

Epoch

Multihousing
M-PACT



Now Is The Time
To Live As A Missionary



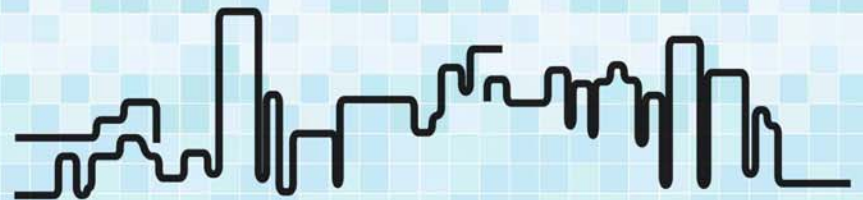
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Now Is The Time
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Introduction

The doors are open. Imagine God using you to make an eternal impact in the lives of people who live in multihousing communities. The doors of opportunity are wide open for you to live and respond as a missionary. These communities represent more than half of the North American population. The vast majority of people who live in these settings are unreached with the gospel. These people represent every people group and population segment. They represent every generation and socioeconomic level in North America. They are found in every community—in every state and province.

What a doorway of opportunity God has placed before you!

John reminds the church in Philadelphia, “See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut” (Revelation 3:8, NIV). Has God placed an open door in your life—an invitation for you to join him in reaching people in a multifamily housing community? As you pray and seek God’s direction, He will open doors to these multihousing communities. *Epoch Multihousing M-Pact* will provide you with the doorways to walk through as you live like a missionary.

What is an *Epoch*? An *Epoch* is an extended period of time ushered in by the brokenness and faithful praying of God’s people which results in the sending of everyday Christ followers into the harvest to make disciples and establish relation-based faith communities that result in lost people coming to know Christ. It all starts with prayer and a willingness to walk through God’s open doors.

God is using ordinary, everyday Christ followers who are living out the Great Commission (see Matt. 28:18-20) to make disciples in these strategic places and gather people for His worship and glory.

God is at work in the multihousing world. Owners and managers have put out the welcome mats for people who want to minister in their communities. People groups from all over the world are moving into multihousing. For many middle and upper income people, multihousing is becoming the preferred choice for housing because of shared amenities, community life, and price. In low income communities, people are crying out for someone to come and help them. As a follower of Christ, you have the opportunity to join God as He works to impact people who live in multihousing with the gospel.

The vast number of people who live in multihousing may make it seem like an impossible assignment. Nevertheless, Jesus commands us to go to them. God is the Master of doing the impossible by using ordinary people to do extraordinary things!



It was a young shepherd boy, David, tending his father's flock out on the green hills of the countryside who won the battle against a giant whom all the professional soldiers were afraid to fight – an ordinary shepherd boy who couldn't even wear the armor of a soldier. Can you imagine a day when modern day David's see the giant task of multihousing as an opportunity too big to miss? God did an impossible thing through an ordinary young man who was willing to enter into battle.

In contrast, it was the twelve spies who went to spy out the "promised land" who came back to report that this seemed to be an impossible task. The majority said that there were giants in the land. The spies thought that they looked like mere grasshoppers compared to the giants. But there were two men, Joshua and Caleb, who gave a different report. They claimed that God was able and that taking hold of the promised land would be a great opportunity if only they could trust God and obey His Word (see Numbers 13:26-14:9). Sad to say, the Israelites did not seize the door of opportunity that God had placed before them that day. Can you imagine a day when modern day Joshua's and Caleb's believe God for the land of multihousing? God does impossible things through ordinary people who believe and obey Him. It was Joshua and Caleb who eventually did get to take the land and seize the opportunity.

It is the twenty-first century, and lost people from every corner of the world are in North America—perhaps in *your* multihousing community. It may be the one you live in, or the one near your church or in your neighboring town. They need to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ where they live because the reality is that the vast majority will not attend a local church. They are crying out for help in the midst of their depravity and despair. They are your family, your neighbors, your coworkers, and your fellow citizens.

Can *you* imagine a time when *you* would play a role in God's redemptive work in their lives? Can *you* imagine sharing your life and, in turn, sharing Jesus Christ and salvation with them? Can *you* imagine a move of God in the multihousing world in North America through someone like you?





Epoch Multihousing M-Pact: Overview

What is *Epoch Multihousing M-Pact*?

It is joining God as He uses everyday Christ followers among those people who live in multihousing. Impact occurs when everyday Christ followers are willing to be sent into the harvest to make disciples and establish relationship-based faith communities. God will be glorified as lost people come to know Christ.

What is the heart of *Epoch Multihousing M-Pact*?

It is a process. Better yet, it is a lifestyle directed by the Holy Spirit and marked by a passion to make disciples and gather them together for His worship and glory. It is everyday Christ followers living as missionaries in multihousing communities. *Epoch Multihousing M-Pact* will provide you and your church with the essential handles to open the doors of multihousing.

