek to bring out in the following few paragraphs. The current emphasis on the missional nature of the church has been seen before, even if different forms and expressions for it have been articulated. For example, well over a hundred years ago, Bannerman addressed the “chief end of the Church” in a way that resonates with the current missional focus: “The

chief end of the Church is to be in this world what Christ Himself was, to do in it what He did, to carry on to final success the great work for which He came from heaven." D. Bannerman, *The Scripture Doctrine of the Church: Historically and Exegetically Considered* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1887), 246.

⁷Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit* (trans. Margeret Kohl; New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 10. He adds: "It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfil [*sic*] to the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church, creating a church as it goes on its way." *Ibid.*, 64.

⁸George Hunsberger, "Evangelical Conversion Toward a Missional Ecclesiology," in *Evangelical Ecclesiology: Reality or Illusion?* (ed. John G. Stackhouse, Jr.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 110.

⁹Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV.3.2. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1962), 573ff.

¹⁰Hunsberger, "Evangelical Conversion Toward a Missional Ecclesiology," 119.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 120-21.

¹²Some of the material in my answer is adapted from John Folmar, "Pastoring a Multi-Ethnic Church," [cited 1 July 2011]. Online: <http://www.9marks.org/ejournal/pastoring-multi-ethnic-church>.