



guidelines for  
**CHURCH**  
**GROWTH**

Dan Nell

# ***Guidelines for Church Growth***

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## Foreword

The desire of the author is to see  
Pastors  
Cell Groups  
Bible Schools  
Use the information in this book  
as a tool in growing their Church

Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures was  
taken from the “Spirit filled Life Bible”  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

My aim is to place a book in your hand that will give you guidelines how a church can grow spiritually and also in numbers.

**T**his book was “born” when I compiled information for my Master’s thesis. My professor came with the idea that I should consider it to write a book on this subject, so that everyone could have insight to this information. This sparked something in my heart and now I want to share this with you, hoping that my “information” will give you “revelation” so that you will have “inspiration” to do what God wants you to do.

This book will talk to pastors and leaders, but also to all Christians that have a spiritual hunger to see their church grow so that they will impact their community for God’s Kingdom. I want to underline this statement that not one word, sentence, or even one book will give you all the guidelines you need for your church to grow. But this I know that if you are crying out to God for spiritual growth, He will hear your prayers and give you His “blue print” what He wants you to do. Growth will take place when God is involved in whatever you plan for Him and His Kingdom.

Many books (and articles) have been written on “Church Growth”.

– In this Introduction I want to share with you two books that changed my way of thinking concerning CHURCH GROWTH.

The first book is: **Natural Church Development** by Christian A. Schwartz

C & P Publishing, D-25924 Emmelsbüll, Germany (p 16, 1996).

Christian Schwartz writes:

“A look at church growth literature can be confusing. An entire array of programs claim the following: ‘Do what you do, and you will get the same results’.”

*Unfortunately many of these concepts contradict one another. One group pushes ‘mega churches’ as the most effective way to reach a community with the gospel, while another suggests that the optimal church size is a small group, almost like most home Bible studies. Some suggest that the key to success is a worship service targeted toward non-Christians, while others emphasize that the goal of a worship service is exclusively worshipping God and equipping the saints. One group is convinced that marketing strategies must be integrated into church planting, while another enjoys healthy church growth without even having heard of such methods.”*

After doing a survey with one thousand churches Christian Schwartz gives us eight principles for Church Growth:

#### 1. EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP

It is his view that this is what Jesus did.

By doing this one helps others to fulfil their ministry.

One must equip, support, motivate and mentor individuals, enabling them to become all that God intended them to be.

#### 2. GIFT-ORIENTATED MINISTRY

Schwartz says one must avoid training people and giving them a Certificate without giving them something to do. Train less people per time, but use them in God's kingdom.

#### 3. PASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY

The question Schwartz asks, is: *“Are the Christians in your church ‘on fire’ for the Lord? Do they live committed lives and practise their faith with joy and enthusiasm?”*

#### 4. FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES

There are two problems in church concerning structures. The one is that the spiritual ones tend to be sceptical towards structures and the

other problem is others think structures are the real thing.

Therefore, structures must be functional.

#### 5. INSPIRING WORSHIP SERVICES

We must know: *"Is the worship service an inspiring experience for the people?"*

#### 6. HOLISTIC SMALL GROUPS

Holistic small groups (meaning ministering to the person as a whole) should be the natural place for Christians to serve each other with their gifts.

#### 7. NEED-ORIENTATED EVANGELISM

The need of the day must always be the driving force for us to evangelise.

#### 8. LOVING RELATIONSHIPS

The following questions should be asked:

- a. Are the leaders in the church aware of the problems of their members?
- b. How often do members invite each other for meals or a cup of coffee?
- c. How much laughter (happiness) is there in the church?

Love has a magnetic power far more effective than evangelistic programmes.

### **NCD Research International**

“When Christian A. Schwarz’s book, “Natural Church Development”, was first published in 1996, it not only opened a new chapter in the international discussion on church growth, but it also initiated a vibrant movement of striving for church health that now encompasses more than 60,000 NCD Surveys done in 70 countries.

Take time and read the books “Natural Church Development” (Christian A. Schwarz), “Implementation Guide to Natural Church Development” (Christian A. Schwarz & Christoph Schalk) and “Colour Your World with Natural Church Development” (Christian A. Schwarz) if you fully want to understand the background and context of this blog.

Website: [www.ncd-international.com](http://www.ncd-international.com)

The other book I read that undergirds my biblical statements of above was written by O.S. Hawkins, printed by Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1990. The name of this book is:

**“Revive us again - New Testament keys to Personal and Church Growth”**

Hawkins starts his book with these words:

“With all of my being I believe in a balanced ministry – evangelism, the equipping of the saints, social ministries, special ministries, and more.

I am grateful to God that our church, the First Baptist Church of Lauderdale, Florida, is recognized for its care and concern for every aspect of people’s lives.

At thanksgiving we serve perhaps the largest “Thanksgiving” dinner in the world, as many as seven thousand attend. We encourage everybody to come, not only at Thanksgiving, but all through the year. We are a church with an open door, without distinction between race, colour, or social standing.”

Hawkins goes on to say:

**WHAT MAKES A GREAT CHURCH?**

We are not talking of a great church in the eyes of the people, but in the eyes of God.

### In the eyes of the people a great church is

- A church that has all the buildings they need. This may be true from people's views, but this does not make all churches great. All over the world you will find magnificent church buildings today, with a handful of members and some of these churches even closed down.
- Often in the eyes of people a great church is determined by their finances. Finances are needed in the church, but this isn't the only way to measure a church by.

The secret to a great church in the eyes of God is found in the second chapter of Acts with the birth of the church. It includes **four** vital elements:

- These early believers were "all together" (Acts 2:1). They found their strength in **participation** with each other. There has never been a great church that has not captured this element of participation.
- Second, there is the element of **proclamation**. These early believers knew how to preach the Word of God. Peter stood up on the day of Pentecost, took a text from the scroll of Joel, and preached the gospel of Jesus Christ, boldly and unashamedly. Three thousand came that day to receive Christ.
- Third, there is the element of **preservation**. The Bible tells us they "continued steadfastly" in the apostle's teachings.

They devoted themselves to prayer and fellowship. People did not come through the front door of the church and then left again through the back door.

- Finally, there is the element of **propagation**. They went everywhere witnessing, and the Bible states: *“the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”* (Acts 2:47)

Any church that aspires to be great in the eyes of God must be characterized by these four vital elements.

***The most important organization to the future of any area ought to be the local New Testament church. The prosperity of any town or city does not lie in the hands of the industries or business, but in the hands of those serving God!***

## **PARTICIPATION**

The members of the first church found their strength in participation with one another. They were united and not divided. They decided to stay together as well as pray together. ***Unity is one of the single most important factors in church growth.***

We are talking of unity and not uniformity.

In the first church they were as different as people in churches today, but God cemented them together and did great and mighty works through them.

Look at those in the group. Peter was there. He was the one that denied our Lord before a maiden. Thomas the doubter was present. John and James were selfish in wanting to have the number one and number two positions in the Kingdom.

There were forgiven adulterers and tax collectors. They were different, but they were “all together”. They found strength in participation with each other.

If a church is backbiting and murmuring, they will not participate together.

We need everybody in our church to be a part of the bigger picture. This “bigger picture” is to win souls for Christ and to care for each one of them. That is why each member should discover their calling from God and be equipped to be effective.

## **PROCLAMATION**

The word “Proclamation” means: “A public announcement about something important“.

Real revival is always rooted and grounded in the proclamation of the Word and our testimony. And when it is preached in truth and power, it leads men and women to seek God with all their heart.

*Read again for yourself the sermon Peter gave on the day of Pentecost in the book of Acts, chapter 2 v. 14-40.*

*When he proclaimed the Word, three thousand came to Christ on one day!*

**Our preaching must be prophetic. This means we must preach biblically.**

A preacher not using the Word of God correctly (meaning as it is written), would be like a carpenter trying to build a home without the correct tools. Churches will overflow with people if the powerful Word of the Lord (in its correct way) is proclaimed. Don't add or delete anything!

The great churches of the world today have anointed preachers behind their pulpits who select their text from the Word of God and proclaim it boldly.

**Our preaching must be plain.**

Many preachers today make their message difficult to understand, that is why they do not make an impact. Our preaching must be all about Christ.

**Our preaching must also be positive.**

In Acts 2:32 Peter preached: "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact." We have a positive gospel! Every preacher should ask himself how much of his preaching points to Christ.

**Our preaching must be personal and penetrating.**

We get a lot of preaching that speaks of "we" and "they".

We should preach directly to the hearts of the people and challenge them with the Word of the Lord!

In our preaching we must trust the Holy Spirit to convict the hearts of the people, so that they will respond to God's Word.

Conviction always precedes conversion.

**The winning characteristics of Jesus' preaching:**

1. Its simplicity (using everyday illustrations)
2. It was positive and had divine authority
3. It brought conviction
4. It was rich of fundamental principles
5. It was full of tenderness and love
6. It was direct and personal
7. It appealed to the highest in man and God

**Our preaching must be productive (we must have a goal).**

In Acts 2:41 we read: "Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day."

Three thousand were saved in one day! They did so much with so little, and we seem to do so little with so much!

## PRESERVATION

So often, so many people in various places are touched with sparks of genuine revival, only to have them burn out, because they are not preserved and the flame is not fanned in their hearts.

Someone said: *“As soon as they get on the ‘gospel wagon’, they fall off again.”*

It won’t help us getting new converts if we do not take care of them.

## PROPAGATION

The church must **“propagate”** the gospel – sharing with others their stories and their experiences so that they also can be saved.

Acts 1:8 is not just about receiving “power” by receiving the Holy Spirit, but also about being “witnesses” for the Lord.

## TO MOBILIZE OUR PEOPLE TO PROPAGATE THE GOSPEL, THE FOLLOWING IS NEEDED:

1. Leaders should show the example.
2. Our people should have expectancy.
3. The church members should be equipped.

Nothing mobilizes people more than encouragement and words of appreciation.” **(End of quote: O.S. Hawkins)**

## **IT IS GOD THAT BRINGS GROWTH**

Paul teaches the church in Corinthians that some preach God's Word and others care for the new converts, but it is only God that brings growth.

We find these words in **1 Corinthians 3:1-7**: “And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, ‘I am of Paul,’ and another, ‘I am of Apollos,’ are you not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.”

The two outstanding things needed for the church to grow, (according to the scripture above) are that we should evangelise (plant the Word of the Lord in the hearts of people) and then also take care of them. This is to “water” the spiritual seed that was planted in the hearts of the new Christians.

Planting must take place. This is to **EVANGELISE.**

The Word of the Lord must be “*planted*” in the hearts of people.

This is what the first disciples did.

It is written in the book of Mark (Living Bible translation): “And the disciples went everywhere preaching, and the Lord was with them and confirmed what they said by the miracles that followed their messages.” **(Mark 16:20)**

**Another very important thing to do, is: Caring for what has been planted.**

- God brings growth, but someone plants and cares for the plants.
- Every Christian must do one of these, or both.

**Leaders must take care of every new disciple.**

The complaint against the shepherds in the Old Testament is also against the church of today.

Ezekiel 34:4 “The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them.”

**There is another truth connected to the above statement we read in 1 Corinthians 3, and that is in Mark 4.**

The Scripture I am referring to, we find in the Living Bible and it adds more truth about growth.

In Mark 4:26-29 we read: *“Here is another story illustrating what the Kingdom of God is like: ‘A farmer sowed his field, and went away, and as the days went by, the seeds grew without his help. For the soil made the seeds to grow. First a leaf-blade pushed through, and later the wheat-heads formed and finally the grain ripened, and the farmer came at once with his sickle and harvested it.”*

**IF WE UNDERSTAND 1 COR. 3:3-7 AND MARK 4:26-29, WE HAVE THREE THINGS TO CONSIDER:**

- SEED MUST BE PLANTED. (God’s Word must be planted into the hearts of people.)
- WHATEVER WE PLANT INTO PEOPLE’S LIVES, WE MUST TAKE CARE OF. (Today we miss the “caring” part in the Church. We load new souls on the front of the “Gospel wagon” while others fall off at the back.)
- THE SOIL MUST BE CORRECTLY PREPARED FOR GROWTH TO TAKE PLACE. (Reinhardt Bonnke, the world-wide evangelist, once said: *“You never sow on cement.”*)

## HOW DID PAUL AND APOLLOS OPERATE IN CORINTH?

Paul planted God's Word in the hearts of the people. (**Acts chapter 18:1-8**)

We need to take note of what happened in the house next to the church.

Today most members of a congregation want everything to happen inside their church building.

God is sending a worldwide revival in His Church through the Cell Structure, because we started focussing on church buildings more than on the real church, namely God's people.

Apollos did the "watering".

This means he cared for the new disciples.

**The word says in Acts 18:24, 27, 28** "Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus.... And when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ." (Clearly he taught these new disciples about Christ and He was the anointed one!)

## Growth is the only evidence of a healthy life

In a plant or a tree we find three things essential for growth:

- (1) It is **the root** that feeds the plant or tree.

This we cannot see with our eyes, because it is hidden under the ground. But the roots are the most important part, because they give life to the plant or tree.

There are things in our Christian life that cannot be seen by others, such as our Bible reading and prayers, as well as our personal walk with the Lord which strengthen our spiritual growth in Him.

- (2) **The stem and leaves** that we can see.

These are things that make us strong and protect us, so that we can grow in the Lord.

- (3) **The fruit** is for us to enjoy.

Fruit was never meant to be a decoration. The reason we have to bear fruit is because Jesus wants us to be fruitful (**John 15:5**) so that others can enjoy what we produce.

## THREE HINDRANCES TO GROWTH

“For where there are **envy**, **strife**, and **divisions** among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?”

**The first hindrance is envy.**

In the church one also finds spiritual envy, because when God uses someone else rather than me, I become jealous. This grieves God's Spirit and hinders growth in the church.

**Strife** (or quarrelsomeness) should not even be mentioned among church members. The word says that leaders should qualify according to what is written in **1 Tim. 3:3**: "not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous".

Again in **2 Tim. 2:24** we read: "And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient."

**Any division** in the church will hinder God's love and power from being manifested.

## **THE BOOK of ACTS**

### **SUMMARY and HISTORY of the first CHURCH**

The book of Acts was written by Luke, the physician (Col. 4:4), as a follow-up of his Gospel in which he writes about the **life, death** and **resurrection** of **Jesus**.

This is not so much "THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES", but rather "THE ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT."

The book of Acts is not just the “works” of the first apostles, but is all about what the Holy Spirit did in the time of the first churches after the day of Pentecost.

Acts and James are the only books in the New Testament which do not end with the word, "AMEN". The Acts of the Holy Spirit (or the “working of the Holy Spirit”) is certainly not completed yet, but is continuing through the church of today.

There seem to be many seminars being held from time to time about one or other important aspect of what the New Testament church must do to grow. All have their foundations in the book of Acts.

**In order to understand the whole plan of God with His church, we need to look at the total message of the book of Acts.**

Read the book of Acts again during your daily Bible reading time and put yourself in the place of these first disciples. Share their experience in the working of the Spirit of God, the salvation of souls, the signs and wonders, and then cry out to God: "Lord, please do it again."

**In the book of Acts Paul illustrates how the first church gained momentum after the Holy Spirit was poured out on the first disciples.**

**After the growth came the persecution.**

Due to the persecution that followed, the believers were forced to flee to other areas, this in turn led to the spreading of the good news of the gospel to the other nations, who heard the good news and believed.

Because of the persecution in the first church, the gospel was spread to Ethiopia, North Africa.

**We read about this in Acts 8:26-38.**

The story is about the Minister of Finances of the Ethiopian Queen from the city of Candace. He went to Jerusalem to worship God. This shows that he knew something about the God of Israel.

Philip, that was appointed as deacon in Jerusalem (**Acts 6**), was sent by God to meet this man travelling back from Jerusalem on his wagon. He was reading a part of the book of Isaiah, the prophet.

By reading this story one realises that this minister of finances of Ethiopia could read the Hebrew language, because the Old Testament was written in Hebrew.

The part that he was reading we know today as **Isaiah 53**. These are the words he read: “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. In His humiliation His justice was taken away, and who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth.” The Ethiopian asked Philip to explain what he was reading. This Philip did, telling him that Isaiah was talking about Jesus. He believed this gospel and was baptised before the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away.

## **THE CHURCH IN THE BOOK OF ACTS GREW MIGHTILY**

**In Acts 6:7 we read:** “Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith”

**Again we read in Acts 11:21:** “And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.”

Growth is the story of the first church in die book of Acts.

**In chapters 2 to 7** the first Christians testified in and around Jerusalem.

**In chapter 8 to 12**, they testified in Judea and Samaria.

**And then from chapter 13 to the end of the book**, we find that they testified to the ends of the earth.

**In Acts 19** it is stated that within two years, the whole Asia heard God's Word, and through the Apostle Paul's stay in prison, the Word was even preached in Rome.

