

BY FERNANDO TOBIS

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After 11 years pastoring a Foursquare church in Brazil, I was compelled by Jesus to move to the U.S., to the city of Atlanta, and plant a church. This was undoubtedly the biggest challenge of my life.

As a church-planter in another country, it was easy to focus on what I didn't have yet, and it was hard not to let negative thoughts direct my attitudes or affect my vision for the future.

Living this experience, I learned that God changes us before changing our circumstances. I didn't see a way to reach people. I didn't know how it would happen, but [Isaiah 43:19](#) promised me He would "do a new thing" and "make a road" (NKJV).

In the midst of doubt and the unknown, I found rest and favor in a God who works for those who wait for Him. Then some "divine encounters" began to take place, and we saw a path to growth.

Let us keep the flame within us burning for evangelism because without that fire of passion, ministries may stagnate, relationships languish and dreams die ([Rom. 12:11-13, MSG](#)).

PRAYER + REFLECTION

- Oh, God, let us not be distracted, but focus on the mission You have set before us.
- Help us to find new ways and opportunities like "rivers in the desert" (Isa. 43:19).
- May the flame of passion be constantly lit within us.