

SPD Strategy: Mission to the Cities

It might surprise you to know that the most challenging mission field in the South Pacific Division is in our major cities, particularly amongst our post Christian, majority people groups. God loves our cities. The Great Controversy on earth starts in the Garden of Eden but ends in a City - the New Jerusalem. God said to Jonah, about the evil city of Nineveh, “should I not have pity on that great city?” When Ellen White wrote in 1910 that “the work in the cities is the essential work for this time”, New York city was smaller than Sydney is today. The work in our cities is still our essential work.

We want to thank you for your faithfulness in giving to the Mission to the Cities offering last year. That offering is already being used in several projects including the Karla Bidjar First Nations Church Plant in Perth, Flatbush Church Plant in Auckland, New Design Community in Perth, Northern Beaches Church Plant in Sydney, Doncaster Hope Fellowship in Melbourne, the Brisbane Karen Church Plant and many more.

Appeal: Please pray for our cities, pray for volunteers who will be willing to minister in our cities and pray that this Mission to the Cities offering will continue to help “the essential work of our time”.

Local Church Budget

Watch Out!

Colombian drug dealer Pablo Escobar was the leader of a cartel that controlled up to 80 per cent of the world’s cocaine sales. His brother Roberto was one of the cartel’s accountants and author of the book *Escobar: The Untold Story of the World’s Most Powerful Criminal*. In the book, Roberto reveals, “Pablo was earning so much that each year we’d write off ten per cent of the money because rats would eat it in storage or it would be damaged by water or lost.” Some sources claim that Escobar’s annual ten per cent ‘tithe-for-the-rats’ was more than a billion dollars!

Jesus once said, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy.” I think Jesus might have known a few greedy people in His day. Luke 12:13-21 tells Jesus’ parable of the rich fool, and it’s not pretty:

Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or arbiter between you?” Then Jesus said to them, “Watch out!”

Jesus’s urgency makes it sound like the crowd is about to be squashed by an out-of-control bus. It’s like Jesus has just seen a raging bull running at them, and He yells, “Watch out! Run for your lives!” He’s giving a severe warning here, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”

It has been said that “Earth provides enough to satisfy everyone’s need but not everyone’s greed.” Let’s “Watch out!” and be on our guard—against all kinds of greed.

Appeal: As we return God’s tithe and give our Promise offerings today, let’s ask God to search our hearts to see if there are any greedy ways inside us and then lead us in His everlasting ways.