## **ACTS 1:1-8**

### **TO UNDERSTAND CHURCH GROWTH WE MUST UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS WRITTEN IN THE FIRST EIGHT VERSES IN THE BOOK OF ACTS.**

I made the following notes in my Bible on these verses, namely:

#### **A CHURCH WILL GROW:**

- (1) If they can hear from the Holy Spirit (v.2)
- (2) If they understand the message of the Kingdom of God  
(v.3)
- (3) If they are baptized by (in) the Holy Spirit (v.4,5)
- (4) If they are witnesses for Christ. (v.8)

By reading the above we will have to understand what Luke meant when he wrote in **Acts 1:2,3**: “through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen. “

For a church to grow it is very important for them to hear very clearly from God and establish what the Holy Spirit is saying to the leaders.

We listen too much to what other people say. One needs to relax and be quiet - listening for commands and instructions from Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

Dr. Yonggi Cho of Seoul, Korea, is the pastor of the largest church on earth, numbering more than 800,000 members.

When he was asked that if God should send him to the UK to start a new church, will he do exactly the same he did in Seoul?

His answer was that he would fast and pray for three weeks to find God's will and commands before he did anything.

**If local churches should get their direction through God's Spirit, they will experience growth.**

### **ONE OF THE KEY TEXTS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS IS SURELY ACTS 1:8**

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

**The infilling of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the first believers was very important for spiritual growth in the first Church.**

Another truth in the book of Acts that will help a church to grow, is concerning the promise of the Father, that is the Holy Spirit.

That is why we read of "The promise of the Father" in Acts 1 v.4.

The promise of the Holy Spirit must surely be a part of the Kingdom.

How can God's kingdom come in an assembly without the Holy Spirit?

The Greek word that is used for “power” is “dunamis”, meaning the “indwelling power”, or “power living in you”.

**A church that has the Holy Spirit indwelling them, will grow spiritually and also in numbers.**

The reason that believers are not as effective for God as they should be, is because they do not have the power of His Holy Spirit in their lives.

**Jesus said in Luke 11:13:** “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to you children, how much more your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.”

**Believers also need the Holy Spirit to help them pray more effectively.**

**Rom. 8:26 says:** “Likewise the Spirit also helps us in our weaknesses.

For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us.”

**Believers also need the Holy Spirit, because “He will guide you into all truth; and He will tell you things to come.” (John 16:13)**

With the Holy Spirit it is easier to know God's ways for one's life and make the correct decisions.

**It all started, because the Holy Spirit came on the first disciples on the day of Pentecost.**

A local church cannot expect real godly growth if it does not allow the Holy Spirit into the lives of their members.

**Please read again what is written in Acts 2:4**

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

The Amplified translation: “and they were all filled (diffused throughout their souls) with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other (different, foreign) languages, as the Spirit kept giving them clear and loud expression (in each tongue in appropriate words).”

On Pentecost day there came ***a sound of a rushing mighty wind*** and ***“tongues of fire” (Acts 2).***

**The Amplified Bibles says**: “There came a sound from heaven like the rushing of a violent tempest blast” and in The Living Bible translation expresses it thus: “There was a sound like the roaring of a mighty windstorm in the skies above them.”

***We should desire that God's “Wind” will work in power and in glory.***

**One wonders why “sound” in the church is a problem to so many?**

When God works through His Spirit we will **hear** and **see** what God has done.

**In Acts 2:6 we read these words:** “And when *this sound* occurred, the multitude came together.” This should happen again when God’s Spirit starts moving in churches, towns and cities.

Today we are grateful to God that Peter was there and he received this gift of the Holy Spirit, even after denying that he knew Jesus. Thomas was there and he was filled with the Holy Spirit even if he did not believe that Jesus was raised from the dead. Simon, the zealot, was there and he received the Holy Spirit. “Zealot” means that Simon belonged to an extreme party, but that did not hinder God’s Spirit to work in his life.

**Thank God, women also received God’s Spirit!**

“And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication,

with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.” Acts 1:13, 14

Individuals can (whoever they are) receive God’s Spirit. All that is needed, is a sincere thirst in one’s heart for God’s Spirit.

Jesus said about the Holy Spirit the following in John 7:37-39: “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, **out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.** But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

This happens when believers have a thirst for God. Their actions will show whether they are thirsty for the things of God and God Himself.

May the wonder of tongues grab the attention of unbelievers, so that they will call out and declare that God is truly among the Christians.

**In 1 Cor.14:22 one reads that speaking in tongues is a sign to unbelievers that God is among the believers.** “Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers...”

On the day of Pentecost, the sound of a mighty wind, plus the sound of all the different languages spoken by the disciples,

made such an impression on the people that they cried out:  
 "What must we do?" (Acts 2:37)

Peter then went on to tell them that they need to get saved, be baptized, so that they will also receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

**We read this in Acts 2:37, 38** "Now when they heard this (the sound from heaven and the speaking in tongues), they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

The first disciples had to testify in Jerusalem as well as in Judea, Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. It means simultaneously everywhere.

This is a message that should be remembered today.

A powerful prophecy went out in an assembly, which stated that members need to build their own nest, so that birds from this nest would be able to go out and build nests in other places. This is one of the most precious prophecies regarding the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Members can build their own nest

(our assembly), but also need to go out and also build other “nests” (churches) for God’s kingdom. This is how the church will grow.

One often places the emphasis on the word “power”, but it is the author’s opinion that the emphasis should rather be on “witnesses”.

Believers do not receive the power of the Holy Spirit just to be better Christians, but rather to be witnesses for Christ.

**A church, with people who are witnesses for Christ, will be a powerful church and will draw many others to God’s kingdom.**

## **ACTS 2:42-47**

**IN ACTS 2:42-47 THERE ARE NINE PRINCIPLES THAT MADE THE FIRST CHURCH, IN JERUSALEM, TO GROW.**

For any church to grow they must return to these nine principles.

In **Acts 2:47** we read these words: “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

**Before Luke could write the above statement, nine things took place, and four of them are mentioned in Acts 2:42, namely:**

“And they (the new Christians) continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine (this is number one), fellowship (number two), in the breaking of the bread (number three), and in prayers” (number four).

**The first principle: They grew because they continued in the apostles’ doctrine. (Acts 2:42)**

If there is no growth in a church, the first thing to look at, is their doctrine.

If a church stays in the correct doctrine, God will confirm their preaching.

No church will grow if God’s Word is not preached and taught correctly and with power.

No wonder that Paul started a Bible School in Ephesus to teach them the Word of the Lord. (Acts 19:8-10)

**In Mark 16:20 we read the following:** “And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs.”

The footnote in The Spirit Filled Life Bible says that the word “*confirming*”, is to establish, to secure and guarantee. “*The miracles that accompanied the disciples’ preaching, confirmed to the people that the messengers were telling the truth, that God was backing up their message with supernatural phenomena.*”

***If a Church does not have confirmation from God on their preaching and teaching, then there must be something wrong concerning the Word they share with their people!***

**The second principle: They had fellowship with each other. (Acts 2:42)**

Without true "fellowship" an assembly will not grow as expected. They took time to eat bread together and even had communion together.

Today the church is full of lonely Christians. This is one reason why there is no growth.

**The third principle: It is clear that they knew how to pray.**

**(Acts 2:42)**

Most assemblies have wonderful programs, but in some cases prayer does not cover these programs. Prayer is our spiritual oxygen.

**The first Church knew what it was to pray!**

**Acts 4:31 says:** “And when they prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.”

The word used for boldness, is the Greek word “*parrhesia*” and it means “*freedom of speech and cheerful courage*”.

The preceding story is about the healing of the cripple man at the temple gate called Beautiful.

**What happens when a Church unites in prayer?**

**If we read from Acts 4:31 to Acts 5:14, we find that SEVEN things happened because of the disciples praying.**

- The place was shaken. (Acts 4:31)

Only a God given "shaking" will give a spiritual breakthrough.

At the end time God will create a mighty shaking, and only those who belong to the Lord, will remain standing. (Heb. 12:25-28)

The Amplified Bible translates this text as follows: "Now this expression "yet once more" indicates the final removal and transformation of all (that can be) shaken, that is, of that which has been created, in order that what cannot be shaken, may remain and continue."

If one needs a "shaking" from God, one should start praying.

- They were filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 4:31)

The first disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but for God it was important to fill them again.

Believers regularly need a new infilling of the Spirit of God.

- They received liberty and boldness, because they prayed.

Acts 4:31 says they spoke the word of God with

***"boldness"***.

Thank God for Heb.10: 35. "Therefore do not cast away your confidence (boldness) which has great reward." God wants to give us liberty and boldness, not to be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- The believers were one of heart and mind. (Acts.4: 32)

When there is unity in the hearts and minds of people, God will work wonders and let that Church grow.

- The sins amongst them were revealed, because they prayed.

Consider Ananias and his wife Sapphira, and what happened to them in Acts 5: 1-10.

Because this man and his wife lied to the Holy Spirit, they both died on the same day.

Church laws will not keep a church clean, but where the people pray, cleansing takes place.

- God added more and more believers. Acts 5:14: “And believers were increasingly added (that means many were added) to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women.”

In Acts 6:7 we read: “Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

Again we read in Acts 11:21: “And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.”

**The fourth principle: Acts 2:43 “Then fear came upon every soul and many wonders and signs were done through the Apostles.”**

If believers want a breakthrough in their assembly, they should trust the Lord for signs and wonders. To see this happen, they should reach out and pray for those in need. The moment a church starts doing this, signs and wonders will take place. God always honours His Word.

### **Acts 3 (A lame man healed)**

Peter and John went up to the temple to pray, when they met this lame man begging. Peter took him by his hand and raised him up on his feet in the mighty name of Jesus.

Through the healing of this lame man in Acts 3 at the temple gate called Beautiful, God added more souls to His Church. In that time the number of the men became about five thousand. That is without counting the women and children!

**In Acts 3 from verse 7 we read these words:** “And he (Peter) took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. **(v.8)**

So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them – walking, leaping, and praising God. **(v.9)** And all the

people saw him walking and praising God. **(v.10)** Then they knew it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. **(v.11)** Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed. **(v.12)** So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? **(v.13)** The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. **(v.16)** And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all."

As they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came and arrested Peter and John. But we read in **Acts 4:4** how the church grew: "However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand."

**Signs and wonders in a church will always result in growth.**

### **The same thing happened in Acts 5:12-15.**

“And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. (v.14) And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, (v.15) so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them.”

In **Acts 8:5-8** we read of how Philip went to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. From verse 5 we read: “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralysed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.”

In **Acts 9:32-35** we read that Peter went to Lydda, where he found a man called Aeneas, who had been paralysed for eight years. To him he said: (v.34) “Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you, arise and make your bed. Then he arose immediately. (v.35) So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.”

Through the healing of this one man all the people of Lydda and Sharon turned to God. If this is not growth, what is it then?

In **Acts 19:11,12** we read: “Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.”

Many believed and got rid of all the sins they did. This even included burning books of magic of those that practiced it (v.18). And in verse 20 we read: “So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.”

**The fifth principle: (Acts 2:44, 45) “Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.”**

The Amplified Bible translates this scripture as follows: “Not one of them claimed that anything which he possessed was (exclusively) his own, but everything they had, was in common and use of all.”

If the church of today should do the same - start to share with one another their possessions - we will again see a move of God.

This was so important that we read about it again in **Acts. 4:32:**  
 “neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.”

**Principle number six: Acts 2:46 “So continuing daily with one accord in the temple...”**

How do church members think that they will grow if they do not attend their church services? If the local members are enthusiastic about their own church services, the possibility is there that others may be drawn to their church.

On the other hand, if they are not, how do they think others will be interested to come?

The writer of Hebrews wrote the following in Heb.10:24,25: “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some,....”

A dedicated Christian once said these words: *“I cannot miss any morning or evening church service, or even my cell meeting, because if God does something when I am not there, I won’t be able to handle it.”*

**Principle number seven: Acts 2:46 “and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart.”**

The words in this Scripture, “***from house to house,***” are connected to the concept of cell groups God is using in modern times all over the world.

The problem today is that many churches think that everything needs to take place in the church building. They feel that this is the only place where God will move through His Spirit.

All over the world God is raising up cell groups.

Cell groups are small groups in houses and apartments. This is where church members can have a closer fellowship with one another and where God’s gifts can operate.

A cell must not be "organised" in order to live, but must be an "organism", then it will live on its own.

### **SOMETHING ABOUT CELLGROUPS**

I believe that cells in a church can really be a great blessing and can be used by God in growing a church. One example we find in the largest church on earth, namely the one in Seoul, Korea. The Pastor is Dr. Yonggi Cho.

The latest statistics I have of this church are that they have 800,000 members and 56,000 cell groups!

I also personally know Pastor Sunday Adelaya of The Embassy of God Church in Kiev, Ukraine. He has 25,000 members and thousands of cell groups that are working successfully.

So I want you to know I am not against cell groups at all, but I don't think cell groups create revival in a church.

I think revival creates cell groups - so that the growth can keep on happening in a Church.

### **In 2000 I visited the “Pensacola Revival.”**

Let me share my experience I had when I visited the Brownsville Assemblies of God in Pensacola just a year after the revival broke out in that church.

We were four Pastors from South Africa that had an interview with the “Pastor of Pastoral Care” of the above church.

From this interview I made the following notes:

The first year 170,000 came to Christ in this church. People came from all over the world to experience the move of God's Spirit. They stood in their thousands from 6h00 in the morning (in temperatures of 40C) to wait for the doors to open at 18h00! This was something to see.

In this interview with their pastor of “Pastoral Care” I asked him if they believed in cell groups. His answer was: *“Yes, but how will we have any cell groups when our people are in church every day?”*

I also asked him if he believed in house visitation. He gave the same kind of answer by telling us that he could hardly visit anybody, because they were in church!

What I'm trying to say, is that when God moves in a church, many things that you and I cleave onto, may not even work at that point in time.

Whatever you do in your church, please get your "blueprint" from God - and whatever He tells you to do, will work.

Cell groups can be more successful when you have a group of people that feel that they want to change something in their community, for example helping the aged. Why should cell groups only come together one evening per week just to bless one another with God's Word and prayer?

**Principle eight: According to Acts 2:47 they knew how to give praise to the Lord. This was the lifestyle of the Church in Jerusalem.**

An assembly that lives a lifestyle of praise to God, even in their everyday way of living, will certainly draw people to their church. The same thing applies to our singing and music in our local church.

People will attend a church where the worship is uplifting.

**Principle nine:** According to Acts 2:47 a striking feature of the church in Jerusalem was, and which is not always recognised, the fact that they enjoyed the favour of all the people.

In The Message translation of the Bible this verse reads as follows: "The people in Jerusalem were very impressed by the lifestyle of the believers. Everybody talked about it. That is why there were people who came to faith and believed in Christ daily."

Let us get rid of our wrong perceptions. For example:

*"Everybody must hate me, because I am a Christian."*

**The Living Bible translates Acts 2:47 with these words:**

"The whole nation had a good opinion of them."

Grace is free, but favour you must earn. Favour exalted Joseph from the jail to the highest position in the palace. The word *favour* in Greek is "*charis*". The meaning of this word is "*a joyful gift of grace.*"

We must never think that we shall win this world for Christ if we want everybody to be against us. God must give us favour with people.

We will never have favour with people if we are aggressive towards them, and condemn them. Always remember that the "Gospel" is "Good News."

## **Acts 9:31**

**Acts chapter nine, verse 31, is an exciting text that gives us very clear principles on Church Growth. It tells us what happened in a region (or County) with churches before they multiplied.**

**The scripture, to which I am referring, is Acts 9:31.**

“Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria had **peace** and were **edified**. And walking in **the fear of the Lord** and **the comfort of the Holy Spirit**, they were multiplied.”

The Living Bible translates Acts 9:31 as follows: "The church had peace, and grew in strength and numbers. The believers learned how to walk in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit."

A Pastor in Colorado Springs asked God to give him revival in his church.

The answer God gave him was: *"You want revival in YOUR church.... but I want revival in MY church!"*

**LET US LEARN FROM ACTS 9:31 WHAT CAUSED THESE CHURCHES TO GROW.**

(1) They had PEACE (Peace and tranquillity) There was peace between one assembly and another, and peace among one another in the assembly.

**Paul writes in Col. 3: 15:** "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you are called in one body, and be thankful".

*The Living Bible translates this scripture as follows:* "The peace that Christ gave us, must act as a referee in your heart, when you doubt about something, because God has called you to be one body that lives in peace and harmony."

REMEMBER: The referee knows the rules. He blows the whistle and his verdict is final. THIS IS HOW THE PEACE OF GOD WORKS IN US. When anything disturbs God's peace in your life, listen to the "referee in your heart."

(2) They were EDIFIED (Built up).

They encouraged each other.

If there is one thing that destroys the work of God, it is the tongue.

Read James 3, then you will see what power the tongue has. Words are like a pillow filled with feathers. If you cut it open and shake it out in the wind, you will NEVER be able to gather all the feathers again.

**BEFORE YOU TALK, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:**

- (a) Is it true?
- (b) Is it really necessary?
- (c) Is it full of love?

### 3) They WALKED in the fear of the Lord!

The fear of the Lord refers to *awe*, *reverence*, and *respect*.

