

A Vision for Our Cities

As the main purveyor of influence to surrounding communities, the city is where culture is formed. The Christian desire to shape culture with the gospel therefore requires Christians to live and be active in the city.

Repeatedly throughout the Scriptures, we see God's concern for cities and the people within them, both those inhabited and dominated by his people, like Jerusalem, and those that were not, such as Nineveh and Babylon. God is just as concerned today about cities as he was back then, and therefore so should we.

There are many reasons why we ought to be concerned about the city, not the least of which are the following:

1. The cities are **where people are** and increasingly will be.
2. The cities are the **key centers of influence** culturally, spiritually, and in nearly every other way.
3. The **city is God's invention**, part of God's plan and purpose, and as such should not be regarded as evil. Life in a city is our eventual destiny—or at least our eternal destiny will revolve around a city.

If our intent is to change or have an effect on a city, we have to **engage at many different levels**.

+ We have to **proclaim Christ** to individuals and communities. That means church planting, church replanting, and church revitalization. With all of its faults, the church is God's chosen means of converting and transforming individual lives and the life of any given community. More Christians living out the gospel in the city will bring significant influence and change. We need to help people gain an in-depth understanding of the application of the gospel to their lives.

+ We have to **"act justly and to love mercy"** (Micah 6:8).

+ We have to **engage culture**. Cultural forms are the primary way truth is communicated. Christians need to write, make films, and produce music and other forms of artistic expression. To change a city, you have to change how people think and feel.

+ We have to help Christians **apply their faith** in all that they do, whether business, parenting, education, or anything else.

Dr. Timothy Keller, founder and senior pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, has developed key teachings on the importance of the city to all churches in this document.

>> **Download this powerful and insightful teaching from Dr. Keller [here](#).**



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