



Planting Churches in the Real World

Joel Rainey

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Second Edition: Most church planting literature highlights enormously successful ministries. While such ministries can serve as a noble benchmark for every church planter, they are far from the norm. Most who plant churches will never see their name in lights, and all who plant churches will find it to be one of the most difficult things they have ever sought to accomplish. In this book, the author invites you to take an "inside look" at those difficulties. He shares his own successes and failures with candor, and lays bare the reality of planting a new church, which include both strenuous difficulties and glorious rewards. Read this book to be prepared for the effort, and ready for the blessing that comes from planting churches. *Planting Churches in the Real World* is written by Dr. Joel Rainey, Director of Missions for the Mid-Maryland Baptist Association, a network of more than 50 evangelical churches located in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. area. Dr. Rainey has been involved in planting more than 30 churches, and trains church planters nationally and internationally. He lives in central Maryland with his wife and their two sons. Praise for *Planting Churches*: Church planting is not for the easily discouraged. The average new church is less than 100 attenders after four years, but most conference speakers and book writers tell stories of hundreds after the first year- a reality few church planters experience. Rainey paints a picture of reality, including both the difficulties involved in starting a new church, and the evidence that planting a church is worth enduring those difficulties. If you are a planter drunk with vision, this will sober you up. But, it is more than that. It also shows that church plants make a difference whether they are thousands or dozens after the first year. I've known Joel for years, and he tells the stories from his own journey- telling lessons he learned the hard way. It's real world church planting and it is worth your time. Dr. Ed Stetzer, author of *Planting Missional Churches*. Director of Research, Lifeway Christian Resources, Nashville, TN "Dr. Rainey amuses the reader with countless stories of life on the field. His "lessons learned" approach to the book serves as a clear warning for future church planters: "The Kingdom of Heaven is near you, but this won't be easy!" Dr. Jack Allen, Director, The Day Center for Church Planting. New Orleans, LA "Candid, winsome, thoroughly biblical, keenly missional, and sensibly linked to the real world. Don't be fooled. The weightiness of this little book is inversely proportional to its size, and its wise counsel will help point a safe way through the tangle of neglected assumptions, misguided strategies, ill-founded hopes, and unintentional blunders that accosts the unwary planter on the way to church. Well done!" B. Spencer Haygood, Senior Pastor, Orange Hill Baptist Church. Marietta, GA "Reality bites, as the saying goes. Yet in the age of incredible lostness in America, we must see church planting for what it is . . . a way to spread Gospel influence to every, man, woman and child. High birth weight churches, although fun and influential for the Kingdom, are not the norm, nor are they the answer. Joel Rainey has captured the reality and yet the incredible potential of church planting. New churches running less than 100 are key players in the Kingdom. Small does not have to mean ineffective. Small groups of missionary Christians are critical to our mission and our future. Way to go!" Dr. Dino Senesi. Church Planting Movement Leader, Columbia, SC

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