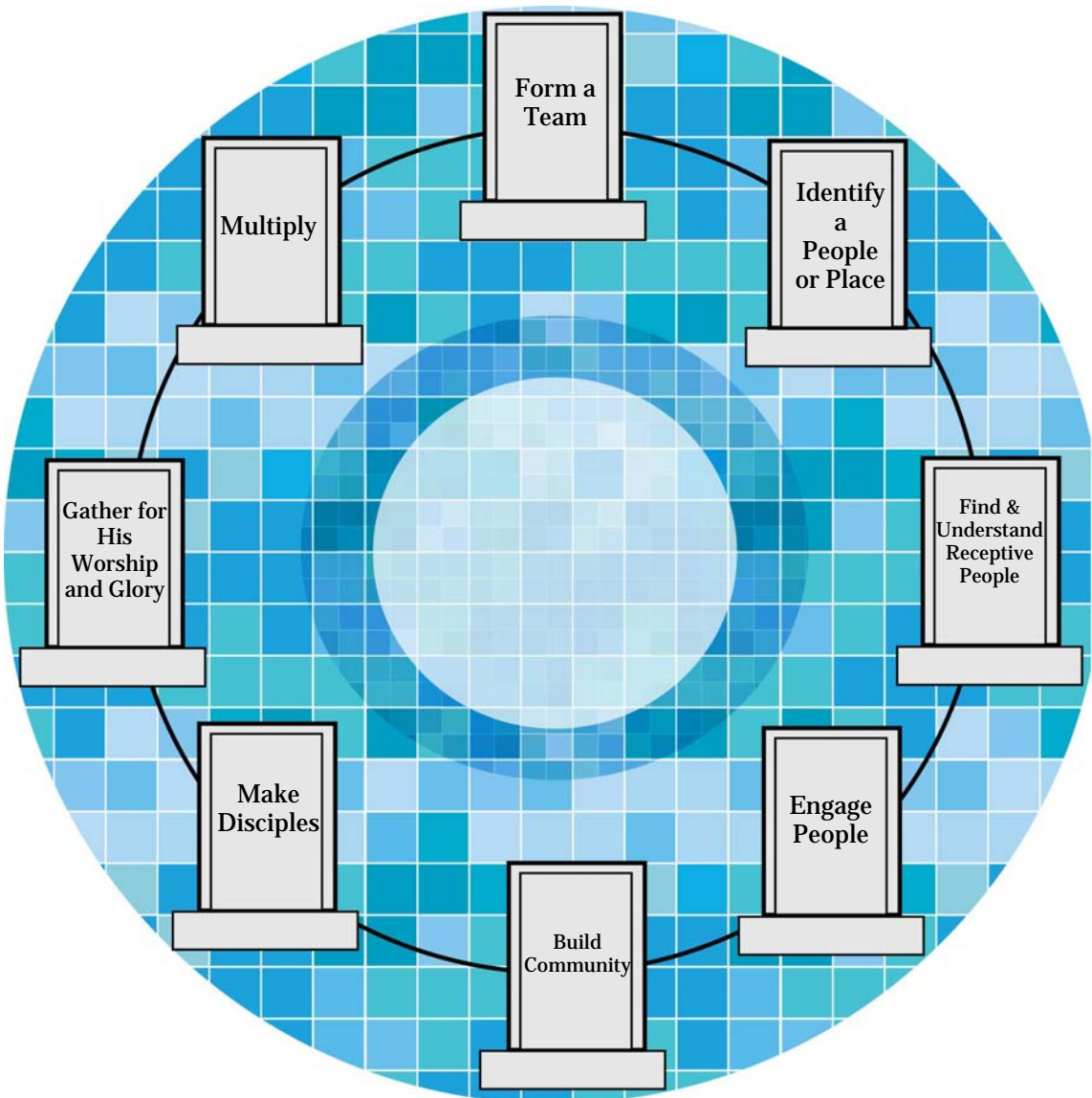
How do believers live as missionaries in multihousing?

Everyday Christ followers, empowered and led by the Holy Spirit, venture into multihousing to live life as missionaries by sowing the gospel and establishing communities of faith. These missionaries pursue a biblical process modeled by Jesus and the church in Acts. The *Epoch Multihousing M-Pact* process flows through these doorways of activities:

- **Form a Team**
Objective: Form a small team that shares a heart for making disciples in multihousing settings.
- **Identify a People or Place**
Objective: Identify a particular group of people in multihousing or a multihousing community that needs the gospel.
- **Find and Understand Receptive People**
Objective: Identify and relate to the person of peace (see Luke 10:6) in your selected multihousing community and begin to gain an understanding of their culture, beliefs, values, and perceptions of Christians and Christianity.
- **Engage People**
Objective: Live a life among your multihousing community that reflects the image of Christ while using the skills and approaches of a missionary to reach them with the gospel.



- **Build Community**
Objective: Connect people together to establish relationships and experience authentic community in multihousing settings.
- **Make Disciples**
Objective: Make disciples who multiply themselves.
- **Gather for God's Worship and Glory**
Objective: Gather people and form relationship-based faith communities in multihousing for God's worship and glory.
- **Multiply**
Objective: Multiply disciples, leaders, and churches through the new believer's existing relationships and the various multihousing industry networks.





How can this be accomplished?

- By acknowledging the sovereignty of God through our prayers and becoming dependent upon Him, His Word and the Holy Spirit to guide everyday Christ followers to make disciple-making disciples.
- By sending God's people into the harvest to make disciples through intentional missionary activities resulting in the raising up of indigenous leaders (those who already live in multihousing).
- By identifying, engaging, embracing, and nurturing personal relationships with specific people groups and/or multihousing places in an effort to understand their culture and who they are as individuals.
- By understanding your unique multihousing environment and then applying the missionary principles to impact it with the gospel.
- By making disciples who multiply themselves and gathering them to form basic faith communities.

