

The Fellowship of the Hinge: Church Planting as Kingdom Building

I want to invite you into what I call “the fellowship of the hinge.” What is this hinge? The fellowship of the hinge is joining up with the Lord Jesus in the work of church planting that he is doing in our countries. The fellowship of the hinge is a movement that brings lost people into the kingdom of God who start churches that start churches.

Now, where do we find this hinge? We find the invitation to join Jesus in the fellowship of the hinge in Acts 1:1, “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus *began* to do and to teach . . .”

This is the hinge. In the Gospels Jesus *began* to do and to teach, and in the Acts of the Apostles Jesus *continues* to do what He began, but He does it through His servants. What he continued to do in the Acts, he continues to do today – through his servants and disciples, through you and me.

Dietrich Schindler is a German-American missionary church planter who is currently the executive director of church planting for the Evangelical Free Church of Germany (Bund Freier evangelischer Gemeinden). Under his leadership the denomination is striving to plant 100 new churches in Germany in ten years. After five years 54 churches have been planted. He has himself planted five churches in Germany and has written and lectured on what it would take to see a church planting multiplication movement to take root in Germany and in Europe. Dietrich has been married to Jan Carla for thirty years, and they have three adult children.

I. In the Gospels Jesus *began* to build His Church

A. Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 4:23).

1. Jesus is the *auto basileia*

IL. Diagram: My kingdom / God’s kingdom

2. Jesus is the founder of the Church (Matthew 16:13-19)

B. The Gospel of the Kingdom has the Church as its expression of new life
(Matthew 5:20)

1. New community

2. New messenger

3. New life-style

C. As the Gospel has multiplication in its DNA, so too the Church

1. The sower expects a large harvest (Mark 4:20)

2. The gospel has inherent power to grow (Mark 4:26-29)

II. In the Acts of the Apostles Jesus *continues* to build his Church – Church Planting

A. Where the Gospel goes, new churches are planted (Acts 1:8)

B. Newly Planted churches plant churches (Acts 16:4-5)

III. Join the fellowship of the hinge!

A. Jesus wants to continue His work in your country with you and with others – Will you partner with Him?

B. Jesus wants to do greater things than what we have as of yet experienced – Do you see a church planting movement on the horizon?

C. Jesus wants to start with your heart – Will you give Him your undivided devotion?

Further Study

Logan, Robert E. *The Missional Journey: Multiplying Disciples and Churches that Transform the World*. (Carol Stream, IL: ChurchSmart, 2013).

Ott, Craig and Wilson, Gene. *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and Best Practices for Multiplication*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011).

Robinson, Martin. *Planting Mission-Shaped Churches Today*. (UK: Monarch Books, 2006).

Schindler, Dietrich. *The Jesus Model: Planting Churches the Jesus Way*. (Carlisle, UK: Piquant Edition, 2013).

Stetzer, Ed, *Planting Missional Churches*. (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2003).