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Introduction Winter 2001

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Introduction

Gary L. McIntosh, Editor

The first issue of 2001 includes articles that will challenge you on the effectiveness of evangelism, make you think deeply about ecclesiology, and probe your understanding of postmodernism.

The first article, "The Formerly Unchurched," by Dr. Tom Rainer is the presidential lecture given at the American Society for Church Growth meetings in November 1999. In his article, Dr. Rainer shares some of his cutting edge research regarding effective evangelistic churches. His insights are extremely helpful for those consulting with churches in the area of evangelism.

Dr. Howard Snyder's article on "New Wineskins: With What Materials?" focuses on developing "A Theology of New Wineskins for the 21st Century." In his thoughtful article, he demonstrates his skill at historical reflection as he points to helpful and unhelpful places to develop our ecclesiology.

Church planting has taken on different dimensions and forms in the last decade. "Innovative Ways to Plant Churches in the 21st Century" by Dr. Robert Logan is a quick overview of some creative ways church planting has recently taken place. Fortunately, Dr. Logan goes beyond simple description and summarizes important principles for effective church planting in the coming decade.

Tom Clegg and Warren Bird have teamed together to write a thought provoking new book *Lost in America*. Chapter Two of their new book is excerpted here and presents "Seven Deadly Statistics" that will cause most of us to think twice about what is taking place in evangelism in North America.

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The last article by Dr. Will McRaney continues our look at postmodernism and its impact on church growth. "The Evangelistic Conversion in an Increasingly Postmodern America" will aid you to understand the new ministry context in which we seek to reach people for Christ.

Some of the above articles were presented at the annual meeting of the American Society for Church Growth in November 2000 and other articles from those meetings will be published in forthcoming issues of this journal.

—Editor