If we fear God, we will not touch His anointed.

Let us remember how David did not want to harm King Saul, because he respected him as God's anointed. **(1 Sam.24:1-7)**

If we fear God, we will not rob Him (Mal.3:10 and Acts.5: 1-11).

May God give people that will teach others how to fear Him, as we read in 2 Kings 17:28: "Then one of the priests ... taught them how they should fear the Lord."

### 4) They had the COMFORT of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is called "*the Comforter*", because He is the One that will always be with us as our Helper and Guide.

In 2Tim.1:7 we read: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and a sound mind."

**"A sound mind"** means to have good judgment, the ability to understand and make right decisions. This includes self control and discipline.

*Because the churches in all these regions walked in peace and in the fear of God and enjoyed the Holy Spirit in their lives, they grew.*

## **ACTS 19:1-20**

### **THIS PASSAGE IS ABOUT THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS.**

If the church in Ephesians could grow, any church in the world can grow.

Ephesus was one of the five major cities in the Roman Empire, along with Rome, Corinth, Antioch and Alexandria.

Today Ephesus is a part of Turkey.

The temple of the goddess, Artemis (Diana), was located there. This made the city to be full of idol worshippers. The moral of Ephesus was bad.

Ephesus started out as a small church (about twelve men), but grew to one of the largest churches in the early days. Some believe they grew up to ten thousand members.

### **THE FOLLOWING FACTORS CONTRIBUTED TO THEIR GROWTH AND SHOULD BE A HELP FOR LOCAL CHURCHES TODAY ALSO TO GROW:**

- (1) They were all filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:2,6).

It is very important that churches should encourage their people to be filled with God's Spirit. It is the Spirit that will guide us; (Rom. 8:14) helps us to pray; (Rom. 8:26) gives us power to be witnesses (Acts 1:8) and even helps us to be real worshippers (John 4:23,24).

- (2) They were trained in God's Word.

For two years Paul taught them God's Word in the school of Tyrannus, and he spent time with them on a daily basis.

If you study the book of Ephesians that he wrote to this church, you will find some of the best teachings in God's Word. The teaching in the book to the Ephesians is about their position in Christ, their walk in Christ and their spiritual weapons.

A church that will equip their people in God's Word, will experience growth.

- (3) Ephesus experienced signs and wonders (Acts 19:11,12).

People want to see God in action. God wants to use us as Jesus promised in the gospel of John 14:12. We will even do greater things than He did. Trust the Lord for signs and wonders today.

- (4) Another thing that helped Ephesus to grow, was that they cleansed themselves from all the sinful things that had a hold on their lives.

We read in Acts 19:18 to 20 these words: "And many who had believed, came confessing and telling their deeds.

Also many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all.

...So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed."

## **MINISTRIES and CHURCH GROWTH**

THERE WILL BE GROWTH IN THE CHURCH IF THE  
MEMBERS DISCOVER THEIR MINISTRY AND ALLOW GOD'S  
SPIRIT TO USE THEM.

**In Ephesians 4:11-16 we read:** “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the **equipping** of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (**equipping**, “*katartismos*” Strong’s #2677: *A making fit, preparing, training, perfecting, making fully qualified for service -- Spirit Filled Life Bible, page 1793*) ...till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to be a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes **growth** of the body for the **edifying** of itself in **love**.”

According to this sixteenth text of Ephesians chapter four, we understand that, if we want to see **growth** in the church, and people who **edify and also love** one another, the members should be joined together and each doing their part, by fulfilling their function God gave them.

**The Amplified Bible translates Eph. 4:16 as follows:** “For because of Him the whole body (the church, in all its various parts closely) joined and firmly knit together by the joints and ligaments with which it is supplied, when each part (with power adapted to its need) is working properly (in all its functions) grows to full maturity, building itself up in love.”

**The Living Bible translation on verse 16 says:** “Under His direction the whole body is fitted together perfectly, and each part in its own special way helps the other parts, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

**Paul adds to these words. He wrote to the Ephesians the following about ministries and functions needed in the church. He writes to the church in Romans 12:4 to 8 these words:** “Just as there are many parts to our bodies, so it is with Christ’s body. We are all parts of it, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other, and each needs all the others.

God has given every one of us the ability to do certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, then prophesy whenever you can – as often as your faith is strong enough to receive a message from God. If your gift is that of serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, do a good job of teaching. If you are a preacher, see to it that your sermons are strong and helpful. If God has given you money, be generous in helping others with it. If God has given you administrative ability and put you in charge of the work of others, take the responsibility seriously. Those who offer comfort to the sorrowing, should do so with Christian cheer.”

### **THE CHURCH WITH A HEART**

Tommy Barnett is the senior Pastor of one of the fastest growing churches in America - the Phoenix First Assembly of God, in Phoenix, Arizona.

This church is called “*The Church with a Heart*”, because of its over 200 outreach ministries.

Tommy Barnett celebrated his 50 years of ministry in 2003.

He says: “*Find a need and fill it, find a hurt and heal it.*”

This is a soul winning church, with an average weekly attendance of over 15,000, committed to reaching the city, country and world for God.

When the church called Pastor Barnett in December 1979, the average attendance was 250. Attendance in 1980 climbed to 4,800 at Easter, over 6,500 at Thanksgiving, and over 8,000 at Christmas. In 1982 more than 18,000 attended Easter services and the 1983 Easter services broke all records, attracting 25,000. Breaking records again, Easter 1989 saw crowds of 100,000 in one weekend. The annual Christmas production attracted over 130,000 in a ten day long schedule.

Phoenix First Assembly's "*Bus Ministry*" was born in 1980 with five buses.

By 1981, a nationwide poll of all denominations named Phoenix First Assembly the fastest growing Bus Ministry in America. Their fleet of buses includes nine wheelchair vehicles.

With the increasing needs of the people in the urban areas, "*Adopt-a-block*" was formed to weekly minister to entire neighbourhoods on a regular basis. Far more than evangelism, "*Adopt-a-block*" teams mow lawns, fix houses, wash graffiti, provide furniture, and build lasting relationships with the community while bussing them to church.

In addition to children and adults from all types of homes, the buses provide transportation for college students, the elderly, deaf, handicapped and homeless.

The International Christian Education Association and Moody Monthly recognized the unusual growth of Phoenix First Assembly by presenting the “*Fastest Growing Church*” award to Pastor Barnett in two consecutive years.

In addition to remarkable numerical growth, Pastor Barnett has guided First Assembly into an era of phenomenal revival. At the altar calls, scores of people of all ages and backgrounds come forward to commit their lives to Christ.

Assisting Pastor Barnett is a staff of 16 pastors who minister in such areas as counselling, music, hospital visitation, youth, college and career, elderly, bus ministry, Spanish outreach, home visits, church administration and much more.

A group of over 200 young men and women, known as the “*Master’s Commission*”, is devoting at least one year to missionary service.

They spend their days in classes, Bible study, Scripture memorization, prayer and also in hands on ministry. They visit nursing homes, detention centres, deliver food to the needy, visit homes, work bus routes and serve in many capacities.

Phoenix First Assembly’s “*Master’s Commission*” has lead the way and there are now over 100 affiliated groups, some 4,000

strong, worldwide including Nicaragua, New Zealand, Asia, Philippines and El Salvador.

More than 10,000 have graduated from Pastor Barnett's "*Saturday Soul winning Society*" classes. Soul winning teams go out to call on homes throughout the city, some witness to the street people.

The "*Deacon Visitation Ministry*" has developed a large core of committed lay-ministers within the church to help the pastoral staff ensure that every single visitor and new convert receive personal follow-up and mentoring.

Phoenix First Assembly heads up the "*Church on the Street*" that was started as a rehabilitation centre after seeing homeless people attend the Church's Thanksgiving dinner in 1980. They now minister weekly to 3,500 people in inner-city church services, parks, streets and prisons.

The numerical and spiritual growth of Phoenix First Assembly has inspired other churches across the country. By popular demand, Tommy Barnett hosts an annual "*Pastor's School*". Approximately 7,000 pastors, leaders and workers attend each year.

This “*Pastor’s School*” is an intensive, informative and exciting three days of study, observation and field practice in methods, which have spurred the explosive growth of Phoenix First Assembly.

In September 1994, Tommy Barnett as a result of the invitation from the Southern California District of the Assemblies of God launched the “*Los Angeles Dream Centre*” as a home Missions project. Beginning with a church averaging 48 people on a Sunday morning, the ministry is now reaching 35,000 per week, located in the heart of the inner city of Los Angeles at the former Queens hospital.

**This church operates over 175 ministries**, reaching out to gang members, drug addicts, unwed mothers, children without parents, halfway house for released prisoners, feeding the homeless and needy, motorcycle groups, and aids victims. Miracles take place at the “*Dream Centre*”, because people are given an opportunity to “dream again”.

The church epitomizes Pastor Barnett’s quote: “*Find a need and fill it, find a hurt and heal it.*”

ALL THIS, BECAUSE OF PASTOR TOMMY BARNETT THAT LED HIS CHURCH IN FINDING THE NEED IN THE WORLD AND ALLOWING GOD TO USE THEM TO FILL THAT NEED.

**THE SAME THING HAPPENED WITH PASTOR DEON  
ROBERTO OF ABITJAN (cote d'Ivoire) IN THE IVORY  
COAST.**

For 20 years he was a pastor of a church that grew to 1,000 members, but then the growth stopped.

Through fasting and prayer he waited on God and the Lord said to him to get his people in ministries and to stop trying to do everything himself.

This he did and during the next 20 years his church grew to 100,000 members with 8,000 cell groups.

**OUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF HOW A CHURCH CAN  
GROW THROUGH MINISTRIES.**

When we were called to pastor a church in Bloemfontein in 1982, this church had 293 members.

God also told me to teach the church how to discover their ministry.

This I did, and preached sermons on this topic for five consecutive Sundays. The members opened their hearts to hear God's teaching according to what we read in **1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12 and Ephesians 4.**

In the following four years the church grew to 750 members and six years later grew to more than 1,400 members.

**THE EMBASSY OF THE BLESSED KINGDOM FOR ALL  
NATIONS  
KIEV, UKRAINE**

The above Church became one of the fastest growing churches in Europe. One of the main reasons why this church grew is because their members are involved in ministries. They have more than 200 ministries.

The moment you become a member of this church, you submit yourself to a cell group for the first few months. After that you have to find twelve “*new disciples*” and start your own cell group. Above this you must ask the Lord if there is any other ministry you should be involved in.

*1 Pet.4:10 state that God has given each of us a “gift”, not for ourselves, but for others. “As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another.”*

**Some information about this Church:**

**Dated April 2010**

The Central Church address is:

18 Tychyny Street, Kiev, Ukraine

Tel. 380-44-5531-535

E Mail: [secretary@godembassy.org](mailto:secretary@godembassy.org)

Website:

[www.godembassy.org](http://www.godembassy.org)

- Pastor Sunday Adelaja started this church in 1994 with 7 people.
- He was born in Nigeria in 1964 and is married to Bose and has three children.
- In April 2010 they had 25,000 members in Kiev.
- He speaks Russian very fluently and is a good communicator.
- He preaches on TBN Tuesdays from 15h30 to 16h00 (South African time).
- 40 Services are held weekly in Kiev to accommodate their members.
- This church has 2000 cell groups.
- 50% of the congregation is actively involved in volunteer ministries.
- They feed up to 2000 people daily.
- They have homes for street and abandoned children.
- Over 2000 children have been restored to their families.
- 3,000 people have been set free from drugs and alcohol addiction.
- Over one million salvations are recorded.
- Over 700 Churches are planted in 45 Countries.
- Their TV Ministry reaches 100 million homes across Europe, Russia and Africa.
- Political and Senate leaders are members of this church.

- The Embassy of God also impacts: Schools, factories, banks and other social groups of society.
- Thousands of Mafia members have come to the Lord through the activities of this church.
- The Church's hot-line has counselled over 70 000 people, of which 3 000 are now church members.
- The Embassy of God is planning to build a 20 000 seat auditorium in Kiev, the first of its kind in Europe.
- This church is now the largest Evangelical Charismatic church in all of Europe.

Personal questions I asked Pastor Sunday Adelaya, and some answers, 20 April 2010,:

- 1) Should every member be involved in ministry? His answer was: "Yes."
- 2) Should a Church be involved in Missions? His answer was: "Yes."
- 3) "There should be freedom in our worship."
- 4) "A worship team is very important."
- 5) What special things did God use to let your Church grow?  
His answer was:

"God used the teaching of "Discover your Potential, written by Dr. Myles Munroe, and the G-12 system/method.

The “G-12” is when a new member gathers 12 new converts together, after he/she has been in the Church for four months, and train them in the principles of the Word.

- 6) General questions were answered as follows by giving them a percentage: *“The length of services wasn’t so important for him and received only 30%; social events and outreaches got a 50%; Children’s and Youth work got 80%; Women’s and men’s associations he gave 60%; preaching and training of new Leaders got a 100% mark by Pastor Sunday. Pastoral visits got a 20%.*

# **THE KINGDOM of GOD and CHURCH**

## **GROWTH**

Church Growth and The Kingdom of God cannot be separated.

All Jesus' preaching was about the Kingdom of God.

**Matt. 4:17,23** "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say: repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."

Where the gospel of the Kingdom is preached, people will repent and healing and miracles will occur.

**At the first increase of the loaves, we read in Luke 9:11:** "And He received them, and spoke to them of the kingdom of God."

Even in the "Our Father" prayer, Jesus teaches us to pray: "The kingdom come" (**Matt.6:10**). In **Matt.5:10** and **Matt.10:7, 8**

**Jesus also deals with the Kingdom of God.** In Matt.6:33 Jesus tells us to seek His kingdom. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The Amplified Bible translates this text "But seek for, (aim at and strive after) first of all, His kingdom, and His righteousness (His way of doing and being right) and then all these things taken together will be given you besides."

If the church understands the meaning of God's kingdom it will surely grow.

Because the Greek word for "Kingdom" is "basileia", meaning "Where God rules and reigns", that's His "sovereign area."

God's kingdom is the area and place where He rules and reigns and where the will of God is acknowledged and obeyed.

**In 1 Cor. 4:20 Paul writes: "for the kingdom of God is not in words, but in power." God's kingdom is connected to His power.**

An example of this we find where Jesus drove a blind and dumb spirit out of a man. The Pharisees accused Jesus that He did this through the power of the devil.

Jesus answered them in Matt.12:28: "But, if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

Each time God works through His power, His kingdom is manifested.

**The following also preached the kingdom of God:**

- John the Baptist (Matt. 3:2)
- His disciples (Matt. 10:7)
- Philip (Acts 8:12)
- Paul (Acts 14:21,22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23)

In Acts 14:22 Paul said: "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

After the resurrection of Jesus, He appeared to many of His disciples for forty days, and taught them about the kingdom of God.

**We read in Acts 1:3 these words:** “to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days **and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.**”

The message of the KINGDOM must have been of great importance to Jesus, that's why He spoke to them about this. We should be "Kingdom people".

By saying that, I mean that we should be people that seek God's will and His ruling in our lives, more than our own.

Too often the “kingdom vision” of assemblies only reaches as far as the front door of their church. Anything “outside” their church building is not the kingdom of God for them.

This is one of the reasons many leaders in the church today want to control their people.

The disciples still did not understand what Jesus meant when He talked about His kingdom. That is why they asked Him in Acts 1:6: “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?”

They thought that He would establish an earthly kingdom and free them from the Roman bondage, but Jesus talked about God's heavenly kingdom.

In Greek the word "kingdom" means "God's will and where He rules". You and I have God's kingdom in our lives if God controls our lives and we do His will.

Paul says that the kingdom of God is "righteousness (to stand before God without blame), peace and joy in the Holy Spirit".

Test your life with this scripture to know if you have His kingdom.

**IF WE UNDERSTAND THE KINGDOM OF GOD, WE'LL  
UNDERSTAND THE TEACHING JESUS GAVE IN  
MATT. 5, 6 and 7.**

Here we find the teaching of the "*Principles of God's kingdom*". Someone once said: "*If you understand the teaching Jesus gave in Matthew chapters five to seven, and obey them, you will enter God's kingdom.*"

The author prays that God's kingdom will break down every resistance and that people will make it their own as we read in The Living Bible translation: "Since John the Baptist started preaching, until today, the new realm where God rules, is busy to break down every resistance, and people who concentrate and apply their strength, make it their own."

## **REVIVAL and CHURCH GROWTH**

When we talk of “Revival”, it is not just special services, but it is when God decides to visit a Church, a City and a Nation.

God can even create a revival when not one of our “programmes” or anything we do, is involved. God just decides that He wants to be there and do a mighty work in the lives of people.

**J. Edwin Orr, one of the best authors, defines “revival”.**

“An Evangelical Awakening is a movement of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ bringing about a revival of New Testament Christianity. Such an awakening may change an individual only, or it may affect a larger group of people; or it may move a congregation or the churches of a city or district, or the whole body of believers throughout a country or continent; or indeed the larger body of believers throughout the world. Such Awakenings come about in various ways, but there is a pattern which is common to all. The main effect of an Evangelical Awakening is always the repetition of the phenomena of the Acts of the Apostles, which narrative gives a simple account of an Evangelical Awakening, one that revived believers, and then converted sinners to God.”