What might God do through *Epoch Multihousing M-Pact* if implemented in your church?

- Expand the influence of your church throughout your community.
- Strengthen established churches as they function as missionary communities—enlisting, equipping, deploying, and reproducing teams of lay missionaries.
- Create an outward focus for your members who already live in multihousing.
- Create an outward focus for your small groups.
- Identify unreached people groups and places and engage them in their context, in their language, with the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Provide a process for new ministries to be established and new churches to be planted among identified peoples or multihousing places.



A Snapshot of Multihousing

A Multihousing Definition

Multihousing is multiple family communities. They may be attached or in close proximity with one another and share amenities and regulations.

Types of Multihousing

Four Industry Levels

1. “A” Properties: Upper-Middle Income
2. “B” Properties: Middle Income
3. “C” Properties: Partially Subsidized
4. “D” Properties: Fully Subsidized

Apartments

Condominiums

Military Housing

Marinas/R.V. Communities

Live, Work and Play Communities

Duplexes, Triplexes and Multiplexes

Senior Housing/Assisted Living Communities

Manufactured Housing (Mobile Home Parks)

Community Associations (Lake, Golf, Tennis, etc.)

Urban High Rises

Row Houses

Gated Communities

Collegiate/Dormitory Housing

Town Homes/Loft Communities

The Importance of the Manager

The manager is responsible for the multihousing community. He or she is tasked with resident retention, the quality of life in the community, and the bottom line of profit for the ownership. Your partnership with the manager can be the difference between simply touching a community and transforming a community for Christ.

Manager’s Concerns and Your Answers

1. Are you here to persuade people to come to your church? (*Promise to respect religious differences and to begin communities of faith on site.*)
2. Will there be surprises? (*Promise to communicate with the manager.*)
3. Will you take care of the property? (*Promise to respect the properties.*)
4. Who has the final say so? (*Promise to abide by the guidelines/rules of the community.*)

Meeting the Manager

- Be brief
- Give references
- Present introductory letter (For sample letter, see www.experiencemultihousing.com.)
- Respect their position



Keys to Unlocking Multihousing Doors



Doorway One: Form a Team

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11, NIV).

Objective: Form a small team that shares a heart for making disciples in the multihousing setting.

Although *Epoch Multihousing M-Pact* can be initiated by an individual, it is strongly suggested that a small team be assembled to take the journey together. The team can take many forms—indigenous, incarnational, intentional or a combination of these approaches.

Indigenous Team

An indigenous team is formed from those who live in the community. This is the most reproducible form of team. A missionary was asked, “When do we hand the baton off to the indigenous leaders?” We start with the baton in their hands. We start with those leaders.

Incarnational Team

An incarnational team is a group who actually moves into the community. Many apartment owners are providing an apartment in exchange for a chaplaincy team on site. The plan is to work from the inside in partnership with management, adding value to their business by your presence and activities.

Intentional Team

An intentional team is formed by those who will be willing to frequently visit the community. This is a great starting point. One missionary said, “You are there so often that the residents think you live there.” In the book of Acts, the team would stay with the people of the community then turn it over to the indigenous leaders over a period of time.

Open Doors in Multihousing

Eric and his family are an example of an incarnational team. They have moved into an apartment provided through a partnership with *Apartment Life*, a Great Commission partner. They are helping to meet the needs of the apartment industry and the residents they serve. They focus as a team on building authentic community through activities. On a Monday night, you’ll find Eric and his family hosting a party in the community center around the football game. They have fun with their neighbors, care for one another, and give back to their community—living like missionaries.

Here are important matters to keep in mind as you develop your team.

- Keep your team small.
- Team members must grasp the importance of living like Jesus. Therefore, they must:
 - ❖ Be growing in Christian maturity.
 - ❖ Possess a passion for making disciples.
 - ❖ Possess a servant's heart.
 - ❖ Value forming personal relationships with others.
 - ❖ Possess a genuine love for God and willingness to express it in practical ways.
 - ❖ Be willing to function cross-culturally.
 - ❖ Be a team player.

Remember...

- A team diverse in gifts (see Eph. 4:11) and in personality types is ideal.
- The purpose of your team is *to take the gospel to people* who are lost and make disciples.
- "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16, NIV). A vital part of your team should be a group of prayer warriors who faithfully intercede on your behalf.
- A multihousing team can be indigenous, incarnational or intentional in approach, or any combination of the three.
- A team provides mutual support, encouragement, accountability and celebration.

Action Steps:

- Establish a regular gathering of your team.
- Help team members discover their giftedness and calling for ministry.
- Establish a prayer warrior network and communicate requests and victories with them regularly.
- Partner your team members together for prayer, seeking the power and presence of God in your lives.
- Enlist the services of an individual or church staff member who has an understanding of multihousing ministry to coach you on this journey.

Resources:

- *Living Your Strengths* by Albert L. Winserman, Donald O. Clifton, & Curt Liesveld (Gallup Press, 2004)
- *The Purpose-Driven Life* by Rick Warren (Zondervan, 2002)
- *Discover Your Giftedness* by Mels Carbonell (Christian Impact Ministries, 2006)
- *Apartment Life* (www.apartmentlife.org)

For the following web-based resources, visit www.churchplantingvillage.net/epoch

- PLACE
- Discovery Tools
- Developing a Prayer Warrior Network



Keys to Unlocking Multihousing Doors



Doorway Two: Identify a People or Place

“They saw that I [Paul] had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter was for the circumcised” (Galatians 2:7, HCSB).

