

# The Billy Graham School

# COMPASS

## Navigating Ministry & Missions

Volume 2 • Issue 1

February 2008

### A Heart for the City...

Dear church leader,

With this edition of the *Compass*, I am pleased to announce the Wayne and LeAlice Dehoney Center for Urban Ministry Training through the Billy Graham School. We at the BGS want to focus on the cities for several reasons:

- People are in the cities, and we are committed to training ministers to reach people.
- The world is increasingly urban (now more than 50 percent urban).
- God is bringing the world to the cities.
- The cities offer tremendous opportunities for doing missions and evangelism while addressing social needs.
- The world's influencers are based in the cities.



*“Consider how your church might influence a city for Christ.”*

Kevin Hall, the associate director for the center, is coordinating the center's work. Our goal is to challenge students to minister in the cities, provide short-term and long-term opportunities for student internships in the cities, and offer conferences and training for persons already serving in the cities. The center's website will soon be available, and your prayer support will be critical to us as we begin this center.

Consider how your church might influence a city for Christ. Perhaps your students will take a mission trip to New York City or Chicago and minister in a multi-ethnic area. Maybe your church should support a church plant in Boston or Los Angeles. Members of a small group might adopt an international city, learn about it, and pray for the missionaries and church leaders serving in that urban context.

If you now serve in a city, your first step is to approach your city as a missionary. How many nationalities and ethnic groups are represented

in your city? What are the primary needs there? How many homeless are in the city? What percentage of the population is unchurched? Who are the “movers and shakers” there? If you do not know the answers to these questions, ask God to increase your burden for your city. Do your homework, and devise a strategy to lead your church to engage the city. The Great Commission demands it.

Chuck Lawless  
Dean, The Billy Graham School of  
Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth

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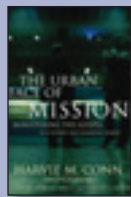
## Recommended Resources

Topic of the Month:  
**Urban Ministry**



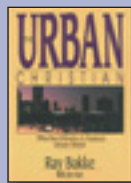
Claerbaut, David.  
*Urban Ministry In a New Millennium*

Stark, Rodney.  
*Cities of God: The Real Story of How Christianity Became an Urban Movement and Conquered Rome*



Conn, Harvie. *The Urban Face of Mission: Ministering the Gospel in a Diverse and Changing World*

Greenway, Roger S. & Timothy M. Monsma.  
*Cities: Missions' New Frontier*



Bakke, Ray. *The Urban Christian: Effective Ministry in Today's Urban World*

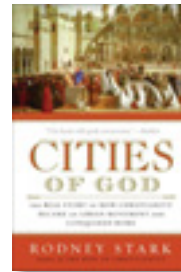
Books can be found at:  
Lifeway.com or Amazon.com

## *Cities of God: The Real Story of How Christianity Became an Urban Movement and Conquered Rome*

## Book Review

Rodney Stark, sociology of religion scholar, provides a history of Christianity that goes beyond many conventional views of the early church. Stark uses quantitative research to show how Christianity grew quickly and steadily. His goal is to view the rise of Christianity within the appropriate social and cultural contexts through a social scientific lens.

Stark argues that Christianity was an urban religion that grew through relationships. He also



shows that early Christianity was primarily an urban movement. He explains that about two-thirds of the population of the Roman Empire – and of Christians – were in the major urban cities. In light of the fact that over half the population of the world resides in urban contexts today, this book is a must read for pastors, church leaders, and scholars alike.

By: Kevin Hall

**Rodney Stark, *Cities of God: The Real Story of How Christianity Became an Urban Movement and Conquered Rome.***

## Concern for the Poor: Extra Credit – or Core Curriculum?

Survey a cross section of conservative evangelical church members and ask them to estimate how many sermons they have ever heard on biblical issues such as sexual morality, stewardship, or use of the tongue. Then ask them how often they have ever heard any biblical teaching on God's heart for the poor. Although that topic shows up with astonishing frequency in the Bible, suburban, middle-class, conservative Christians often have practically no biblical frame of reference on it. Those passages that address poverty and the poor are either invisible or relegated to the status of "optional information."

Scripture makes clear, however, that when it comes to following Jesus, knowing and reflecting God's heart for the poor is not "extra credit." Rather, it is an integral part of the core curriculum of following Jesus. It is Christianity 101. To do as we ought demands that this knowl-

edge be embedded in the DNA of our Christian character.

We as leaders who have been commissioned to teach the whole counsel of God must ask ourselves if we are helping people to know the heart of God for the poor and to reflect His concern practically and visibly. Here are three steps in this direction:

**Think biblically.** Care for the poor will never become part of the DNA of our faith or those we lead if we are not convinced this is absolutely biblical and a reflection of God's heart. It is not enough to believe it is important, or necessary, or simply a real need in our community. We must become convinced that this is a core aspect of what it means to follow Jesus.

**Act holistically.** The knee-jerk reaction to the modernist controversy of the 1930's caused an unbiblical division between the physical and spiritual needs of

people in conservative evangelical thinking. God is concerned about whole people.

We cannot attempt to minister to the spiritual needs of people while ignoring their physical needs. This is especially true when ministering among the poor. It is very difficult to have credibility with the message of the cross when physical realities are ignored.

**Engage systemically.** To help the poor in practical ways is to recognize, among other things, that sin is not just personal but structural and institutional. (Remember Haman). Therefore, Christians must know how to address both personal sin and the institutional sin that get embedded in the structures of society and which destroy people and communities.

