

Michael's article on <http://thegospelcoalition.org/> highlighted in blue with a link that jumps to article below...



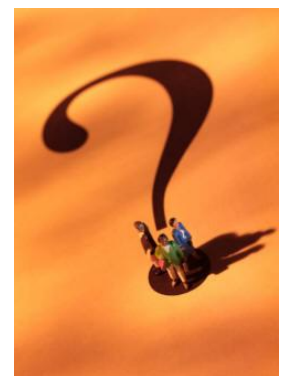
## WHAT'S THE PRIMARY QUESTION FOR FULL-TIME CHURCH PLANTERS?

There is one question that full-time Christian workers - whether European or foreign missionaries - need to grapple with that our lay brothers and sisters might not have to think about, and that is...

### ▶▶ What Is My Role Here?

Did you ever get up from your couch and walk to the kitchen to get a glass of water only to forget your goal before you got there? You ask yourself, "What did I come here for?" It's happened to us all. Usually we look around the room, we think about it, and then we suddenly remember what we came for. The task gets done! Momentarily forgetting what we came for or getting sidetracked along the way doesn't make us bad people; it just means we are human. A few minutes wasted in confusion is not a great tragedy. **The only tragedy would be returning to the couch without that glass of refreshing water in our hands.**

Most full-time church planters run into similar situations in their ministry at one point or another. We moved to this European town because we knew that [church planting and church planting movements](#) are the fastest way to



**Did I move to this European town to pastor a church, to plant a church, or to be part of a movement of church planting?**

reach the lost, influence the world, and bring glory to God. We came to this town to have a role in multiplying churches throughout the area or throughout the entire country. However, along the way we found other exciting things to do. Perhaps we even started a church but then found it difficult to leave. Isn't this just like forgetting why we went to the kitchen? **We who are full-time church planters need to ask ourselves, "What was it that God sent me here to do, and am I still doing that?"**

Over the years we've talked to a multitude of missionaries and full-time European church planters - many of them dear and respected friends - who've told us things like, "I came here to start churches, but I was asked to take over the pastorate for a retiring missionary." or "We moved here to help start multiple churches, but we've had to stay in the first one we planted for over twenty years now. **Sometimes these stories are shared with tears, and always with no small degree of regret or frustration.** We love these people and our hearts break for them. They came to the kitchen but haven't yet gotten the drink of water they so desired.



**Why did I come here?  
Am I fulfilling that role?**

Unless the Holy Spirit was truly redirecting the church planter's path, we're all a bit saddened by their five-, ten- or twenty-year delay in the work of church multiplication. But **the real tragedy would be returning to the couch without a glass of water - that is, returning to our sending church, sending mission, or sending country without having attempted to be a part of a movement of church planting.**

Before asking any of our other questions for [foreign missionaries](#) or [full-time workers](#), or even our [general questions](#) for all church planters, we always want full-time church planters to ask themselves, **"Why did I come to this European town?" and "Am I fulfilling that role?"**

*The Omega Course* refers to this as keeping your eye on the "Z" (the end result). [Ott and Wilson](#) refer to it as choosing between the [three roles of church planting missionaries](#). We just like to think of it as fulfilling what God has placed in our hearts and not returning to the couch empty-handed.

## Related:

For a fascinating discussion of the three roles of church planting missionaries, [click here.](#) ►►

For some questions for missionaries, [click here.](#) ►►

For some questions for full-time European workers, [click here.](#) ►►

For some questions for all church planters, [click here.](#) ►►