Orr J. Edwin, *“The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain”* (1949) *“The Second Evangelical Awakening in America”* (1953)

## THE REVIVAL IN WALES (1904)

This is recorded concerning the Revival in Wales in 1904:

Souls were saved, individual lives were changed and Society itself was changed.

Countless numbers of souls were saved. No records were kept of the actual number converted, but 150,000 is a very conservative estimate during the first six months.

Wales became a God-fearing nation again.

People, thousands of them, were saved. There are still men and women in our churches today whose parents or grandparents' testimonies tell of how they were converted in the Revival of 1904 and 1905.

### **The one man God used was Evan Roberts.**

Not only were individual lives changed by the power of the Holy Spirit, but whole communities were changed. Indeed, society itself was changed - Wales was a God-fearing nation again.

Public houses became almost empty. Men and women who used to waste their money in getting drunk, were now saving it, giving it to help their churches, buying clothes and food for their families. And not only drunkenness, but stealing and other offences grew less and less so that often a magistrate came to court and found there were no cases for him.



Men, whose language had been filthy before, learnt to talk purely. It is related that not only did the colliers put in a better day's work, but also that the pit ponies turned disobedient! The ponies were so used to being cursed and sworn at, that they just didn't understand when orders were given in kind, clean words! The dark tunnels underground in the mines echoed with the sounds of prayer and hymns, instead of oaths and nasty jokes and gossip.

People, who had been careless about paying their bills, or paying back money they had borrowed, paid up all they owed.

People who had not been friends for a long time, because of something that had happened in the past, forgot their quarrels and were happy together again. In fact, Evan Roberts used to say that there could be no blessing on anyone who had unkind thoughts about anyone else.

**Information taken from Moriah Website [www.moriah.org.uk](http://www.moriah.org.uk)**

## **THE “AZUSA STREET” REVIVAL IN LOS ANGELES (1906-1908)**

### **Apostolic Faith Church in Azusa Street, Los Angeles:**

“When the earthquake and fire struck San Francisco on the 18th and 19<sup>th</sup> April 1906, killing 503 people and caused \$350 million in damages to the city, God created a spiritual awakening at Azusa Street Church.

As leader of this awakening, God used Brother William J. Seymour and his wife, Sister Jenny Moor Seymour, an African American - two humble servants.

“The power of God now has this city agitated as never before. Pentecost has surely come and with it the Bible evidences are following, many being converted and sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues as they did on the day of Pentecost. (We read about this in Acts 2.)

It would be impossible to state how many have been converted, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost. They have been, and are daily, going out to all parts of the compass to spread this wonderful gospel.

The meetings begin about ten o’clock in the morning and can hardly stop before ten or twelve at night, and sometimes two and three in the morning, because so many are seeking, and some are slain under the power of God. People are seeking three times a day at the altar, and row after row of seats have to be emptied

and filled with seekers. We cannot tell how many people have been saved, and sanctified, and baptised with the Holy Ghost, and healed of all manner of sicknesses. Many are speaking in new tongues, and some are on their way to the foreign fields, with the gift of the language. We are going on to get more of the power of God.

When Pentecostal lines are struck, Pentecostal giving commences. Hundreds of dollars have been laid down for the sending of missionaries and thousands will be laid down. No collections are taken for rent, no begging for money.”

**Retrieved from: “*The Apostolic Faith (Volume 1, No.1) Los Angeles, California, September, 1906*”**

“One hundred years after Los Angeles Azusa Street Revival, the Pentecostal Movement now claims up to 600 million followers worldwide. The rough-edged town of 240,000 residents had doubled its population in just six years, and the city sprouted so many new churches, that modern day experts have called it an ‘American Jerusalem’. This is according to Vinson Synan, dean of Regent University School of Divinity, and ordained minister of the Pentecostal Holiness Church.

**St Petersburg Times, Sat. 22, 2006, PAC**

### This is what a Reporter wrote about Azusa Street

The **Azusa Street Revival** took place in Los Angeles, California, and was led by William J. Seymour, an African American preacher. It began with a meeting on April 14, 1906, and continued until roughly 1915. The revival was characterized by ecstatic spiritual experiences, accompanied by speaking in tongues, dramatic worship services, and inter-racial mingling. The participants received criticism from secular media and Christian theologians for behaviors considered to be outrageous and unorthodox, especially at the time. Today, the revival is considered by historians to be the primary catalyst for the spread of Pentecostalism in the 20th century.

In 1905, William J. Seymour, the one-eyed 34 year old son of former slaves, was a student of well-known Pentecostal preacher, Charles Parham, and an interim pastor for a small holiness church in Houston, Texas. Neely Terry, an African American woman who attended a small holiness church pastored by Julia Hutchins in Los Angeles, made a trip to visit family in Houston late in 1905. While in Houston, she visited Seymour's church, where he preached the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues, and though he had not experienced this personally, Terry was impressed with his character and message. Once home in California, Terry suggested that Seymour be invited to speak at the local church. Seymour received and accepted the invitation in February 1906, and he received financial help and a blessing from Parham for his planned one-month visit.

Seymour arrived in Los Angeles on February 22, 1906, and within two days was preaching at Julia Hutchins' church at the corner of Ninth Street and Santa Fe Avenue. During his first sermon, he preached that speaking in tongues was the first biblical evidence of the inevitable baptism in the Holy Spirit.

On the following Sunday, March 4, he returned to the church and found that Hutchins had padlocked the door. Elders of the church rejected Seymour's teaching, primarily because he had not yet experienced the blessing about which he was preaching. Condemnation of his message also came from the Holiness Church Association of South California with which the church had affiliation. However, not all members of Hutchins' church rejected Seymour's preaching. He was invited to stay in the home of congregation member Edward S. Lee, and he began to hold Bible studies and prayer meetings there.

Seymour and his small group of new followers soon relocated to the home of Richard and Ruth Asberry at 214 North Bonnie Brae Street. White families from local holiness churches began to attend as well. The group would get together regularly and pray to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

On April 9, 1906, after five weeks of Seymour's preaching and three days into an intended 10-day fast, Edward S. Lee spoke in tongues for the first time.

At the next meeting, Seymour shared Lee's testimony and preached a sermon on Acts 2:4 and soon six others began to speak in tongues as well, including Jennie Moore, who would later become Seymour's wife. A few days later, on April 12, Seymour spoke in tongues for the first time after praying all night long.

News of the events at North Bonnie Brae St. quickly circulated among the African American, Latino and White residents of the city, and for several nights, various speakers would preach to the crowds of curious and interested onlookers from the front porch of the Asberry home. Members of the audience included people from a broad spectrum of income levels and religious backgrounds.

Hutchins eventually spoke in tongues as her whole congregation began to attend the meetings. Soon the crowds became very large and were full of people speaking in tongues, shouting, singing and moaning. Finally, the front porch collapsed, forcing the group to begin looking for a new meeting place. A resident of the neighborhood described the happenings at 214 North Bonnie Brae with the following words:

They shouted three days and three nights. It was Easter season. The people came from everywhere. By the next morning there was no way of getting near the house. As people came in, they would fall under God's power; and the whole city was stirred. They shouted until the foundation of the house gave way, but no one was hurt.

The group from Bonnie Brae Street eventually discovered an available building at 312 Azusa Street, which had originally been constructed as an African Methodist Episcopal Church in what was then a black ghetto part of town. The rent was \$8.00 per month. A newspaper referred to the downtown Los Angeles building as a "tumble down shack". Since the church had moved out, the building had served as a wholesale house, a warehouse, a lumberyard, stockyards, a tombstone shop, and had most recently been used as a stable with rooms for rent upstairs. It was a small, rectangular, flat-roofed building, approximately 60 feet (18 m) long and 40 feet (12 m) wide, totaling 4,800 square feet (450 m<sup>2</sup>), sided with weathered whitewashed clapboards. The only sign that it had once been a house of God, was a single gothic-style window over the main entrance.

Discarded lumber and plaster littered the large, barn-like room on the ground floor. Nonetheless, it was secured and cleaned in preparation for services. They held their first meeting on April 14, 1906. Church services were held on the first floor where the benches were placed in a rectangular pattern.

Some of the benches were simply planks put on top of empty nail kegs. There was no elevated platform, as the ceiling was only eight feet high. Initially there was no pulpit. Frank Bartleman, an early participant in the revival, recalled that "Brother Seymour generally sat behind two empty shoe boxes, one on top of the other. He usually kept his head inside the top one during the meeting, in prayer. There was no pride there.... In that old building, with its low rafters and bare floors..."

The second floor at the now-named Apostolic Faith Mission housed an office and rooms for several residents including Seymour and his new wife, Jennie. It also had a large prayer room to handle the overflow from the altar services below. The prayer room was furnished with chairs and benches made from California Redwood planks, laid end to end on backless chairs.

By mid-May 1906, anywhere from 300 to 1,500 people would attempt to fit into the building. Since horses had very recently been the residents of the building, flies constantly bothered the attendees. People from a diversity of backgrounds came together to worship: men, women, children, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, rich, poor, illiterate, and educated. People of all ages flocked to Los Angeles with both skepticism and a desire to participate. The intermingling of races and the group's encouragement of women in leadership was remarkable, as 1906 was the height of the "Jim Crow" era of racial segregation, and fourteen years prior to women receiving suffrage in the United States.

Worship at 312 Azusa Street was frequent and spontaneous with services going almost around the clock. Among those attracted to the revival were not only members of the Holiness Movement, but Baptists, Mennonites, Quakers, and Presbyterians.

An observer at one of the services wrote these words:

No instruments of music are used. None are needed. No choir - the angels have been heard by some in the spirit. No collections are taken. No bills have been posted to advertise the meetings. No church organization is back of it. All who are in touch with God realize as soon as they enter the meetings, that the Holy Ghost is the leader.

Among first-hand accounts were reports of the blind having their sight restored, diseases cured instantly, and immigrants speaking in German, Yiddish, and Spanish all being spoken to in their native language by uneducated black members, who translated the languages into English by "supernatural ability".

Singing was sporadic and in a cappella or occasionally in tongues. There were periods of extended silence. Attendees were occasionally slain in the Spirit. Visitors gave their testimony, and members read aloud testimonies that were sent to the mission by mail. There was prayer for the gift of tongues. There was prayer in tongues for the sick, for missionaries, and whatever requests were given by attendees or mailed in. There was spontaneous preaching and altar calls for salvation, sanctification and baptism of the Holy Spirit. Lawrence Catley, whose family attended the revival, said that in most services preaching consisted of Seymour opening a Bible and worshippers coming forward to preach or testify as they were led by the Holy Spirit. Many people would continually shout throughout the meetings.

The members of the mission never took an offering, but there was a receptacle near the door for anyone that wanted to support the revival.

The core membership of the Azusa Street Mission was never much more than 50-60 individuals with hundreds and thousands of people visiting or staying temporarily over the years.

Also starting in September 1906 was the publication of the revival's own newsletter, the *Apostolic Faith*. Issues were published occasionally up until May 1908, mostly through the work of Seymour and a white woman named Clara Lum, a member of the Apostolic Faith Mission. The *Apostolic Faith* was distributed without charge, and thousands of laypersons and ministers received copies worldwide. Five thousand copies of the first edition were printed, and by 1907 the press run reached over 40,000.

The *Apostolic Faith* publication reported the happenings at the Azusa Street Mission to the world. The lead story of the first issue was titled "Pentecost has come". It contained a letter from Charles Parham, an article on Pentecost from Acts, and a series of anecdotes of people's experiences within the revival. One edition in 1907 wrote, "One token of the Lord's coming is that He is melting all races and nations together, and they are filled with the power and glory of God. He is baptizing by one Spirit into one body and making up a people that will be ready to meet Him when He comes." The *Apostolic Faith* brought increasing attention to the happenings at Azusa Street and the fledgling movement that was emerging from the revival.

By 1913, the revival at Azusa Street had lost momentum, and by 1915 most of the media attention and crowds had left. Seymour remained there with his wife, Jennie, for the rest of their lives as pastors of the small African American congregation, though he often made short trips to help establish other smaller revivals later in life. After Seymour died of his heart on September 28, 1922, Jennie led the church until 1931, when the congregation lost the building.

The building was torn down and replaced by what became the Japanese-American Cultural and Community Center in Los Angeles after it lost its foreclosure in 1938.

## **Sending of missionaries**

As *The Apostolic Faith* and many secular reports advertised the events of the Azusa Street Revival internationally, thousands of individuals visited the Mission in order to witness it firsthand. At the same time, thousands of people were leaving Azusa Street with the intentions of evangelizing abroad. Reverend K. E. M. Spooner visited the revival in 1909 and became one of the Pentecostal Holiness Church's most effective missionaries in Africa, working among the Tswana people of Botswana.

G. Garr and his wife were sent from Azusa Street as missionaries to Calcutta, India, where they managed to start a small revival. Speaking in tongues in India did not enable them to speak the native language, Bengali.

Garr significantly contributed to early Pentecostalism through his later work in redefining the "biblical evidence" doctrine and changing the doctrine from a belief that speaking in tongues was explicitly for evangelism, to a belief that speaking in tongues was a gift for "spiritual empowerment".

Missionary Bernt Bernsten traveled all the way from North China to investigate the happenings after hearing that the biblical prophecy of Acts 2:4 were being fulfilled. Other visitors left the revival to become missionaries in remote areas all over the world. So many missionaries went out from Azusa (some thirty-eight left in October 1906) that within two years the movement had spread to over fifty nations, including Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, Holland, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, South Africa, Hong

Kong, China, Ceylon and India. Christian leaders visited from all over the world.

By the end of 1906, most leaders from Azusa Street had spun off to form other congregations, such as the 51st Street Apostolic Faith Mission, the Spanish AFM, and the Italian Pentecostal Mission. These missions were largely composed of immigrant or ethnic groups. The South East United States was a particularly prolific area of growth for the movement, since Seymour's approach gave a useful explanation for a charismatic spiritual climate that had already been taking root in those areas. Other new missions were based on preachers who had charisma and energy. Nearly all of these new churches were founded among immigrants and the poor.

Doctrinal differences abounded, and many separate organizations and denominations sprung from the initial revivals. The Church of God in Christ was formed in 1907, the Assemblies of God and United Pentecostal Church were formed in 1914, the Pentecostal Church of God was formed in 1919 at the Sharon Bible School.

Today, there are more than 500 million Pentecostal and charismatic believers across the globe. The Pentecostal denomination is currently second in size behind the Roman Catholic Church and is the fastest-growing form of Christianity today. The Azusa Street Revival is commonly regarded as the beginning of the modern-day Pentecostal Movement.

Retrieved from "[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Azusa\\_Street\\_Revival](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Azusa_Street_Revival)"

Categories: Religious organizations established in 1906 | African Methodist Episcopal Church | Charismatic and Pentecostal Christianity | Christianity in California | Revival movements| Christian revivals

## **THE REVIVAL IN BROWNSVILLE, PENSACOLA IN 1995**

The **Brownsville Revival** (also known as the **Pensacola Outpouring**) was a widely-reported religious phenomenon that began within the Pentecostal movement on Father's Day, June 18, 1995 at Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida. Characteristics of the Brownsville Revival movement included acts of repentance by parishioners and a call to holiness, said to be inspired by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Some of the occurrences in this revival fit the description of moments of religious ecstasy. More than three million people are reported to have attended the meetings since their inception.

In 1993, two years before the revival began, Brownsville's Pastor John Kilpatrick, began directing his congregation to pray for revival. Supporters of the revival would also cite prophecies by Dr. David Yonggi Cho, pastor of Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea, as evidence that the revival was inspired by God. According to Dr. Cho, God told him He was "going to send revival to the seaside city of Pensacola, and it will spread like a fire until all of America has been consumed by it."

On the Sunday the revival began, evangelist Steve Hill was the guest speaker, having been invited by Kilpatrick.

It was claimed that hundreds of those who attended services that day, were moved to renew their faith during Hill's sermon. In time, the church opened its doors for Wednesday-through-Saturday evening revival services to accommodate the thousands of people who arrived and waited in the church parking lot before dawn for a chance to enter the packed sanctuary.

By 1997, it was common to have lengthy and rapturous periods of singing and dancing and altars packed with hundreds of writhing or dead-still bodies from a variety of ages, races and socio-economic conditions. As the revival progressed, the testimonies of people receiving salvation were joined by claims of supernatural healings. In Steve Hill's words, "We're seeing miraculous healings, cancerous tumors disappear and drug addicts immediately delivered."

However, the church told local news reporters that it did not keep records of the healings. In 1997, leaders of the revival such as Hill, Kilpatrick, and Lindell Cooley, at the time the worship director at Brownsville, traveled to cities such as Anaheim, California; Dallas, Texas; St. Louis, Missouri; Toledo, Ohio; and Birmingham, Alabama.