Objective: Identify a particular group of people in multihousing or a multihousing community that needs the gospel.

Christ commands His followers to make disciples of all nations. This can be accomplished by intentionally sowing the gospel among selected peoples or places encountered while living life or through intentional cross-cultural ministry. God’s Spirit crosses cultural barriers. Rather than sowing randomly, focus on sharing the good news strategically among certain people or in specific communities where God is already at work.

The sad reality is that the vast majority of people who live in multihousing are unchurched. Most multihousing settings are very receptive. The common perception is that multihousing is only reflected by those from a lower socioeconomic level. These kinds of communities are very receptive to the gospel if we go to them. God may be leading you to a low income area.

Could it be time to take a fresh look at your community? Communities are rapidly changing. Regentrification is a process occurring in urban centers where properties in blighted areas are being purchased and redeveloped into top end condos and apartment communities. Identify those areas that are changing in your community.

The priority of prayer is vital. Ask God to direct your team toward the people and communities on whom He wants you to focus. Is God calling your group to focus upon people you know or who are like yourselves? Is He calling you to cross cultural barriers and to reach out to people with views and lifestyles unlike your own? People from all over the world live among us, sent by God to hear the good news of Jesus Christ (see Acts 16:26, 27).

Once the Holy Spirit has steered your team to a particular group of people or a multihousing place, commit your time, talents, and treasures to the task.

Open Doors in Multihousing

Chuck, a rancher from California, is leading his team in “*Praying Down the Walls*,” Joshua and Jericho style. He has been instrumental in leading the entire church (with his pastor’s direction) to adopt a multihousing site, and then pray for seven weeks—utilizing prayer walking, weekly bulletin announcements and weekly prayer meetings. God is touching the hearts of the people in the pew to see the apartments all around their own Jerusalem. He is leading the way by praying for God’s next steps to reach those in multihousing.

Remember....

- There are pockets of people who need to hear the gospel everywhere.
- Identifying a specific multihousing community will allow your team members to focus their energy.
- God is at work in the lives of people who live in multihousing communities. God is also at work by gathering people together in a particular community. Our assignment is to identify where He is at work and join Him.
- Prayer is to be the priority. Pray seeking God's leadership and favor.
- Determine to stay for the long term. As one manager said, "These church people won't stick with it, I've seen them come and go."

Actions Steps:

- Identify individuals or groups with whom your team has regular contact.
- Learn to see those who have been invisible among you, conditioning yourselves to see as Jesus sees them. The disciples saw Zacchaeus as a despised tax collector. Jesus saw him as a person with potential. Look for the ignored, the forsaken, the rejected.
- Identify groups of people who share a common language or heritage who live in your community.
- Identify and adopt an unreached multihousing community near you, utilizing a "*Praying Down the Walls*" approach.
- Communicate with your prayer warriors as you seek God's direction. Have them prayer walk with your team in the potential communities.
- Embrace the Holy Spirit's leading to reach the people of multihousing.

Resources:

- *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* by Henry Blackaby (Lifeway Church Resources)
- *Apartment Guides/Real Estate Agents/Agencies*
- *Praying Down the Walls* (www.experiencemultihousing.com)

For the following web-based resources, visit www.churchplantingvillage.net/epoch

- *A Prayer Walking Guide*
- *PEOPLES Search*
- *Using the U. S. Census to Gather Community Data PowerPoint*



Keys to Unlocking Multihousing Doors



Doorway Three: Find and Understand Receptive People

“Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us that God may open a door to us for the message, to speak the mystery of the Messiah—for which I am in prison—so that I may reveal it as I am required to speak. Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the time. Your speech should always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person” (Colossians 4:2-6, HCSB).

Objective: Identify and relate to the person of peace (see Luke 10:6) in your selected multihousing community and begin to gain an understanding of their culture, beliefs, values, and perceptions of Christians and Christianity.

Prayer is an integral element to creating a climate of receptivity in the multi-housing community and for the calling out of workers into the harvest (see Luke 10:2b). When unreached people are prayed for, God’s Spirit moves in wonderful ways. Prayer is the threshold to enter each doorway.

A **Person of Peace** is an individual who seems to be receptive to your presence and desires to establish a gathering of believers. Although the person may not be a believer, he or she should be receptive to Christianity. The person of peace must be well connected with others, having a large network of friends and/or relatives among the multihousing community. The person of peace must be well-known by others (for either good reasons or bad). The point is, he or she is known and knows many in your community! There are individuals like Lydia (see Acts 16). When the Lord opened her heart, she believed and caused a ripple effect of belief to those she knew.

As you begin to meet the people of the multihousing community, identify a person of peace (see Luke 10:6-7) to partner with your team. The person of peace may be the manager. Receptivity is the key to your access. Managers are busy people with a job to do. They aim for resident retention and making a profit. God’s people can add value to their work and their communities. Moreover, the person of peace may be a resident who the community looks to as the leader. Look for open people as the Holy Spirit directs your team to a person of peace.

