

Pursuing “Church Cultivation”

Commentary by Steve Saint

We have largely treated the Great Commission as a spectator sport – where the highly-trained and lavishly-equipped players from afar take the field, while local believers sit in the stands to watch. It was supposed to be more like a military engagement, where everyone must join the fight.

The single most common failing I see in fledgling churches in frontier areas is the lack of an economy which will allow fathers to stay with their families, mothers to stay in the home to nurture their children to be God-followers, and the community of believers to support their own efforts to reach out to the community of “not coming after ones” (non-Christians) around them.

My son Jesse and his family are down in Shell Mera, Ecuador, where my parents were living when my father was killed 50 years ago. Jesse is working with a young man from Shell in starting a business to build modern airplanes for the North American market. (The first apprentices are two Waodani young men, one of whom is the grandson of Mincaye, our dear friend and one of those who killed my father.) We don’t even dare call this a ministry, much less ask people to contribute to it. Why? Because it doesn’t fall under the category of “church planting.” No, it is “church cultivation” – the natural follow-on to church planting. 🌐

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