The primary part of the revival ended when Hill moved on to pursue other works. In 2003, Hill founded a church in the Dallas area where he now serves as senior pastor. Cooley left in October of 2003. Kilpatrick resigned as senior pastor in 2003 to form an evangelistic association of his own.

Until 2006, the church continued to hold special Friday-night services that were a continuation of the event.

### Impact

During the revival, nearly 200,000 people claimed they gave their lives to Jesus, and by fall 2000 more than 1,000 people who experienced the revival, were taking classes at the Brownsville Revival School of Ministry. Thousands of pastors visited Brownsville and returned to their home congregations, leading to an outbreak of mini-revivals that helped the Assemblies of God recover from what some saw as a denominational decline.

## **PREACHING and CHURCH GROWTH**

**Preaching of the Gospel was (and will be) one of the best ways God used (and will use) to bring growth in His Church.**

### **Preaching of Jesus**

The best example we can think of, to confirm this statement, is the preaching of Jesus Christ. He is considered the best preacher of all times.

His preaching, that lasted just three years, was so powerful that, after two thousand years, it is still creating spiritual breakthroughs all over the earth. Millions of lives have been changed by the power of the His gospel.

**His “best sermon” was surely the one we find in Matthew 5,6 and 7, also called the “Sermon on the Mount” or “The Beatitudes” (Attitudes to be).**

Because the Bible was a thick book with so much information, a pastor was asked what part in the Bible could help us to get to heaven, and while doing so, could help us to live a victorious life on earth.

His answer was to **read, understand and do** what was written in the three chapters of Matthew 5, 6 and 7. This was a good answer.

Preaching anything Jesus preached (and taught), will bring growth to churches and lives of Christians.

Three things about Jesus' Preaching:

- His preaching was with simplicity.
- His preaching was relevant.
- His preaching was with authority.

**Note: I encourage you to read again my notes on pages 8 and 9.**

***This is from the book: "Revive us again", by O.S. Hawkins.***

Then underline the following:

- (1) Our preaching must be prophetic.*
- (2) Our preaching must be plain.*
- (3) Our preaching must also be positive.*
- (4) Our preaching must be personal and penetrating.*
- (5) Our preaching must be productive.*

## **Preaching of Peter**

Peter, the fisherman, preached a sermon, written down in **Acts 2:14-40**, that brought 3000 souls into the Kingdom of God.

This was in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

Read Peter's message over and over until the Holy Spirit reveals everything you should understand what was said that day.

**What we need through preaching, is:**

- (1) Information
- (2) Revelation
- (3) Inspiration

**Preaching of Paul**

In Acts 17 we read of the very important sermon Paul, the Apostle, preached at the Areopagus in Athens.

The Areopagus (or the “Hill of Ares”) was an open forum for philosophical debate, and was located southwest of the Parthenon on the Acropolis in Athens. When Paul saw all the idols, he stood up and preached a sermon that shook all that were present. (Acts 17:22-31)

This is how the gospel of Christ came to the Greek people. We read these words in verse 34: “...some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.”

Through the book of Acts Paul brought many other anointed sermons that God used to change and challenge people’s lives to the glory of God.

## Preaching of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)

Jonathan Edwards was born on October 5, 1703, and died of smallpox, March 22, 1758. Edwards played a critical role in shaping the First Great Awakening, and oversaw some of the first fires of revival in 1733 to 1735 at his church in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Jonathan Edwards will be remembered by his most famous sermon, *“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”*. God used this one sermon to create a mighty revival in a great part of America. He preached this sermon in Enfield, Connecticut in 1741.

When Whitefield preached at Edwards' church in Northampton, he reminded them of the revival they had experienced just a few years before. This deeply touched Edwards, who wept throughout the entire service, and much of the congregation was moved too. Revival began to spring up again, and it was at this time that Edwards preached his most famous sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” in Enfield, Connecticut in 1791. This sermon has been widely reprinted as an example of “fire and brimstone” preaching in the colonial revivals, though the majority of Edwards' sermons were not this dramatic. He used this style deliberately, indeed.

**Google** Find more sermons on: [www.reformsermonarchives.com](http://www.reformsermonarchives.com)

# Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God

by Jonathan Edwards

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*-Their foot shall slide in due time-*

***Deut. 32:35***

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In this verse is threatened the vengeance of God on the wicked unbelieving Israelites, who were God's visible people, and who lived under the means of grace; but who, notwithstanding all God's wonderful works towards them, remained (as v.28.) void of counsel, having no understanding in them. Under all the cultivations of heaven, they brought forth bitter and poisonous fruit; as in the two verses next preceding the text. The expression I have chosen for my text, their foot shall slide in due time, seems to imply the following doings, relating to the punishment and destruction to which these wicked Israelites were exposed.

1. That they were always exposed to *destruction*; as one that stands or walks in slippery places is always exposed to fall. This is implied in the manner of their destruction coming upon them, being represented by their foot sliding. The same is expressed, Psalm 73:18: "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction."

2. It implies that they were always exposed to sudden unexpected destruction. As he that walks in slippery places is every moment liable to fall, he cannot foresee one moment whether he shall stand or fall the next; and when he does fall, he falls at once without warning, which is also expressed in Psalm 73:18, 19: "Surely thou didst set them in

slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction: How are they brought into desolation as in a moment!"

3. Another thing implied is, that they are liable to fall *of themselves*, without being thrown down by the hand of another; as he that stands or walks on slippery ground needs nothing but his own weight to throw him down.

4. The reason why they are not fallen already, and do not fall now, is only that God's appointed time is not come. For it is said, that when that due time, or appointed time comes, *their foot shall slide*. Then they shall be left to fall, as they are inclined by their own weight. God will not hold them up in these slippery places any longer, but will let them go; and then at that very instant, they shall fall into destruction; as he that stands on such slippery declining ground, on the edge of a pit, he cannot stand alone, when he is let go, he immediately falls and is lost.

The observation from the words that I would now insist upon is this: "There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God." By the mere pleasure of God, I mean his sovereign pleasure, his arbitrary will, restrained by no obligation, hindered by no manner of difficulty, any more than if nothing else but God's mere will had in the least degree, or in any respect whatsoever, any hand in the preservation of wicked men one moment.

The truth of this observation may appear by the following considerations:

There is no want of *power* in God to cast wicked men into hell at any moment. Men's hands cannot be strong when God rises up. The strongest have no power to resist him, nor can any deliver out of his hands.-He is not only able to cast wicked men into hell, but he can most easily do it. Sometimes an earthly prince meets with a great deal of difficulty to subdue a rebel, who has found means to fortify himself, and has made himself strong by the numbers of his followers.

But it is not so with God. There is no fortress that is any defence from the power of God. Though hand joins in hand, and vast multitudes of God's enemies combine and associate themselves, they are easily broken in pieces. They are as great heaps of light chaff before the whirlwind; or large quantities of dry stubble before devouring flames. We find it easy to tread on and crush a worm that we see crawling on the earth; so it is easy for us to cut or singe a slender thread that anything hangs by: thus easy is it for God, when he pleases, to cast his enemies down to hell. What are we that we should think to stand before him, at whose rebuke the earth trembles, and before whom the rocks are thrown down?

2. They *deserve* to be cast into hell; so that divine justice never stands in the way, it makes no objection against God's using his power at any moment to destroy them. Yea, on the contrary, justice calls aloud for an infinite punishment of their sins. Divine justice says of the tree that brings forth such grapes of Sodom, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" Luke 13:7. The sword of divine justice is every moment brandished over their heads, and it is nothing but the hand of arbitrary mercy, and God's mere will, that holds it back.

3. They are already under a sentence of *condemnation* to hell. They do not only justly deserve to be cast down thither, but the sentence of the law of God, that eternal and immutable rule of righteousness that God has fixed between him and mankind, is gone out against them, and stands against them; so that they are bound over already to hell. John 3:18. "He that believeth not is condemned already." So that every unconverted man properly belongs to hell; that is his place; from thence he is, John 8:23. "Ye are from beneath." And thither he is bound; it is the place that justice, and God's word, and the sentence of his unchangeable law assign to him.

4. They are now the objects of that very same anger and wrath of God that is expressed in the torments of hell. And the reason why they do not go down to hell at each moment, is not because God, in whose

power they are, is not then very angry with them; as he is with many miserable creatures now tormented in hell, who there feel and bear the fierceness of his wrath. Yea, God is a great deal more angry with great numbers that are now on earth: yea, doubtless, with many that are now in this congregation, who it may be, are at ease, than he is with many of those who are now in the flames of hell.

So that it is not because God is unmindful of their wickedness, and does not resent it, that he does not let loose his hand and cut them off. God is not altogether such a one as themselves, though they may imagine him to be so. The wrath of God burns against them, their damnation does not slumber; the pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them; the flames do now rage and glow. The glittering sword is whet, and held over them, and the pit hath opened its mouth under them.

5. The *devil* stands ready to fall upon them, and seize them as his own, at what moment God shall permit him. They belong to him; he has their souls in his possession, and under his dominion. The scripture represents them as his goods, Luke 11:12. The devils watch them; they are ever by them at their right hand; they stand waiting for them, like greedy hungry lions that see their prey, and expect to have it, but are for the present kept back. If God should withdraw his hand, by which they are restrained, they would in one moment fly upon their poor souls. The old serpent is gaping for them; hell opens its mouth wide to receive them; and if God should permit it, they would be hastily swallowed up and lost.

6. There are in the souls of wicked men those hellish principles reigning, that would presently kindle and flame out into hell fire, if it were not for God's restraints. There is laid in the very nature of carnal men, a foundation for the torments of hell. There are those corrupt principles, in reigning power in them, and in full possession of them, that are seeds of hell fire. These principles are active and powerful, exceedingly violent in their nature, and if it were not for the restraining hand of God upon them, they would soon break out, they would flame

out after the same manner as the same corruptions, the same enmity does in the hearts of damned souls, and would beget the same torments as they do in them. The souls of the wicked are in scripture compared to the troubled sea, Isa. 57:20. For the present, God restrains their wickedness by his mighty power, as he does the raging waves of the troubled sea, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further;" but if God should withdraw that restraining power, it would soon carry all before it. Sin is the ruin and misery of the soul; it is destructive in its nature; and if God should leave it without restraint, there would need nothing else to make the soul perfectly miserable. The corruption of the heart of man is immoderate and boundless in its fury; and while wicked men live here, it is like fire pent up by God's restraints, whereas if it were let loose, it would set on fire the course of nature; and as the heart is now a sink of sin, so if sin was not restrained, it would immediately turn the soul into a fiery oven, or a furnace of fire and brimstone.

7. It is no security to wicked men for one moment, that there are no visible means of death at hand. It is no security to a natural man, that he is now in health, and that he does not see which way he should now immediately go out of the world by any accident, and that there is no visible danger in any respect in his circumstances. The manifold and continual experience of the world in all ages, shows this is no evidence, that a man is not on the very brink of eternity, and that the next step will not be into another world. The unseen, unthought-of ways and means of persons going suddenly out of the world are innumerable and inconceivable. Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they will not bear their weight, and these places are not seen. The arrows of death fly unseen at noon-day; the sharpest sight cannot discern them. God has so many different unsearchable ways of taking wicked men out of the world and sending them to hell, that there is nothing to make it appear, that God had need to be at the expense of a miracle, or go out of the ordinary course of his providence, to destroy any wicked man, at any moment. All the means that there are of sinners going out of the world, are so in God's hands, and so universally and

absolutely subject to his power and determination, that it does not depend at all the less on the mere will of God, whether sinners shall at any moment go to hell, than if means were never made use of, or at all concerned in the case.

8. Natural men's prudence and care to preserve their own lives, or the care of others to preserve them, do not secure them a moment. To this, divine providence and universal experience do also bear testimony. There is this clear evidence that men's own wisdom is no security to them from death; that if it were otherwise we should see some difference between the wise and politic men of the world, and others, with regard to their liableness to early and unexpected death: but how is it in fact? Eccles.2:16. "How dieth the wise man? even as the fool."

9. All wicked men's pains and *contrivance* which they use to escape hell, while they continue to reject Christ, and so remain wicked men, do not secure them from hell one moment. Almost every natural man that hears of hell, flatters himself that he shall escape it; he depends upon himself for his own security; he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do. Every one lays out matters in his own mind how he shall avoid damnation, and flatters himself that he contrives well for himself, and that his schemes will not fail. They hear indeed that there are but few saved, and that the greater part of men that have died heretofore are gone to hell; but each one imagines that he lays out matters better for his own escape than others have done. He does not intend to come to that place of torment; he says within himself, that he intends to take effectual care, and to order matters so for himself as not to fail.

But the foolish children of men miserably delude themselves in their own schemes, and in confidence in their own strength and wisdom; they trust to nothing but a shadow. The greater part of those who heretofore have lived under the same means of grace, and are now dead, are undoubtedly gone to hell; and it was not because they were not as wise as those who are now alive: it was not because they did not lay out

matters as well for themselves to secure their own escape. If we could speak with them, and inquire of them, one by one, whether they expected, when alive, and when they used to hear about hell ever to be the subjects of that misery: we doubtless, should hear one and another reply, "No, I never intended to come here: I had laid out matters otherwise in my mind; I thought I should contrive well for myself: I thought my scheme good. I intended to take effectual care; but it came upon me unexpected; I did not look for it at that time, and in that manner; it came as a thief: Death outwitted me: God's wrath was too quick for me. Oh, my cursed foolishness! I was flattering myself, and pleasing myself with vain dreams of what I would do hereafter; and when I was saying, Peace and safety, then suddenly destruction came upon me.

10. God has laid himself under *no obligation*, by any promise to keep any natural man out of hell one moment. God certainly has made no promises either of eternal life, or of any deliverance or preservation from eternal death, but what are contained in the covenant of grace, the promises that are given in Christ, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. But surely they have no interest in the promises of the covenant of grace who are not the children of the covenant, who do not believe in any of the promises, and have no interest in the Mediator of the covenant.

So that, whatever some have imagined and pretended about promises made to natural men's earnest seeking and knocking, it is plain and manifest, that whatever pains a natural man takes in religion, whatever prayers he makes, till he believes in Christ, God is under no manner of obligation to keep him a moment from eternal destruction.

So that, thus it is that natural men are held in the hand of God, over the pit of hell; they have deserved the fiery pit, and are already sentenced to it; and God is dreadfully provoked, his anger is as great towards them as to those that are actually suffering the executions of the fierceness of his wrath in hell, and they have done nothing in the least to appease or

abate that anger, neither is God in the least bound by any promise to hold them up one moment; the devil is waiting for them, hell is gaping for them, the flames gather and flash about them, and would fain lay hold on them, and swallow them up; the fire pent up in their own hearts is struggling to break out: and they have no interest in any Mediator, there are no means within reach that can be any security to them. In short, they have no refuge, nothing to take hold of, all that preserves them every moment is the mere arbitrary will, and uncovenanted, unobliterated forbearance of an incensed God.

### **APPLICATION**

The use of this awful subject may be for awakening unconverted persons in this congregation. This that you have heard is the case of every one of you that are out of Christ.-That world of misery, that lake of burning brimstone, is extended abroad under you. There is the dreadful pit of the glowing flames of the wrath of God; there is hell's wide gaping mouth open; and you have nothing to stand upon, nor any thing to take hold of, there is nothing between you and hell but the air; it is only the power and mere pleasure of God that holds you up.

You probably are not sensible of this; you find you are kept out of hell, but do not see the hand of God in it; but look at other things, as the good state of your bodily constitution, your care of your own life, and the means you use for your own preservation. But indeed these things are nothing; if God should withdraw his band, they would avail no more to keep you from falling, than the thin air to hold up a person that is suspended in it.

Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell; and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf, and your healthy constitution, and your own care and prudence, and best contrivance, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you and keep

you out of hell, than a spider's web would have to stop a falling rock. Were it not for the sovereign pleasure of God, the earth would not bear you one moment; for you are a burden to it; the creation groans with you; the creature is made subject to the bondage of your corruption, not willingly; the sun does not willingly shine upon you to give you light to serve sin and Satan; the earth does not willingly yield her increase to satisfy your lusts; nor is it willingly a stage for your wickedness to be acted upon; the air does not willingly serve you for breath to maintain the flame of life in your vitals, while you spend your life in the service of God's enemies. God's creatures are good, and were made for men to serve God with, and do not willingly subserve to any other purpose, and groan when they are abused to purposes so directly contrary to their nature and end. And the world would spew you out, were it not for the sovereign hand of him who hath subjected it in hope. There are black clouds of God's wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder; and were it not for the restraining hand of God, it would immediately burst forth upon you. The sovereign pleasure of God, for the present, stays his rough wind; otherwise it would come with fury, and your destruction would come like a whirlwind, and you would be like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose. It is true, that judgment against your evil works has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been withheld; but your guilt in the mean time is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are constantly rising, and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward. If God should only withdraw his hand from the flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God, would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon

you with omnipotent power; and if your strength were ten thousand times greater than it is, yea, ten thousand times greater than the strength of the stoutest, sturdiest devil in hell, it would be nothing to withstand or endure it.