Open Doors in Multihousing

Paul and Teresa have been starting a network of house churches in high rises in New York City. Paul tells of a young lady named Zoe, who is a non-believing person of peace exploring the claims of Christ. She has become increasingly enthusiastic about becoming a part of a Christian community of faith. Zoe serves as a sort of community catalyst. She is a natural at building relationships. Paul feels sure that Zoe is close to conversion and feels that when this occurs, she will be instrumental in leading others to faith in Jesus.

Pockets of People are to be found in the multihousing community. Study the people; seek to understand them. Watch how they group together. Ask questions, beginning with the manager. Find out what their greatest need is and then find out how your team can meet it. Ask questions of the residents with the manager's approval. Assess the needs of the residents. As one missionary said, "We must be resident-driven and not church-driven in our ministry to those in multihousing." Meet the people where they live.

Overcoming our blindness to the lost people who live in multihousing and who may be receptive to the gospel requires patience and guidance from our Heavenly Father. Therefore, it is a spiritual exercise built upon a genuine love for God and His people. It requires that your team do the following:

1. Pray regularly and specifically for your multihousing communities.
2. Begin with the manager, receiving their approval and understanding their role as manager.
3. Become a student of your local multihousing community while learning to listen and ask questions as you interact with them.
4. Identify with your multihousing community without compromising God's call to holy living.
5. Assess their values, religious beliefs, and knowledge of Scripture. Seek to understand their lives, their behaviors, and their unique needs.
6. Show them love in practical ways while being sensitive to your desire to present biblical truths to them (see 1 Corinthians 9:22b).

Remember...

- God opens the hearts of people when you pray.
- There are pockets of people that live in multihousing.
- The importance of becoming a student of your multihousing community.
- Relationships are critical. Owners, managers and residents in multihousing communities are those you serve. You serve at the pleasure of the manager.

Action Steps:

- Continue prayer walking your field, praying that God's Spirit will lead you to a person of peace and raise up laborers (see Luke 10:2).
- Identify and build a relationship with your person of peace.
- Plan to meet regularly with the management—a vital partner.
- Connect with people and become a student of your community.
- Conduct a [needs assessment](#) with the manager's approval.
- Express love in practical ways.

Resources:

- [Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry and Mary](#), by Lee Strobel (Zondervan, 1993)
- [Things to Remember When Meeting with a Manager](#)
- For additional resources, visit www.churchplantingvillage.net/epoch and



Keys to Unlocking Multihousing Doors



Doorway Four: Engage People

“Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you’ (John 20:21, HCSB).

“Let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16, HCSB).

Objective: Live a life among your multihousing community that reflects the image of Christ while using the skills and approaches of a missionary to reach them with the gospel.

When you hear the word “church,” what crosses your mind? Is it a building? Is it where you worship or where ministry occurs? In *Epoch Multihousing M-Pact*, we suggest this view of church may need to be adjusted.

First, a church is a group of people and not a place. God’s focus is on relationships—our relationship with Him and our relationships with each other. The church is God’s family of faith. There needs to be a distinction between going to church and being the church. It is about building relationships with people, as you go (see Matthew 28:19-20).

Second, a church is ministry in action. It is a group of people living out the mission of God in their setting, in this case, multihousing neighborhoods. God’s nature is to send. Jesus has sent His followers to the fields. If we are going to live out the mission of God in multihousing, we must engage people, build relationships and meet needs.

Jesus was engaging people at every turn. A walk through the gospel of John reveals this truth. He records Jesus enjoying the people at a wedding party. Then, a religious leader, Nicodemus, approached Him at night which led to a discussion of the new birth. Turn the page, and a woman with a sordid reputation met Jesus at the well. She soon discovered the Living Water, Jesus Himself. Throughout John’s gospel, Jesus is engaged in lives of people. Jesus invested time in His twelve disciples. Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13, NIV). Jesus is that kind of Friend.

Open Doors in Multihousing

Mike is an everyday Christ follower in Ohio. God is using the skills he learned in the business world to creatively engage people who live in apartment communities. Picture yourself walking into the entry way of the apartment offices to a room filled with children and parents enjoying a gospel rendition of rap music at a Friday night talent show. The good news is preached and people respond to Jesus. We must go to them, not wait for them to come to us.

Remember...

- Prayer is vital as you engage the people of multihousing.
- Reflecting the life of Christ is more important than being religious.
- People have special needs, and you can meet those needs in Jesus name.
- Trust is a necessity. Regardless of the socioeconomic level, people will question your motivations.
- Follow Jesus' example of engaging people.

Action Steps:

- Continue engaging the multihousing community through prayer as the Spirit directs. Ask God to move in the heart of the owners, managers, and residents. Ask God for workers (see Luke 10:2).
- Stay engaged with the management so that you are aware of their needs. When a need is discovered, move promptly to meet that need.
- With the management's permission, follow up on your previous assessment of the needs of the community. It will shape your work while you continue to build upon the new relationships.
- Begin to meet the needs with special acts of kindness.
- After trust is established, begin to offer special events that are relevant to your setting such as block parties, sports clinics, special interest classes and other avenues for engaging people.
- Invest time in building relationships with people who are not yet Christians, seeking to understand them and their families. Present the gospel sensitively, contextually, as the Holy Spirit leads.
- Establish a visual presence and be available to the community.

