

# Kids Cost Too Much

## by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson

"We shouldn't be spending so much money starting new churches," a church officer grumbles. "If they'd just take that money and use it to revitalize our existing churches, we'd all be better off." Would we now?

"Ginger and I have decided we just can't afford kids. Frank tells his bachelor friend. We're struggling now to make ends meet."

"Children sure are expensive," his friend retorts. "I hear it costs more than \$100,000 to raise a kid these days." He shook his head. "Why people would spend that kind of money on children, I just don't know. Kids are such a pain!"

Are kids a bother? Is the sky blue? You're up in the middle of the night to feed the baby. You follow a toddler around the house cleaning up messes. And let me tell you about raising teenagers ....

But when all is said and done, I've never heard any grandparents say, "I just wish we hadn't spent our hard-earned money on Debby and Dave when they were young."

Physical reproduction is God's plan for the next generation. So is starting new churches. Churches, like people, go through a predictable life cycle: birth, growth, reproduction, decline. And, though we don't like to admit it, if they keep going the way they are, some of our churches won't last forever. Just a shot of money won't cure all their ills. Church growth professor Pete Wagner quips, "It's easier to have babies than to raise the dead."

Moreover, new churches, like kids, have energy to burn. In fact, far more people come to know Christ in a new church, than in an older church of similar size. For reaching the lost, new churches beat older ones hands down.

The bottom line is this: skimping on new churches deprives the next generation of hearing the good news of Jesus. So planting baby churches is more than just denominational hype. It's at the core of God's plan to evangelize our world.

By the way, has your church had a baby recently?