The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood. Thus all you that never passed under a great change of heart, by the mighty power of the Spirit of God upon your souls; all you that were never born again, and made new creatures, and raised from being dead in sin, to a state of new, and before altogether unexperienced light and life, are in the hands of an angry God. However you may have reformed your life in many things, and may have had religious affections, and may keep up a form of religion in your families and closets, and in the house of God, it is nothing but his mere pleasure that keeps you from being this moment swallowed up in everlasting destruction. However unconvinced you may now be of the truth of what you hear, by and by you will be fully convinced of it. Those that are gone from being in the like circumstances with you, see that it was so with them; for destruction came suddenly upon most of them; when they expected nothing of it, and while they were saying, Peace and safety: now they see, that those things on which they depended for peace and safety, were nothing but thin air and empty shadows.

The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince; and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from

falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you were suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you have not gone to hell, since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not this very moment drop down into hell.

O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: it is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you, as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment. And consider here more particularly

1. *Whose wrath it is:* it is the wrath of the infinite God. If it were only the wrath of man, though it was of the most potent prince, it would be comparatively little to be regarded. The wrath of kings is very much dreaded, especially of absolute monarchs, who have the possessions and lives of their subjects wholly in their power, to be disposed of at their mere will. Prov. 20:2. "The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: Whoso provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul." The subject that very much enrages an arbitrary prince, is liable to suffer the most extreme torments that human art can invent, or human power can inflict. But the greatest earthly potentates in their greatest majesty and strength, and when clothed in their greatest terrors, are but feeble, despicable worms of the dust, in comparison of the great and almighty Creator and King of heaven and earth. It is but little that they can do,

when most enraged, and when they have exerted the utmost of their fury. All the kings of the earth, before God, are as grasshoppers; they are nothing, and less than nothing: both their love and their hatred are to be despised. The wrath of the great King of kings, is as much more terrible than theirs, as his majesty is greater. Luke 12:4,5: "And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, Fear him."

2. It is the *fierceness* of his wrath that you are exposed to. We often read of the fury of God; as in Isaiah 58.18: "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries." So Isaiah 66:15: "For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire." And in many other places. So, Rev. 19:15, we read of "the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." The words are exceeding terrible. If it had only been said, "the wrath of God," the words would have implied that which is infinitely dreadful: but it is "the fierceness and wrath of God." The fury of God! The fierceness of Jehovah! Oh, how dreadful must that be! Who can utter or conceive what such expressions carry in them! But it is also "the fierceness and wrath of *Almighty* God." As though there would be a very great manifestation of his almighty power in what the fierceness of his wrath should inflict, as though omnipotence should be as it were enraged, and exerted, as men are wont to exert their strength in the fierceness of their wrath. Oh, then, what will be the consequence! What will become of the poor worms that shall suffer it! Whose hands can be strong? And whose heart can endure? To what a dreadful, inexpressible, inconceivable depth of misery must the poor creature be sunk who shall be the subject of this!

Consider this, you that are here present, that yet remain in an unregenerate state. That God will execute the fierceness of his anger, implies, that he will inflict wrath without any pity. When God beholds

the ineffable extremity of your case, and sees your torment to be so vastly disproportioned to your strength, and sees how your poor soul is crushed, and sinks down, as it were, into an infinite gloom; he will have no compassion upon you, he will not forbear the executions of his wrath, or in the least lighten his hand; there shall be no moderation or mercy, nor will God then at all stay his rough wind; he will have no regard to your welfare, nor be at all careful lest you should suffer too much in any other sense, than only that you shall *not suffer beyond what strict justice requires*. Nothing shall be withheld, because it is so hard for you to bear. Ezek.8:18. "Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them." Now God stands ready to pity you; this is a day of mercy; you may cry now with some encouragement of obtaining mercy. But when once the day of mercy is past, your most lamentable and dolorous cries and shrieks will be in vain; you will be wholly lost and thrown away of God, as to any regard to your welfare. God will have no other use to put you to, but to suffer misery; you shall be continued in being to no other end; for you will be a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction; and there will be no other use of this vessel, but to be filled full of wrath. God will be so far from pitying you when you cry to him, that it is said he will only "laugh and mock," Prov. 1:25, 26, &c.

How awful are those words, Isa. 63:3, which are the words of the great God. "I will tread them in mine anger, and will trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." It is perhaps impossible to conceive of words that carry in them greater manifestations of these three things, *vis.* contempt, and hatred, and fierceness of indignation. If you cry to God to pity you, he will be so far from pitying you in your doleful case, or showing you the least regard or favour, that instead of that, he will only tread you under foot. And though he will know that you cannot bear the weight of omnipotence treading upon you, yet he will not regard that, but he will crush you under his feet without mercy; he will crush out your blood, and make it fly, and it shall be sprinkled on his garments, so as to stain

all his raiment. He will not only hate you, but he will have you, in the utmost contempt: no place shall be thought fit for you, but under his feet to be trodden down as the mire of the streets.

The misery to which you are exposed, is that which God will inflict to that end, that he might show what that wrath of Jehovah is. God hath had it on his heart to show to angels and men, both how excellent his love is, and also how terrible his wrath is. Sometimes earthly kings have a mind to show how terrible their wrath is, by the extreme punishments they would execute on those that would provoke them.

Nebuchadnezzar, that mighty and haughty monarch of the Chaldean empire, was willing to show his wrath when enraged with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; and accordingly gave orders that the burning fiery furnace should be heated seven times hotter than it was before; doubtless, it was raised to the utmost degree of fierceness that human art could raise it. But the great God is also willing to show his wrath, and magnify his awful majesty and mighty power in the extreme sufferings of his enemies. Rom. 9:22: "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endure with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" And seeing this is his design, and what he has determined, even to show how terrible the unrestrained wrath, the fury and fierceness of Jehovah is, he will do it to effect.

There will be something accomplished and brought to pass that will be dreadful with a witness. When the great and angry God hath risen up and executed his awful vengeance on the poor sinner, and the wretch is actually suffering the infinite weight and power of his indignation, then will God call upon the whole universe to behold that awful majesty and mighty power that is to be seen in it. Isa. 33:12-14: "And the people shall be as the burnings of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. Hear ye that are far off, what I have done; and ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites," etc.

Thus it will be with you that are in an unconverted state, if you continue in it; the infinite might, and majesty, and terribleness of the omnipotent

God shall be magnified upon you, in the ineffable strength of your torments. You shall be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and when you shall be in this state of suffering, the glorious inhabitants of heaven shall go forth and look on the awful spectacle, that they may see what the wrath and fierceness of the Almighty is; and when they have seen it, they will fall down and adore that great power and majesty. Isa. 66:23, 24: "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

4. It is *everlasting* wrath. It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity. There will be no end to this exquisite horrible misery. When you look forward, you shall see a long for ever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts, and amaze your soul; and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all. You will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, millions of millions of ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty merciless vengeance; and then when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point to what remains, so that your punishment will indeed be infinite. Oh, who can express what the state of a soul in such circumstances is! All that we can possibly say about it, gives but a very feeble, faint representation of it; it is inexpressible and inconceivable: For "who knows the power of God's anger?"

How dreadful is the state of those that are daily and hourly in the danger of this great wrath and infinite misery! But this is the dismal case of every soul in this congregation that has not been born again, however moral and strict, sober and religious, they may otherwise be. Oh that you would consider it, whether you be young or old! There is reason to think, that there are many in this congregation now hearing this

discourse, who will actually be the subjects of this very misery to all eternity. We know not who they are, or in what seats they sit, or what thoughts they now have. It may be they are now at ease, and hear all these things without much disturbance, and are now flattering themselves that they are not the persons, promising themselves that they shall escape. If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing would it be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight would it be to see such a person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But, alas! Instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell? And it would be a wonder, if some that are now present should not be in hell in a very short time, even before this year is out. And it would be no wonder if some persons, that now sit here, in some seats of this meeting-house, in health, quiet and secure, should be there before to-morrow morning. Those of you that finally continue in a natural condition, who shall keep out of hell longest, will be there in a little time! Your damnation does not slumber; it will come swiftly, and, in all probability, very suddenly upon many of you. You have reason to wonder that you are not already in hell. It is doubtless the case of some whom you have seen and known, that never deserved hell more than you, and that heretofore appeared as likely to have been now alive as you. Their case is past all hope; they are crying in extreme misery and perfect despair; but here you are in the land of the living and in the house of God, and have an opportunity to obtain salvation. What would not those poor damned hopeless souls give for one day's opportunity such as you now enjoy!

And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open, and stands in calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day wherein many are flocking to him, and pressing into the kingdom of God. Many are daily coming from the east, west, north and south; many that were very lately in the same miserable condition that you are in, are now in a happy state, with their hearts filled with love to him who has loved them, and

washed them from their sins in his own blood, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. How awful is it to be left behind at such a day! To see so many others feasting, while you are pining and perishing! To see so many rejoicing and singing for joy of heart, while you have cause to mourn for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit! How can you rest one moment in such a condition? Are not your souls as precious as the souls of the people at Suffield\*, where they are flocking from day to day to Christ?

Are there not many here who have lived long in the world, and are not to this day born again? And so are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and have done nothing ever since they have lived, but treasure up wrath against the day of wrath? Oh, sirs, your case in an especial manner is extremely dangerous. Your guilt and hardness of heart is extremely great. Do you not see how generally persons of your years are passed over and left, in the present remarkable and wonderful dispensation of God's mercy? You need to consider yourselves, and awake thoroughly out of sleep. You cannot bear the fierceness and wrath of the infinite God - and you, young men, and young women, will you neglect this precious season which you now enjoy, when so many others of your age are renouncing all youthful vanities, and flocking to Christ? You especially have now an extraordinary opportunity; but if you neglect it, it will soon be with you as with those persons who spent all the precious days of youth in sin, and are now come to such a dreadful pass in blindness and hardness. And you, children, who are unconverted, do not you know that you are going down to hell, to bear the dreadful wrath of that God, who is now angry with you every day and every night? Will you be content to be the children of the devil, when so many other children in the land are converted, and are become the holy and happy children of the King of kings?

And let everyone that is yet out of Christ, and hanging over the pit of hell, whether they be old men and women, or middle aged, or young people, or little children, now hark to the loud calls of God's word and providence. This acceptable year of the Lord, a day of such great

favours to some, will doubtless be a day of as remarkable vengeance to others. Men's hearts harden, and their guilt increases apace at such a day as this, if they neglect their souls; and never was there so great danger of such persons being given up to hardness of heart and blindness of mind. God seems now to be hastily gathering in his elect in all parts of the land; and probably the greater part of adult persons that ever shall be saved, will be brought in now in a little time, and that it will be as it was on the great out-pouring of the Spirit upon the Jews in the apostles' days; the election will obtain, and the rest will be blinded. If this should be the case with you, you will eternally curse this day, and will curse the day that ever you were born, to see such a season of the pouring out of God's Spirit, and will wish that you had died and gone to hell before you had seen it. Now undoubtedly it is, as it was in the days of John the Baptist, the axe is in an extraordinary manner laid at the root of the trees, that every tree which brings not forth good fruit, may be hewn down and cast into the fire.

Therefore, let everyone that is out of Christ, now awake and fly from the wrath to come. The wrath of Almighty God is now undoubtedly hanging over a great part of this congregation: Let everyone fly out of Sodom: "Haste and escape for your lives, look not behind you, escape to the mountain, lest you be consumed."

# Biography of Jonathan Edwards

**Jonathan Edwards, 1703 – 1758.**

*Edwards achieved greatness as an American preacher-evangelist, principal of a college, mystic, and revivalist.*

"Jonathan Edwards is not only the greatest of all American theologians and philosophers but the greatest of our pre-19th century writers as well." So writes Randall Stewart in his book *American Literature and Christian Doctrine*.

Here is a concise summary of the life of Edwards from the able pen of Perry Miller: "Jonathan Edwards was one of America's five or six major artists-who happened to work with ideas instead of with poems or novels. He was much more of a psychologist and poet than a logician. Though he devoted his genius to topics derived from the body of divinity (the will, virtue, sin), he traced them in the manner of the very finest spectator. . . ."

For us to see Jonathan Edwards ascend his pulpit today, a candle in one hand and his sermon manuscript in the other would cause a titter in the congregation.

Jonathan Edwards was a man that moved in the Spirit. He was devoted on rightly dividing the word of truth.

In doing this, Edwards was "flamed" by the power of God.

The tongue of Edwards must have been like a sharp two-edged sword to his attentive hearers. His words must have been as painful to their hearts and consciences as burning metal on flesh. Nevertheless, men gave heed, repented, and were saved.

"Knowing the terror of the Lord" (a thing seemingly forgotten in our day both by pulpit and pew), Edwards smouldered with holy wrath.

Impervious to any consequences of such severity, he thundered these words from his pulpit:

"The bow of God's wrath is bent, and His arrows made ready upon the string. Justice points the arrow at your heart and strings the bow. It is *nothing but the mere pleasure of God* (and that of an angry God without any promise or obligation at all) that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood."

To utter truth like that with tears and tenderness takes an anointed and therefore fearless and compassionate man.

As it was, before Edwards' spiritual hurricane, the crowd collapsed. Some fell to the earth as if pole-axed. Others, with heads bowed, clung onto the posts of the temple as if afraid of falling into the nethermost depths of hell.

Edwards wept as he preached. In this he was a kinsman in soul of the mighty Brownlow North of the revival that occurred years later in Ireland in 1859. The divine law of Psalm 126:6 never has nor ever can be abrogated: "He that goeth forth and *weepeth*, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

As pastor of one of New England's largest, wealthiest, and most socially-conscious congregations, Edwards had a rare perception of the needs of his flock. He also had a heart of great tenderness for their spiritual health.

Edwards was also a soul kinsman of George Whitefield, his contemporary. Was the mighty American, Jonathan Edwards, sparked by the English apostle, Whitefield? Did the thunderings from the vibrant soul of Whitefield, then storming through New England, disturb and challenge the normality of Edwards' preaching life? This is not a rhetorical question. It cannot be answered fully, but it contains more than a grain of truth. We do know that after meeting young George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards changed his style of sermon notes.

**Contrast this great man of God with his contemporary. I quote from Al Sanders in *Crisis in Morality!***

"Max Jukes, the atheist, lived a godless life. He married an ungodly girl, and from the union there were 310 who died as paupers, 150 were criminals, 7 were murderers, 100 were drunkards, and more than half of the women were prostitutes. His 540 descendants cost the State one and a quarter million dollars.

"But, praise the Lord, it works both ways! There is a record of a great American man of God, Jonathan Edwards. He lived at the same time as Max Jukes, but he married a godly girl. An investigation was made of 1,394 known descendants of Jonathan Edwards of which 13 became college presidents, 65 college professors, 3 United States senators, 30 judges, 100 lawyers, 60 physicians, 75 army and navy officers, 100 preachers and missionaries, 60 authors of prominence, one a vice-president of the United States, 80 became public officials in other capacities, 295 college graduates, among whom were governors of states and ministers to foreign countries. His descendants did not cost the state a single penny. 'The memory of the just is blessed' (Prov. 10:7)."

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## **OUR CHILDREN and CHURCH GROWTH**

Someone once said:

*“If we missed our children, we did not miss the boat, we missed the ocean.”*

### **The Importance of Children's Ministry**

No evangelical church has unlimited resources in facilities, money and often a more limiting factor, staff and volunteers. Therefore, to be most effective in its evangelical mission of bringing the Love of God to the largest number of the unchurched, it is important that a church should focus its resources and efforts where there is the highest probability of success; that it focuses on a niche of the unchurched in its geographic market area which are most likely to be attracted to attend.

This is sometimes referred to as *targeting for evangelism*. Dr. Rick Warren, senior pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Orange County, California, one of the fastest growing churches in America, points out:

"The practice of targeting specific kinds of people for evangelism is a biblical principal. It's as old as the New Testament.

Jesus targeted his ministry... [Jesus] publicly identified the Jews as his ministry target. Was Jesus being unfair or prejudiced? Certainly not. Jesus targeted his ministry in order to be effective, not to be exclusive."

The typically raised question is who should be targeted? An investigation of research on reaching the unchurched shows that families with younger children, and more specifically the children, are often the best target market.

Probably the most convincing argument why targeting children's ministry for evangelism can be the most effective, is research on the probability of people accepting Jesus Christ as their Saviour for a lifetime relationship.

Research by George Barna's Institute of over 1,000 adults in May 2001 puts the probability of those coming to Christ at

- 32% of children between 5 and 13 years old
- 4% of children between 14 and 18
- 6% of people 19 years and older

Attracting younger children to a church to learn about the Love of God will have 5 to 8 times the impact of attracting adults.

Barna's research on faith development and discipleship also found that the moral development of children is complete by the age of 9.

Non-religious orientated research on children's moral and values development substantiates that the foundation for lifelong values and morals are formed at the earliest years.