Resources:

- *Servanthood Evangelism Manual* (North American Mission Board, 2000)
- *101 Ways to Reach Your Community* by Steve Sjogren (Navpress Publishing Group, 2001)
- *The Celtic Way of Evangelism* by George G. Hunter III (Abingdon Press, 2000)
- *Glocalization* by Bob Roberts Jr. (Zondervan Publishing, 2007)
- [Resident Survey Guide](#), Texas Multihousing/Barbara Oden
- [Things to Remember When Meeting with a Manager](#)
- [Bible Studies Written for Multihousing Ministries](#)
- A Prayer Walking Guide (www.churchplantingvillage.net/epoch)



Keys to Unlocking Multihousing Doors



Doorway Five: Build Community

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4, NIV).

Objective: Connect people together to establish relationships and experience authentic community in multihousing settings.

“People need to be involved in meaningful and constant community or they will continue on indefinitely in a state of intense loneliness.”¹

Randy Frazee, *The Connecting Church* (p. 33)

J.D. Power’s 2007 study of the multihousing industry identified “a sense of community” as being the number one resident retention factor. Living in close proximity to your neighbors in a multihousing setting doesn’t guarantee or even imply good relationships or community. The craving for real relationships in this high tech and low touch world requires a person willing to set the example of a life lived in authentic community.

As we seek to make disciples and establish relationship-based faith communities, we must be committed to love people for the sake of the gospel. Community can be expressed with people of all ages and all ethnic backgrounds. People who long to belong to a community often search for love and fulfillment in all the wrong places. Often belonging precedes believing; once the unbeliever experiences love and Christian community, then openness to the gospel message is the result.

We acknowledge the fact that we must connect people with people—building community—as part of our disciple-making process. We need to establish a sense of community among some very disconnected people so that they begin to understand the value of community and having personal relationships. Accountability, trust, support and celebration are components of authentic community. When these are present, it can lead to an attractiveness that draws people together. Community is created by doing ministry *with* people instead of *for* people.

Taken from The Connecting Church by Randy Frazee. Copyright © 2001 by the Willow Creek Association. Used by permission of Zondervan, www.zondervan.com.

Open Doors in Multihousing

In Mississippi, Jim was leading a Sunday morning worship service in a nursing home with a great sense of God being at work. Members of the residents’ families began to attend. Most of these family members rarely, if ever attended any church. They began to care for each other with a common bond of having a loved one in the senior living community. It soon became a community of faith—a church impacting residents, families and those in the workplace. In an unlikely place, community was built where loneliness had previously prevailed. When God builds community, lives are changed through Christ.

Where does this community happen in the multihousing setting? Move toward meeting in a residence or a common area. As we examine the life of Jesus, we see that He spent a great deal of time in homes, utilizing the home as a base of His ministry. The early church followed this example by meeting in homes (see Acts 2:42-47 or Romans 16:5) or a common area (see Acts 5:12, 42). Complete households came to Christ when the gospel was shared freely. An example is Cornelius' house in Acts 10. Another example is seen in Acts 16 when the Philippian jailer came to Christ along with his entire household. A living room or an activities room can become the comfortable environment that allows people to connect at a deeper level—a place where people can be open, honest and transparent. It is their home field or their turf.

Remember...

- People long to be involved in something significant. Belonging may proceed believing. Let them move at their pace.
- People desire to have authentic community.
- Community is created by doing ministry *with* people instead of *for* people.
- A home or a common area can become the base of your community.
- Many people learn by doing—community can be built through empowering others to use their gifts.

Action Steps:

- Determine to be focused on Christ (see Acts 2:42-44) in your community of faith.
- Build community through genuinely expressing acts of kindness and creating a culture of caring for one another.
- Connect people through social events. Host or organize social events to help create community (a Monday Night Football party or a pancake breakfast, etc).
- Plan a service project that captures the passion of those in the multihousing community. Involve those who are not yet Christians in the project.
- Identify a home or common area as a place to meet regularly for the purpose of building community.
- Look for opportunities for people in your community to express their giftedness and learn from one another.

Resources:

- *The Search to Belong: Rethinking Intimacy, Community, and Small Groups* by Joseph R. Myers (Zondervan/Youth Specialties, 2003)
- *Making Room for Life: Trading Chaotic Lifestyles for Connected Relationships* by Randy Frazee (Zondervan, 2004)
- *The Church of Irresistible Influence* by Robert Lewis (Zondervan, 2001)
- *Community of Kindness* by Steve Sjogren and Rob Lewis (Regal, 2003)
- *The Connecting Church* by Randy Frazee (Zondervan, 2001)



Keys to Unlocking Multihousing Doors



Doorway Six: Make Disciples

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20, HCSB).

Objective: Make disciples who multiply themselves.

We must understand that God desires for the church to introduce people to Christ and to teach them to be like Christ, enabling them to live out the mission of God. We are to make disciples who multiply themselves—disciple-making disciples. Jesus said, “This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples” (John 15:8, NIV).

Open Doors in Multihousing

In Texas, God is doing a work among people who had been in prison and are now released. John, who works in the criminal justice system, has been reaching out to his co-workers, ex-offenders and the families of those ex-offenders. His church is reaching out to these people with an intentional disciple making approach. Most ex-offenders do not feel like they fit in churches, so small communities of faith are being formed for the purpose of discipleship and life transformation. They are seeing individuals come to Christ and beginning to grow in their journey with Him.

