

When a New Church Plant Fails

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1. **Premature birth.** A very high percentage of failed church plants start public worship too soon. Launching with a tiny group of people often leads to disappointing results. Many church planters underestimate the time needed to gather a sufficient number of people for sustained public worship.
2. **Unclear goals.** Lack of a defined time-line and clear, measurable goals eliminate the capacity to assess the development of the new church start.
3. **Lack of training and coaching.** Planting a church is hard work. Most leaders have little preparation for such an endeavor.
4. **Too much spending, too fast.** New church plants face the temptation to assemble the “tools and trappings” of a “real” church too quickly. Too many material enhancements strain financial resources which detracts from missional activities that reach the lost.
5. **Lack of focus.** Every new church plant faces fundamental questions: Whom are we trying to reach? What strategies will be used to reach them? What is the time-line for new church development? What essential steps must be taken, in what order?
6. **Monistic ministry.** New church plants develop best when “waves” of new people respond to a variety of events, approaches or ministries—a pluralistic approach. Less effective is having only a single event, method or gospel delivery system.
7. **Mismatch between planter and community.** Church planters must have an affinity for the target audience the new church is attempting to reach. Church planting success diminishes when there is dislike for the community the new church is attempting to reach.
8. **Inability to recruit new people.** New church plants almost always attract people who have been attending other churches. But that should never be the target. Planters who can’t or won’t recruit new people may be headed toward disappointing results.