The May 2001 Barna's research also showed that church attendance by children has a lifelong impact. The majority (61%) of adults who attended church as children still attend regularly, while only 22% of those who were not churchgoers as children attend church today.

Early churchgoing also has an impact on whether parents bring their children to church. For parents who were churchd as children, 63% take their own children to church. That's double the proportion among adults who were not churchd and now have children of their own (33%).

George Barna states:

"The research is very clear: if Jesus is not already part of their lives by the time they leave junior high school, the chances of them accepting Him as their Lord and Saviour is very slim (6%,

to be exact). With children, it is just the opposite. Because of the challenges and insecurities they face in life, they are very open to being a part of a community of like-minded people who grow together.

Children have a tremendous influence within their families and on the choices they make in all areas of life...

The greatest evangelical window currently available is among young children."

R. S. Lee, the author of *Your Growing Children and Religion* says it this way:

"The first seven years [of life] constitute the period for laying the foundations of religion. This is the most important period in the whole of a person's life in determining his later religious attitudes."

Research has clearly substantiated the Bible verse: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (**Proverbs 22:6**)

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For additional information on the unchurched, visit the "Barna Institute" website.

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# **CHURCH PLANTING and CHURCH**

## **GROWTH**

***‘The Christian community will grow or decline according to the degree of effort given in planting new churches’ - C.***

***Peter Wagner***

I wish I knew more to help you in “PLANTING CHURCHES”, but I do know this: The reason why many churches do not really grow, may be that when they were “planted”, it was not done the correct way.

In my research in finding the correct way to plant churches, I, as director of *Christ for the Nations Bible School*, asked my students to write an assignment on: “*Basic Principles in Church Planting*”.

The answers I received, were the following:

- Firstly, do research in the town or city where the church should be planted - **the demographics**, namely everything about the society and the statistics relating to the people living there.
- Secondly, have God’s plan and strategy for the place.
- The third thing was to have a love for the people of the place.
- Fourthly, establish a prayer network for the place.

- The fifth thing was to have some teams (this will include the following):
  - An Evangelistic team
  - A Worship team
  - A “Follow-up” team (to take care of the new converts)

When you think of “**Teams**” always remember this:

**Together...Everyone...Achieves...More**

It is very important to have different teams in the church to do the work.

**I found a wonderful revelation in the Living Bible.**

*“Develop your business first before building your house.”*

*In the commentary on this Scripture it says: ‘We should do things in the proper order. If a farmer builds his house in the spring, he misses the planting season and goes a year without food. If a businessman invests his money in a house, while his business is struggling to grow, he may lose both. It is possible to work hard and still lose everything, if the work is done in the wrong sequence.’ Proverbs 24:27*

**First build God’s Church before you build a Church building.**

## **QUESTIONNAIRE**

### **(Sent to churches and leaders)**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2006, “P.E. Church Net” (a Christian organisation in Port Elizabeth, South Africa) sent out a questionnaire for my Master’s Thesis.

This questionnaire was sent to 1800 addresses in the Eastern Cape (this is our County) and included 300 pastors and more than 200 churches.

**In total the questionnaires received back were 74.**

**The answers came from: Pastors, academics, cell leaders, business people and missionaries.**

### **THE QUESTIONNAIRE INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:**

**First question:** WHAT ARE THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH GROWTH FOR APPLICATION IN YOUR CHURCH?

#### **PREACHING**

- Should preaching be “Need” orientated?  
YES / NO / UNCERTAIN / DON’T KNOW
- Should preaching be sound Biblical teaching and doctrine?  
YES / NO / UNCERTAIN / DON’T KNOW

- Should we open the doors for lay people to be able to preach?

YES / NO / UNCERTAIN / DON'T KNOW

### **Answers received:**

**99% said that preaching should be “need” orientated.**

**100% said that preaching should be biblically sound.**

**75% said that lay people should also do the preaching, but they should be trained how to do it before we use them.**

## **CHURCH WORSHIP**

What are important in Worship?

- Should it be “lively” or “conservative”?
- Should it be “new” or more “older” songs?
- How important is a Worship Team?

### **Answers received**

**The most said that the worship should be “lively”, but should be a mixture of “new” and “old” songs. The main goal of the worship team must be to lead the congregation into the presence of God. They are not performers, but worshippers.**

**Concerning Worship, I want to recommend two books:**

**Sorge, Bob:** *“Exploring Worship” A practical guide to praise and worship, 1987, Oasis Publishers*

**Smith, C.M:** *“Identifying Community worship at the New Harvest Fellowship” (Master Thesis in Musicology through Wits University)*

## **MINISTRIES**

- Should every member be in a ministry?
- What ministries do we need in the local church?

### **Answers received**

**More than 95% felt that every member in the local church should be involved in a ministry.**

*[One responded: “However, there should be strong and healthy leaders who want to lead, because they have the training and because they have the calling.*

*Congregation members should be inducted into the structures that exist for them and they should thereafter be invited to become members of the ministry. All ministries should be networked towards a greater goal and not be allowed to develop outside the mission and vision of the congregation need.*

*It is not a case of how 'good the church is or should be', but 'what God's purpose is for the congregation'. All ministries should be aligned to this."*

**In the surveys I received, it was clear that:**

- **Ministries should be focussed on the need in the church, but also in the community.**
- **People should try out what they think God called them to do, until they find the ministry they should do.**
- **The three main ministries needed in the local church should be:**

**Evangelism, Caring and Teaching**

***(Caring included the Cell leaders, visiting the sick and caring for the aged and widows.)***

**High on the list the following ministries were considered as very important to my respondents:**

**Music, Counselling, Ushering, Follow up, Media,**

**Women's and Men's ministries**

## **CELL GROUPS**

- Should be “caring groups” YES / NO
- Should be “evangelism groups” YES / NO
- Should use the Pastor’s sermon notes of the previous Sunday

YES / NO

### **Answers received**

**80% said that Cell groups should be “caring groups” and not “Evangelism groups”.**

**There was a negative response against the use of the pastor’s sermon notes of the previous Sunday in cell group meetings.**

**10% even said it could be boring to go through the whole sermon again.**

**70% said that converts should be passed on to cell groups so that they could be cared for. They felt the main reason for cell groups was because people need fellowship and a place to feel safe and that Sunday meetings could not take care of all the needs of the congregation. This is where smaller groups play a major role.**

**Cell groups are more personal and are creating opportunities for members to be accountable and foster relationships.**

*One respondent replied: “Cell groups encourage personal growth and development. It’s a safe and loving environment to share openly and receive exhortation. It makes room for the use of spiritual gifts and uncourageous members to stop being self-focused and to care for others.”*

*Another respondent wrote: “If we talk about cell groups in context of church growth, then it is vital to have them. As the church becomes larger in numbers, it is important to still create a way of ministering to each member individually, and the cell group creates this opportunity on a weekly basis. People don’t want to disappear in the masses and become only a number or name on the address list. If we want church growth, the member needs to grow individually first, before they can begin to participate in growth of the Body. Lambs have never produced sheep, only mature sheep reproduce.”*

### **The second question:**

**WHAT ARE THE WEAKNESSES OF THE CHURCH?**

**These are some answers received:**

- **Not focussed on the Word**
- **Isolated and not working together with other churches**

- **Restricting God's body to function as God wants them to**
- **Not allowing the gifts to operate**
- **Leadership not qualified to do the work**
- **Immoral lives of members**
- **Power struggles between those in leadership.**
- **Competing against one another's ministries**
- **Majors in helping individual needs and not listening to God**
- **The church has all the answers, but we lock it up in buildings**
- **Allowing politics into the church**
- **Too conscious about the name of their church and this leads to division with other denominations**
- **Dry and stale meetings with no move of the Holy Spirit**
- **20% are doing 100% of the ministries, while 80% just attend**
- **Back biting**
- **Unfaithfulness**
- **Lack of prayer and bible study**
- **Not committed**
- **Set in their ways and do not want to change**

- **Maintenance mood**
- **Not enough personal one-on-one outreach to the unsaved**

**The third question:** WHAT CONSTITUTES A “HEALTHY” CHURCH?

**Comments received from respondents were:**

- **Sound Biblical preaching**
- **The “Five-fold” Ministry, operating (Eph.4:11)**
- **A Praying church**
- **Discipleship training**
- **Evangelism**
- **A caring church**
- **Allowing God to use all members of the church**
- **When the members have a real relationship with Christ and a love for people**
- **When they don’t waste energy on human-made programs**
- **Compassion and mercy toward the lost and hurting**
- **A pastor who cares for the flock**
- **Love one another according to John 13:34, 35**
- **Vibrant active members who love souls**

- **A church that serves her own people, but also has a Mission vision**
- **A worship team that leads appropriately**
- **When people tithe, because they love doing it**
- **A church that reaches out to the poor and needy**

### **The fourth question:**

**ARE THERE ANY ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS?**

- **Get back to the basics of the Word**
- **Teach God's people (with different courses) to win the lost to Christ. This must be a part of their weekly program.**
- **The Eight principles in the book "*Natural Church Development*" written by Christian Swartz**
- **The principles written by Rick Warren in his book "*Purpose Driven Life*"**
- **People must know they are loved, valued and respected**

### **The fifth question:**

**Percentage-wise, how does the following help in Growth?**

|                                          |             |
|------------------------------------------|-------------|
| a. Length of services                    | <b>40%</b>  |
| b. Relevance of sermons to everyday life | <b>100%</b> |
| c. Systematic Leadership training        | <b>100%</b> |
| d. Mentorship of younger leaders         | <b>100%</b> |
| e. Evangelistic Outreaches               | <b>100%</b> |
| f. Social events for church members      | <b>60%</b>  |
| g. Job creation, skills training         | <b>40%</b>  |
| h. Programs promoting abstinence         | <b>40%</b>  |
| i. Advertisement of church activities    | <b>40%</b>  |
| j. Types of sermons preached             | <b>85%</b>  |
| k. Importance of pastoral visits         | <b>60%</b>  |
| l. Children's ministry                   | <b>100%</b> |
| m. Youth work                            | <b>100%</b> |
| n. Women's Association                   | <b>60%</b>  |
| o. Social activities                     | <b>60%</b>  |
| p. Men's Association                     | <b>60%</b>  |

## **PERSONAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **TO SUMMARISE AND PRIORITISE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE WOULD BE THE FOLLOWING:**

#### **THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THAT WILL HELP A LOCAL CHURCH TO GROW SHOULD BE:**

- Relevance of sermon topics for our everyday life  
Preaching should be need-orientated and biblically sound.  
Any other kind of preaching will not challenge the listeners.
- The Worship should be lively, led by a committed worship team, willing to give a mixture of “old” and “new” songs.  
It is not about “*fast*” and “*slow*” songs, but about the worship in the church being an inspiring experience for the people.
- There should be systematic Leadership training.  
Leaders we need, are *Soul winners, Cell leaders, Leaders in music, Leaders in Children’s ministry, Leaders in Youth ministry, Leaders in Women’s ministry, Intercessors and whatever the need should be in the Church.*

- Members must be helped to find their ministry and also be used in their ministry. We should preach about the different Ministries that are needed; equip our people and then release them to fulfil their calling in the ministry God has called them to do.
- New Christians should be equipped in the foundational doctrine of God's Word, so that they can live a victorious life and fulfil their calling.
- Mentorship of younger leaders by more matured ones so that they will have a spiritual covering.
- Every Christian should be filled with God's Spirit to be more effective as a witness **(Acts 1:8)**.

We must have a new *"thirst"* for the Holy Spirit to be in us, as a fountain, as it is written in **John 7:37-39**.

- Cell groups are very important as caring groups where everyone should feel safe and be allowed to develop in their gifts.
- Evangelistic outreaches to the community are important so that we'll make disciples for Christ according **Matt.28:19**.

As Tommy Barnett of Phoenix, Arizona, said: ***"Find a need and fill it, find a hurt and heal it"***:

- Youth work that is focussed on the needs of the young ones

- A Children's ministry is needed that can teach our children to know the Lord and serve Him while they are still very young.
- We should live a life of fellowship with other Christians and share what we have with those in need, as we find in the first Church in the book of **Acts 2:44, 45 and Acts 4:35.**

## **BOOKS on CHURCH GROWTH**

Adelaya, Sunday: ***Pastoring without tears***

Fares Publishing House, Kiev, Ukraine, 2007

Usefulness of this resource:

Caring (shepherding) the Church

Is it possible to be a minister without tears and sorrow?

Listen to the man whom God has used to build the largest church in Europe in a period of 8 years. From 7 people in 1994, The Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for All Nations has grown to 25,000 people in the city of Kiev, Ukraine by the year 2002. Until 2010 they have planted 700 churches in more than 15 countries.

Yet Pastor Sunday Adelaja, the Senior Pastor of Embassy of God, says it's all without tears. Read the secret of this success in this incredible book, which is a must read for all ministers of God everywhere.

Bosworth, F.F.: ***Christ the Healer***

Whitaker House, 30 Hunt Valley Circle, New Kensington, PA 15068, 2000

Usefulness of this resource:

Church Growth through miracles

This is one of the best books concerning "Miracles and Healing" Miracles and healing filled the first Churches with people, and will do the same today.

In this book Bosworth debates that healing was included in Jesus' Atonement.

He gives good reasons why he believes that healing is meant for all people.

He discusses Christ's Ministry of healing and gives his philosophy why this healing ministry should continue.

He gives answers concerning “the thorn in the flesh” of the Apostle Paul.

Then Bosworth gives thirty-one questions to consider, relating to healing.

He ends his book with “Testimonies of Healing”.

Eckhardt, John: ***Moving in the Apostolic***

Renew Books, Ventura, California, U.S.A., 1999

Usefulness of this resource:

Discovering your Purpose and Calling

To be an apostle, or to be apostolic, revolves around the concept of being sent. Only sent ones can fulfil the Great Commission.

God sends every Christian into this world to be His witness.

1. The Church has been given a commission.
2. This commission is an apostolic commission.
3. This commission must and will be fulfilled.
4. Since the commission is apostolic, it will take an apostolic anointing to fulfil it.

Sent ones preach and teach prophetically.

Fawcett, J.R.: ***Preaching the Word***

Printed by Hebron Press, P.O. Box 11118, Rynfield, 1514, R.S.A (1996)

Usefulness:

The importance of preaching

Fawcett starts his book with **Romans 10:14**: *“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear **without a preacher?**”*

God’s major method of communicating truth is by preaching.

Preaching is more than the ability to convey truth; secular teachers and politicians can do that. Preaching is speaking for God.

The preacher is literally God's mouthpiece. *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."* **1 Peter 4:11** (p. 6)

The preacher's life should always illustrate what his words say. The preacher must live up to the standard of his own sermon. His life and example will often influence people more than the words he preaches. Paul instructed the young preacher, Timothy: *"Watch your life and doctrine closely..."* **1 Tim.4:16** (p.17).

Fawcett goes on to say: *"For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."* **2 Corinthians 4:5**

He takes time to talk on the preacher's character, attitude, honesty, sanctification, qualifications and servant hood (pp. 17-27).

In the rest of the book Fawcett explains how to prepare a sermon and how to deliver a sermon (pp. 28-59).

La Haye, Tim: ***Spirit controlled Temperament***

Kingsway Publications Ltd., P.O. Box 827, BN21 3YJ, England, 1999

This resource will help the Church to:

Discover our Personalities to understand each other more. This will help a Church to grow in unity.

In our congregations we find that God has put people together with different temperaments. Understanding each other better will help the church to grow.

There is nothing more fascinating about man than his temperament.

It is temperament that provides each human being with the distinguishing qualities of uniqueness that makes him as individually different from his fellow men as the different designs God has given to snowflakes.

It is the unseen force underlying human action, a force that can destroy a normal and productive human being, unless it is disciplined and directed.

*Temperament provides man with both strengths and weaknesses. Although we like to think only of our strengths, everyone has weaknesses.*

We have all inherited a basic temperament from our parents that contains both strengths and weaknesses.

This temperament is called several things in the Bible:

*“the natural man” “the flesh” “the old man”.*

Temperament is the combination of inborn qualities that affects man's behaviour. These qualities are passed on by the genes on the basis of nationality, race and sex. *Temperament is the combination of qualities with which we were born.*

In this book we are taught about the four different kinds of temperaments, namely: **“Sanguine”**, **“Choleric”**, **“Melancholic”** and **“Phlegmatic”**.

Lindsay, Gordon: ***The Life & Teachings of Christ (Volume 1, 2, 3)***

Christ for the Nations Inc., P.O. Box 769000, Dallas, TX 75376-9000, 1999

Usefulness of this resource:

Preaching should include the Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ

Gordon Lindsay was the founder of *Christ for the Nations Institute* in 1948.

Since then, up to 40,000 students were equipped for ministry. Some of them are in the Mission field and others became very successful pastors of Churches.