One way to bear fruit is to intentionally make disciples of those who live in multihousing communities. Genuine disciples are made within the context of community. The Holy Spirit works in these interactions bringing life. Therefore, we propose this disciple-making process: Connection, Conversation, Belief, Commitment, Transformation, and Reproduction. This process is built upon three basic principles: First, people often need to belong before they believe. Second, the principles of disciple-making are better caught than taught. Third, the Bible is a vital tool for disciple-making.

Disciple-Making Process

Connection: Build relationships with non-Christians, involving them in community and mission. Allow them to see and experience the love of Christ in your group (see John 13:34, 35).

Conversation: Prayerfully and intentionally share biblical truths and principles both verbally (asking good questions) and through the way you live your life.

Belief: Within the context of the new relationship, share the gospel with sensitivity to God’s Spirit. Your objective is for them to gain an understanding of the gospel and affirm that Jesus is the Savior of the world.

Commitment: Once the Holy Spirit has brought the individual to an understanding and acceptance of the truth, lead them to make a commitment to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Transformation: Spiritual conversion begins when individuals accept Christ as Savior and Lord. However, the transformation of their habits and practices may occur over an extended period of time. They will need to replace old habits and practices with those found in Scripture. They will need to establish new habits and practices. Teach them how to pray, how to study God's Word, how to relate to the body of Christ, and how to live out the mission of God.

Reproduction: From the very beginning you must engage new believers in the process of making of disciples. Help them immediately connect with people, starting with those closest to them to begin the process again.

Remember...

- Followers of Christ are to be disciple-making disciples (see Matt. 28:19).
- Disciple-making is a process.
- Disciple-making is better caught than taught.
- The Bible is a vital tool for making disciples.

Action Steps:

- Pray for people by name, seeking opportunities to give a verbal witness to the gospel.
- Connect with unbelievers with the intent of making disciples.
- Seize the moment to encourage the new disciple to seek out someone whom he or she can begin to disciple from their circles of influence. Disciples making disciples is the intended outcome.
- Learn to creatively share how the story of the gospel connects to your own personal life story (see 1 Pet. 3:15).
- Proclaim the gospel with appropriate boldness in what you say and how you live (see Eph. 5:1).
- Establish—with help from your church or coach—clear training objectives and a discipleship process for people after their conversion.
- Place an emphasis on teaching people to study scripture and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- Reinforce with your team and new believers that the objective is to see lives transformed by the presence and power of Jesus Christ. Teach them that all believers must be participating in the mission of God to reach all peoples with the gospel. Do this in your weekly team meetings. Be sure to invite new believers.

Resources:

- *Becoming a Contagious Christian* by Bill Hybels, Mark Mittelberg (Zondervan, New Edition, 1996)
- *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples* by Win & Charles Arn (Baker, 1982)
- *The Lost Art of Disciple Making* by LeRoy Eims (Zondervan, 1978)
- *Transformation* by Bob Roberts (Zondervan, 2006)
- *One Hour/One Day Witnessing Workshop* (www.churchplantingvillage.net/epoch)



Keys to Unlocking Multihousing Doors



Doorway Seven: Gather for His Worship and Glory

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayers” (Acts 2:42, HCSB).

“Let us not give up on meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching (Hebrews 10:25, NIV).

Objective: Gather people and form basic faith communities for God's worship and glory.

In Acts 2:42, we see that the early church devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. They sacrificed to meet the needs of others. They went to the Temple for hours of prayer and, no doubt, to witness. They went from house to house, sharing life and meals together. They had a sense there was an “us.” They were the church—the people of God—and expressed their faith in the confines of community. In 1 Corinthians 14:26, we see that in their meetings all were encouraged to participate, to share in the gathering of the church.

Worship must begin early in your community of faith. God has created His people to worship Him. It may be very simple in expression and style, but worship must begin with giving yourself to God (see Romans 12:1-2). God is the audience. God is seeking worshipers who will worship Him in Spirit and truth.

The size of the group may be as small as two or three, but Jesus is present when people gather for His worship and glory. Encountering the presence of God together in a multihousing setting produces the motivation to serve the Lord right in your community. Worship may be in a living room, a clubhouse, a coffee shop, or by a swimming pool. The need is to help worshipers see that they are living out God's mission. Here are seven ways in which we can worship and glorify our heavenly Father:

1. Pursue the presence of God.
2. Love one another graciously (see John 13:35).
3. Express your love to God through music and the arts.
4. Do life together, making prayer integral in all you do.
5. Give cheerfully.
6. Live out His mission.
7. Make the Word of God central in all you do (see Acts 5:42).

Open Doors in Multihousing

Mike from Orlando shared, “On the launch of our worship in the apartment community, we had a baptism and a cookout. After a powerful time of worship, we baptized five people in the swimming pool. One of the baptism candidates was 67-years-old. After coming up out of the pool from being immersed, he took off swimming bringing about a resounding praise to the Lord from the congregation and spectators. It was a great witness for the apartment community of God's majesty and glory.”

Open Doors in Multihousing

A fine example of gathering for worship and His glory is seen in Tillie, her family, and a host of local church volunteers who currently find themselves in more than 250 multihousing communities each week for worship. They, through praying and relying on God's Spirit, are determined to "hang out and hover around John 3:16," making a difference person by person, impacting the city of Arlington, Texas, for Christ.

Remember...

- It is not about the size of the gathering but about the presence of God.
- Authentic worship leads to service (see Isaiah 6:8).
- The gathering for God's worship and glory will look different in every faith community.
- Worship is a group activity including prayer, giving, singing, and sharing.
- People need to be empowered to use their gifts and talents.

