

Racial Reconciliation Through Church Planting

On February 25, The Alliance will again celebrate Church-Planting Sunday. The following story demonstrates how God uses church plants to transform communities.

Pastor Robbie Edalgo of Cross Culture Church, an Alliance church plant in Cordele, Georgia, decided to take his discipleship group on a prayer walk with a large, wooden cross he had recently acquired. When several African-American men drove by and saw a big white man carrying a cross, they assumed the group was on a white supremacist march. They called a friend, Alex*, to check it out. He caught up with Robbie's team after some African-Americans had joined them in prayer.

"What are y'all doing?" Alex asked.

"We're praying for people," Robbie said. "Can we pray for you?"

Alex declined the offer and confessed why he was there. "It broke my heart," Robbie recalls. He hugged Alex, who agreed to join them in praying for Cordele.

After praying, Robbie opened his eyes and saw a shotgun on the floorboard of Alex's truck and shells strewn on the passenger seat. Robbie then realized that Alex had been expecting a violent confrontation. "There's a lot of racial hurt [here]," Robbie says. "We're entering into the story at what I believe is an opportune time."

The mission to bring differing ethnicities together has begun unifying area denominations. Several people from other churches joined Cross Culture's outreaches, and one of the nation's largest churches has started Bible studies with a nearby African-American congregation.

Despite these efforts, racial tension continued to be evident in Robbie's interactions with some area church leaders. When he invited a deacon from a local church to his home for dinner, the man started to stereotype African-Americans. Robbie asked him to leave.

Robbie's mentor encouraged him to join these leaders in their journey toward reconciliation rather than turn them away. After Robbie called the deacon and apologized for his lack of hospitality, the two decided to study God's Word together at a restaurant. An African-American friend of Robbie's stopped by and sat down with them to talk about God.

Revelation describes what Christ's Kingdom will look like—every tongue, tribe, and nation. "We believe that a multiethnic community of believers is the gospel," Robbie says. May God raise up more Alliance church plants to foster peace and reconciliation in their neighborhoods.

*Name changed

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A Church Worth Going to!

BY AN ALLIANCE WORKER SERVING IN ASIA

Every week, Jack* sits unresponsively throughout the church service. *Is he even listening?* we've wondered. He and his wife, Amy, moved to our community after retiring. Amy has been a Christian for many years; Jack is not a believer. Yet he faithfully attends worship with Amy. He is open to our friendship but has made it clear he does not want us to talk to him about Jesus.

Recently, Jack was one of the first people to arrive for the service. I saw him taking photos of the building. He said he had realized our church was not on Google Maps and was going to fix that. He told me, "Our church is so popular, but no one knows we're here. Now if people come to our town, they can look on Google Maps and find us!"

Later, I checked it out. Jack had written the first "review" of our church: "If you're in the countryside and want to worship God, this church is worth going to!" He even rated us four stars!

Pray for God's Word to penetrate Jack's heart and that he will come to know Jesus.

*Names changed

Our Authority in Christ

John A. MacMillan, veteran C&MA missionary and the associate editor of *The Alliance Weekly* (now *Alliance Life*), wrote a series of articles in that publication in January 1932 entitled "The Authority of the Believer." It was later published as a book.

Ordained in 1923, John was a missionary to China and field director of The Alliance in the Philippines. In the article "John A. MacMillan's Teaching Regarding the Authority of the Believer," Paul King describes how John and his fellow missionaries would "claim . . . land from demonic control in China and bind the powers of darkness." In one example, the missionaries "took possession of a piece of land and began moving logs," says King. "Evil spirits resisted the takeover by projecting a . . . voice from a log [that] threatened, 'Don't you dare move it!'" Unafraid, the missionaries rebuked the voice and continued removing the logs without further difficulty. In 1924, when several Alliance missionaries were kidnapped, John and his remaining colleagues "exercised the believer's authority of binding and loosing, and the missionaries were released," writes King.

According to King, John was a pioneer in teaching about "territorial spirits" and praying against geographical strongholds (see Daniel 10:12-13). He encouraged prayer warriors at home "to roll back the powers of the air and make it possible to bring the Truth to bear on regions where the devil is blocking the way."

Source: paulkingministries.com

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