In these three volumes of “*The Life and Teachings of Christ*” Gordon discusses the following:

### **Volume one**

- That Jesus Christ is the Son of God
- That the Virgin birth was real
- The part John the Baptist played in the life of Christ
- Josephus’ record of John the Baptist and Herod (Volume 1, chapter 10)
- Mary, Jesus’ birth and boyhood
- The Divinity of Christ
- All His miracles and healings

### **Volume two**

- The Sermon on the Mount (called “*the beatitudes*”)
- All the parables (this is outlined in 203 pages)

### **Volume three**

- The sinful woman (Luke 7)
- The unpardonable sin (Matthew 12)
- The Jews seeking a sign (Matthew 12)
- The woman taken in adultery (John 8)
- The healing of the blind man (John 9)
- The raising of Lazarus (John 11)
- Feeding of the four thousand (Matthew 15)
- The transfiguration (Matthew 17)
- Gives detail concerning the last days of Jesus
- The death and Resurrection of Christ

Lindsay, Gordon: ***Prayer that moves mountains***

Christ for the Nations Inc., P.O. Box 769000, Dallas, TX 75376-9000, 2000

Usefulness of this resource:

The importance of Prayer for the Church to grow

Jesus said: *“Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea, it will be done. And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” (Matt. 21:21, 22)*

Lindsay teaches that we must learn the secret to release this power of prayer God has given us. Then miracles will happen.

That’s what happened to Sarah, Abraham’s wife, through prayer. When Jacob “wrestled with God in prayer”, God protected him from Esau, his brother, who wanted to kill him.

Samson prayed to God, and was delivered from the Philistines.

Jonah prayed in the belly of a fish, and God saved him.

Elijah prayed fire from heaven, and rain to come, after more than three years of drought in the land. And so the list can go on...

Lindsay then writes on “The secret of the presence of God”, teaching us that those who were mighty in prayer recognized God’s presence.

We must know what to pray for, and pray according to God’s will. Lindsay also talks on the “Hindrances to Prayer”.

His teaching on “Agreement in Prayer” according to Matt.18:19

Lindsay also gives guidelines on fasting.

Maxwell, John C.: ***Developing the Leader within you***

Thomas Nelson Inc, Tennessee, USA, 1993

Usefulness:

The importance of equipping leaders for a Church to grow

One of the best books that should give answers on Leadership was written by John C. Maxwell.

Maxwell makes the following clear statement about Leadership by saying:

Everything rises and falls on Leadership.

We find different kinds of Leaders, such as:

|                           |                                                 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The Leading Leader</b> | Is born with leadership qualities               |
| <b>The Learned Leader</b> | Has been with leaders most of his life          |
| <b>The Latent Leader</b>  | Has recently seen leadership and is in training |
| <b>The Limited Leader</b> | Has little exposure to leadership or training   |

There is only one definition for Leadership, and that is:  
*“Leadership is the ability to **influence** others to become followers.”*

A real leader knows the difference between being the **boss** and a **leader**, as illustrated by the following:

The boss drives his workers; the leader coaches them.  
 The boss depends upon authority; the leader on goodwill.  
 The boss inspires fear; the leader inspires enthusiasm.  
 The boss fixes the blame for the breakdown; the leader fixes the breakdown.  
 The boss knows how it is done; the leader shows how.  
 The boss says “go”; the leader says “let’s go”.

Mc Gravan, Donald A.: ***Understanding Church Growth***

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980. Reprinted, February 1986

This resource contributes:

To understanding what Church Growth is all about

McGravan makes a clear statement when he says: “Church Growth is Faithfulness to God.”

Church Growth follows where Christians show faithfulness in finding the lost. *“The goal is not to send powdered milk or kindly messages to the son in the far country. It is to see him walking in through the front door of his father’s house.”*

Mc Gravan says there are many kinds of church growth found in the world today, *“each varying from people to people, from time to time, and denomination to denomination.”*

When he discusses growth in Africa, he uses the term, *“school-approach church growth”*, because by opening schools the church grew.

The Africans who attended these schools, were educated to read the Bible and many became Christians (p.13).

He says that there are three kinds of growth: (p.98)

- (1) Biological growth
- (2) Transfer growth (the increase of certain congregations at the expense of others)
- (3) Conversion growth

Mc Gravan talks on “Helps and Hindrances” in church growth (pp. 165-185).

From page 186 Mc Gravan makes it clear that real “Revival is connected to Church Growth” and this only happens when God visits a Church, a City or a Nation. He says: *“Revival is God’s gift. Man can neither command it, nor make God grant it. God sovereignly gives revival when and where He wills...But God responds to sincere continued prayer.”* (p. 189)

A large portion of his book is about how we should penetrate the different people groups on earth with the gospel of Jesus Christ, because not all groups can be reached with the gospel through the same methods (pp. 207-391).

One of the best ways to reach the world for Christ, is through family and friends (pp. 395-411).

Set goals! (pp. 412-457) *“Nothing focuses effort like setting a goal...It is essential that Christian leaders align their basic purposes with the eternal purpose of God to save men through faith on Jesus Christ. This is the step in the consequent growth and development of the Church. Goal setting helps implement such alignment.”*

Mumford, Bob: ***The King and you***

Flemming, H., Revell Co., Old Tappen, New Jersey, 1974

To understand the importance of the message of the Kingdom of God, for a Church to grow

The New Testament is all about "The Kingdom".

Matthew 4:23 sums it all up: *"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people."*

We will find wherever "the gospel of the kingdom" is preached, that people will be healed and delivered.

The gospel of the Kingdom is summed up by Jesus in Matt.5,6,7 We all know this part of the Bible as The Beatitudes, or in other words, *"Attitudes to be"*. The Principles of God's Kingdom is put together in this wonderful teaching of Christ.

Mumford teaches in this book on all the "Bylaws of the Kingdom". Altogether he explains 15 of these bylaws.

Mumford, Bob: ***Take another look at Guidance***

Life Changers Publishing, P.O. Box 98088, Raleigh, NC 27624, 1999

The usefulness of this book:

To be led by God's Spirit in what He wants us to do to His glory

Mumford gives sound teaching on how God guides His people. He uses harbour lights that one finds at certain river or lagoon mouths when ships have to enter at night time or in heavy mist. God has given us *"three lights in a row"* to help us when we need guidance.

These lights are:

- (1) The Word of God
- (2) The Holy Spirit (inner witness)
- (3) Circumstances

Munroe, Myles: ***Understanding your Potential***

Destiny Image Publishers, Inc. P.O. Box 351, Shippensburg, PA 17257-0351

Bahamas Faith Ministry, P.O. Box N9583, Nassan, Bahamas, 2002

Understanding our Potential will help us to fulfil our purpose in life.

The importance of understanding our potential is shown in the following question asked to Pastor Sunday Adelaya, the senior pastor of The Embassy of God church in Kiev. This church has grown since 1994 from 7 members to 25,000.

The question the author asked Sunday Adelaya on the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2010 was:

*“Is there something special that God used to let your Church grow?”*

His answer was: *“God used the teaching of Potential by Dr. Myles Munroe.”*

**Munroe writes in his book, *Understanding your Potential*, these words:**

*“Everything in life was created with potential and possesses the potential principle. In every seed there is a tree...in every bird a flock...in*

*every fish a school...in every sheep a flock...in every cow a herd...in every boy a man...in every girl a woman...in every nation a generation. Tragedy strikes when a tree dies in a seed, a man in a boy, a woman in a girl, an idea in a mind. For untold millions, visions die unseen, songs die unsung, plans die unexecuted and futures die buried in the past. The problems of our world go unanswered, because potential remains buried.”(Introduction)*

All men are sent to the world with limitless credit, but seldom draw to their full extent (p.1). No man can climb beyond the limitations of his own belief (p.7).

Failure is not the absence of success. Failure is the neglect of trying (p.7).

The potential of everything is related to its source (p.9).  
 Who you are, is related to where you came from (p.17).  
 Your potential is much greater than what you are now (p.30).  
 Munroe answers the question: "Why were you born?" by teaching the readers that God made them to bring glory to Him (p.61). We were born, because God planned our birth for a purpose (p.66).  
 Whenever God gives you a responsibility, He also gives you the ability to meet that responsibility (p.71).  
 God's not trying to make you into something. He's trying to expose the real you He already sees (p.78). Munroe uses a whole chapter for "*Challenge your ability*" (Pp.85-94).

When Munroe writes on "*The key to your potential*" (Pp.95-105), he says: "*The secret to a happy and productive life is remaining attached to your source. If you decide you don't need God, you also have decided never to become all you are capable of being.*"

Jesus said in John 15:4: "Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me."

The potential of a thing cannot be fulfilled without being related to its source. Man came out of God and must remain related to God in order to live (p.113).

In Chapter eleven, Munroe gives the keys to fulfilling your true potential. We have the potential to dominate, rule and subdue the whole earth; to produce after your kind; to change impossibilities into possibilities; to influence physical and spiritual matter; to receive whatever you ask; to do greater works than Jesus did (pp.125-138).

Chapter 12 challenges us: "*Dare to believe your potential*".

### **To summarise Munroe's teaching on Potential:**

Potential is everything that you can be, but haven't become!  
 Potential is everything that you can do, but haven't done yet!  
 Potential is how far you can reach, but haven't touched yet!  
 Potential is what you can reach, but haven't achieved yet!  
 Potential is ability that is not exposed yet!

Murdock, Mike: ***The Law of Recognition***

Published by: Wisdom International Inc., P.O. Box 99, Dallas, TX 75221

Usefulness of this resource:      Discovering your Purpose in Life

This book is about: *“Discovering the gifts, opportunities and relationships that God has already placed in your life.”*

The main teachings in this book are:

- The Law of recognition: *“Everything you need in your life is already in your life, merely awaiting your recognition of it.”*
- Recognition of the voice of the Holy Spirit
- Recognition of your assignment
- Recognition of a God-inspired idea
- Recognition of your dominant gift
- Recognition of the dominant gift in others
- Recognition of the uncommon dream that energizes you
- Recognition of an Intercessor assigned to you
- Recognition of the seed God has given you to sow
- Recognition of the gift of Time
- Recognition of your personal limitations
- Recognition of the problem you are presently assigned to solve
- Recognition of those assigned to you
- Recognition of the Bible as your Master Success Handbook

Prince, Joseph: ***Destined to Reign***

Harrison House Publishers, P.O. Box 35035, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74153, (Fourth print) 2008

Usefulness:

To establish real Biblical Preaching

In order to establish a foundation of real Biblical preaching (more specific the message of "Grace") the following resource will be discussed and explained:

Prince has a large Church in Singapore, counting thousand. His message is all about God's grace. God's gift to us is "no Condemnation".

If we condemn people from our pulpits, we will not be able to help them receive God's "Good News", the Gospel.

In his book he tells the reader that the blood of Jesus protects us from condemnation. We should never feel guilty when we are sick. Weapons will be formed against us, but it will not prosper against us (Isaiah 54:17).

The Church says: "Go and sin no more, and only then will we not condemn you." But Jesus says: "I do not condemn you, therefore go and sin no more."

(This is what He did for the woman in John 8.)

If you are under condemnation, you are doomed to repeat your sin, but if you are under grace, sin will not have dominion over you.

The priest in the Old Covenant did not search the sinner, but searched the lamb that was brought as an offering! The Lamb of God became our sin offering. He was searched and found without blemish.

**A message of this grace of God will fill the Church, not a message of condemnation!**

Sheets, Dutch: ***Intercessory Prayer***

Regal Books, Ventura, California, U.S.A., 1996

Usefulness for this research:

The Power of Prayer, in order to show how important prayer is for a Church to grow, the following will be discussed:

The purpose of this book is to ignite and empower the prayer lives of those who read it.

The answer to why prayer is necessary lies in God's original plan when He created Adam.

God needs men and women to stand between Him and people in need, to stand "in the gap" (Ezek.22:30,31) as Moses, Elijah and Daniel did for God's people.

To "*intercede*" means to "*stand in between*".

Through prayer and intercession we meet the powers of darkness, enforcing the victory Christ accomplished.

Sorge, Bob: ***Exploring Worship***

Oasis House, Lee's Summit, Missouri, 1987

To establish a foundation how Worship should be in the Church, this resource will be reviewed:

Sorge explains that "Praise and Worship" is the very heart of a Church.

Churches grow when praise and worship touch their hearts or Churches split up if this does not touch their hearts.

Praise is not praise until it is vocalized or shown forth. There are both vocal and non-vocal forms of praise, but whatever the form, praise is demonstrated – others are aware that praise is taking place!

We should praise the Lord because we are commanded in His word to do so. Psalm 150 is very clear on this.

This book will teach you **when**, **where** and **how** we should praise the Lord.

This book will also teach you everything about Worship:

- What Worship is
- The differences between Praise and Worship
- How to become a Worshipper
- Planning the Worship Service

## Towns, Elmer L.: ***The Complete Book of Church Growth***

Wheaton, ill.: Tyndale House, 1981

This is one of the best complete resources on Church Growth since 1970 and covers more than 300 pages of excellent research done on this subject:

Towns shares his research on “The 100 largest churches in America; The 100 largest Sunday schools in America; Profiles of the world’s most dynamic churches; Methods of Church growth and What the Bible says about Church growth.

Towns says that *The Complete Book of Church Growth* combines statistical research with Biblical exegesis and informed opinion to provide students and laymen with a complete, accurate, and contemporary view of church growth.

It is hoped that this book will succeed both as a research tool and as a practical guide for churches, a map charting the good roads and the bad, the safe avenues to growth, as well as the treacherous ones. (p.5)

**Part 1** In the first part of this book Towns focuses on “*Sunday School and Church Growth in the seventies and eighties*”.

In the beginning of 1970 some Sunday Schools in America grew to 2000 and 5000 in attendance. The First Baptist Church in Hammond, Indiana, grew to 15 101.

In his later research Towns writes in his book: “*The largest attendance has switched from Sunday School to the preaching service.*”

Whereas, in the early seventies, most churches were growing because of their Sunday Schools, this is seldom the case today. Approximately 90% of most churches have larger morning services than Sunday School attendance (p.14).

### **Part 2 “*Success stories in Church Growth*”**

Towns gives the profiles of twelve churches and various sizes and different purposes, but each in its own way growing and maturing.

### **Part 3 “*Church Growth in church groups*”**

Towns gives his research as it occurs among Fundamentalists; Charismatics; Southern Baptists and Mainline Denominations.

### **Part 4 “*Church Growth methods*”**

This chapter includes explorations of soul-winning evangelism; research and scientific analysis; aggressive leadership and faith and goal setting.

### **Part 5 “*Church Growth and the Bible*”**

What does the Bible say about Church Growth?

What picture or images of the church do we find in Scripture, and how can these ‘church portraits’ be transformed into practical, contemporary church methods?

### **Part 6 “*Authorities talk about Church Growth*”**

Towns discusses some of the main books written on Church Growth.

### **Part 7 Towns gives a list of the 100 largest churches in America and the ten largest Sunday Schools in America**

Warren, Rick: ***The Purpose Driven Life***

Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2002.

To show how important it is that each Church member should discover their purpose, so that they can grow spiritually, the following will be reviewed:

More than 30 million books were sold, and these books changed the lives of millions of Christians and many Churches. It helped people find their real purpose in life.

The following words Rick Warren wrote in this book sums up everything he wants to say concerning our purpose in life. He says:

*“Only the Creator and His Word could reveal your purpose!”*

You were made by God, not vice versa, and life is about letting God use you for His purposes, not you using Him for your purpose!”

Warren says: **This is not a “self-help” book.** It is not about how to cram more activities into an overloaded schedule.

Actually, it will teach you how to do less in life – by focusing on what matters most. It is about becoming what God created you to be.

**God has given us PURPOSES for our lives through the Bible.**

In The Message translation we read: *“It’s in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, He had His eyes on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose He is working out in everything and everyone” (Eph.1:11)*

Wimber, John: ***Power Evangelism.***

Haper & Row Publishers, 10 East 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, New York, NY  
10022 1986

It is all up to God to visit a Church, a village, a town, a city or a nation by His miracle power that will create growth

Wimber begins with teaching concerning "The Kingdom of God".

He says: *"For the duration of his public ministry, Jesus demonstrated that the kingdom of God was nearby healing the sick, casting out demons, and raising the dead. Every miraculous act had a purpose: to confront people with his message that the kingdom had come and that they had to decide to accept or reject it."* (p. 1)

Wimber then gives testimonies of how God used him to help people get their deliverance from the power of the enemy. But there were times that God did not heal people when he prayed. But then he writes (p. 44): *"Today we see hundreds of people healed every month in Vineyard Christian Fellowship services. Many more are healed as we pray for them in hospitals, on the streets, and in homes. The blind see; the lame walk; the deaf hear. Cancer is disappearing. Most importantly for me, as a pastor, the people are taking healing and other supernatural gifts to the streets, leading many, who otherwise would not be open to the message of the gospel, to Christ."*

From page 51 Wilbur explains how God uses a "word of knowledge" to help us reach people with His word.

Wimber's main teaching in his book is to show that God will let His Church grow when the power of the gospel saves, delivers and heals people.

From pages 157 to 185 he has Appendix A and B concerning Signs and Wonders in the Church.

**He explains what God will do when He takes His Church through three different "stages", such as the Pentecostal movement, the Charismatic renewal and the Evangelical Protestants.**