By: Dr. Jeff Cook

Associate Professor of Biblical Education and Urban Studies,  
Cedarville University



The City of Brotherly Love, Philadelphia, is home to the Liberty Bell and Philly Cheese-steaks. Philly is only one of three cities to remain in the list of top ten largest cities in America since 1910. With a population of just under 1.5 million today and a metro area of over 5 million, it ranks sixth on the list. Not all of the 1.5 million, however, eat cheesesteaks or visit the Liberty Bell. Like all cities, Philly is diverse – it has prostitutes and homeless, addicts and affluent, fortunate and fortuneless. Many in the city of Brotherly Love hunger for food, attention, or hope. 21.6% are below the poverty level compared to the 12.7% national average. Philadelphia is one of six Northeast cities that make up the most unchurched 25% of the American population. Only about 1% of the population is Baptist. Pray for Philly, and consider visiting Philadelphia for leisure and ministry.

# PURPOSE SIX

## Praying for the city:

**Locally** – Pray about how you can get involved in reaching those in the city nearest you.

Pray for those already ministering in the city.

Pray for opportunities to team with urban pastors.

**Nationally** – Pray for urban church planters.

Pick a city and pray for its leaders. Consider Philadelphia if you are not near a city.

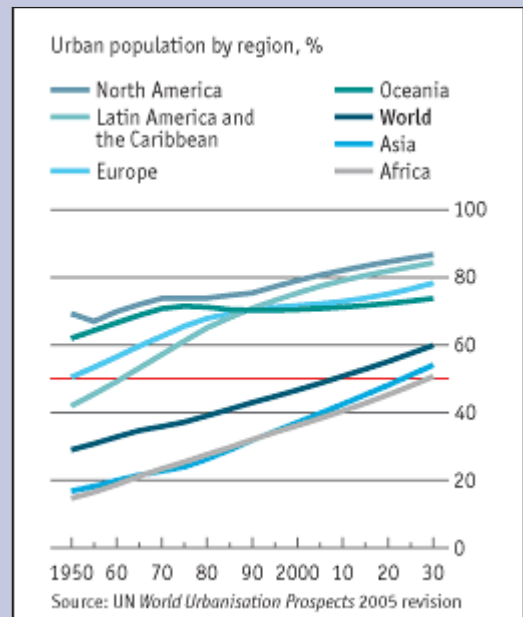
Pray about supporting an urban church plant or sending people on short term missions to the city.

**Internationally** – Pray for the missionaries of the world's cities.

Pick a city to learn about so you can pray for the churches in that city.

## RESEARCH SHOWS

- The United Nations forecasts that today's urban population of 3.2 billion will rise to nearly five billion by 2030, when three out of five people will live in cities.
- In the largest twenty cities in the world are more than 290 million urban dwellers ("The Harvest Fields," 2007).
- In the United States, almost 80 million people live in the 258 cities that have populations of 100,000 people or more (US Census Bureau, 2005).
- Nine of the world's ten largest cities are outside of the United States.
- Within ten years, the world will have nearly 500 cities of more than one million people.



From: *The Economist*, "The World Goes to Town," 5/3/07

## Missionary Matters



Dr. Mark Terry serves as Professor of Missions at a Baptist seminary in the Pacific Rim. The seminary there offers the MA in Missiology, MDiv in Missions, ThM in Missions, Doctor of Missiology, and PhD in Missions. Dr. Terry established and directs those programs. He and his wife were appointed as IMB missionaries to the Philippines in 1975, and served there until 1989. From 1989-93 he was academic dean and professor of missions at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Pineville, KY. In 1993 he joined the faculty at Southern. From 1994-2004 he served as Associate Dean of the Billy Graham School. In 2004 he and his wife, Barbara, were re-appointed as missionaries by

the IMB. Their primary ministry is serving at the seminary: Dr Terry as a professor and Barbara as a librarian. They also do missionary training in the Pacific Rim for the IMB, and they have served as consultants in leadership development. In 2007 they began the development of an Urban Missions Center in a capital city in Southeast Asia. This center will provide training in urban church planting and urban ministry when it is fully developed in 2009.

Pray for Dr. Terry's ministry at the seminary in the Pacific Rim. Pray also for the Urban Missions Center to train many future leaders of urban church planting and urban ministry.

**BGS HELPS**

### **The Dehoney Center for Urban Ministry Training**

We have recently started a center for training ministers to reach the cities. If you are interested in the center or our Certificate of Urban Ministry, please contact us at [BGSInfo@sbts.edu](mailto:BGSInfo@sbts.edu).

### **Biblical Church Growth: The Blog and Writings of Dr. Chuck Lawless**

Blog, Articles, Books, MP3s, Recommended Resources, Book Reviews, Links  
<http://www.biblicalchurchgrowth.com>

### **Need a good evangelistic tract?**

<http://www.sbts.edu/pdf/GRACE.pdf>

### **Know others who might be interested in receiving this e-newsletter?**

Send their contact information to [bgsinfo@sbts.edu](mailto:bgsinfo@sbts.edu).

### **Know college students who might want to receive a new Graham School collegiate newsletter that is now available?**

Send their contact information to [bgsinfo@sbts.edu](mailto:bgsinfo@sbts.edu), or invite them to join the Facebook group, "Students for Global Impact."

### **Contact Us:**

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*Compass* is a production of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

*For more information about The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary go to: [www.sbts.edu](http://www.sbts.edu).*

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