Action Steps:

- Gather people for teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer on a regular basis.
- Respect the fact that people will be at different places in their spiritual journey.
- Discover what people can do to contribute to the worship experience while coaching their development.
- Communicate from the beginning that community exists for God. It is all about Him, not us.
- Worship God with your time, talent and treasures. We would encourage you to begin by supporting worldwide mission causes through Cooperative Program giving.

Resources:

- *Creating Community: Five Keys to Building a Small Group Culture* by Andy Stanley and Bill Willits (Multnomah, 2004)
- *Making Small Groups Work* by Henry Cloud and John Townsend (Zondervan, 2003)
- *Community of Kindness* by Steve Sjogren and Rob Lewis (Regal, 2003)
- *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence (Revell Books, Reprint edition 1999)
- *The Connecting Church* by Randy Frazee (Zondervan, 2001)
- [*National Association of Multihousing Ministries and Congregations*](#)
- [*I Worship DVD*](#) (Integrity Music)
- Cooperative Program, www.CPmissions.net



Keys to Unlocking Multihousing Doors



Doorway Eight: Multiply

“And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2 HCSB).

“Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you” (2 Thessalonians 3:1, NIV).

Objective: Multiply disciples, leaders, and churches through the new believer’s existing relationships and the various multihousing industry networks.

What is the greatest joy in life? Would you say, “Seeing someone come to Christ?” Great! But there is something maybe greater—seeing someone whom you led to Christ leading someone else to Christ! It’s called multiplication—disciples making disciples, churches planting churches.

The goal of your team should be multiplication—the multiplication of disciples, multiplication of leaders and the multiplication of teams to start new ministry sites and faith communities. Some of these may become new churches. Multiplication is the area where we often fail because it is not built into the DNA of the multihousing faith community.

Multihousing has a built-in multiplication element due to the mobile nature of our society. A resident may purchase a condo for twelve months then move, selling their property with a return on their investment only to move into another condo a few miles away. It may very well be a community where God desires to begin a work of transforming lives through a new faith community.

As your gatherings grow in size and disciples are equipped, new gift-based teams must be sent out to reach unreached peoples and under-reached places. The doorways of *Epoch Multihousing M-Pact* must be entered over and over again. New teams must be enlisted. Unreached people groups and places must be identified. New relationships must be built. Community must be established. Disciples must be made and gathered together for God’s worship and glory.

Open Doors in Multihousing

In Alabama, Neal challenged his church to go to the multihousing communities to bring hope in Christ. In a city that was known for its racial division, God did a seemingly impossible thing. They entered into several multihousing communities bringing hope and life. He says “The reality is we do not look for one property, but multiple gathering points.” Think in terms of citywide multihousing impact, because this kind of thinking is what it will take to reach the millions who need Jesus Christ.

Epoch Multihousing M-Pact process is built upon the belief that every leader must be an intentional equipper of disciples and that all disciples must be viewed as potential leaders. Therefore, the key to multiplication is found in leaders who reproduce themselves in new leaders (see 2 Timothy 2:2). When you look at an apple, remember that we can count the number of seeds in an apple but *only* God can count the numbers of apples produced from those future trees in seed form. It is when this orchard effect begins to take root that results in a great harvest for God's glory.

Remember...

- Multiplication of disciples, leaders, ministries, and churches is a biblical mandate (see Genesis 2:28 and Acts 6:7).
- Multiplication is built upon an awareness that lost people who live in multihousing communities matter to God.
- Multiplication starts in the beginning of your team's journey and is directed by God.
- Think in terms of citywide, region-wide, statewide, nationwide and even worldwide (see Acts 1:8)

Action Steps:

- Start with the end in mind— intentionally focus on the multiplication of disciple-making disciples and churches.
- Raise up leaders from the harvest who understand their own culture and release them early. Resources are in the harvest.
- See individuals from different people groups or with different worldviews as an opportunity to start a new community.
- Evaluate and modify as needed.
- Use new believers to make disciples and start new faith communities shortly after their conversion.
- Seek to continually reproduce yourselves as leaders through the practice of coaching (Utilize the *Epoch Implementation Guide* found at www.churchplantingvillage.net/epoch).

Open Doors in Multihousing

Tim from Georgia shares, "God is working all around us! Last week I went to an apartment community to talk with the manager. I introduced myself as working with churches that want to help the community. She immediately got up, closed the door and told me, 'Every morning my staff and I come into my office for a prayer time. We've been praying that God would send someone like you to help us. When can you start work here?' This scenario happens to me regularly! God is in the multiplication business!"

Resources:

- *The Master Plan of Evangelism* by Robert E. Coleman (Revell, 2nd Abridged edition, 1994)
- *Church Multiplication Guide* by George Patterson and Richard Scoggins (William Carey Library Pub, Revised edition 2003)
- *PLACE* (www.churchplantingvillage.net/epoch)
- *Church Planting Movements* by David Garrison (Wigtake Resources, 2003)
- *Barefoot in the Church* by Donald Allen (John Knox Press, 1972)





Is God calling you to live as a missionary?

Is God calling you to live as a missionary and implement M-Pact?

If so, we would like to know of your desire and forward you additional resources as they are developed.

Please visit the Web site below and click on the registration link.

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