

# enrichment

FALL 2000

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## Church Planting





# ministry matters

BY WAYDE I. GOODALL



## Why Plant a Church?

**C**hurch planting can be one of the most successful forms of church growth. However, it can also be one of the most difficult. We may have peers who tried to plant a church, but it wasn't successful—at least they perceived it wasn't successful. How did they come to this conclusion? Remember, our definition of success (or failure) may be different from God's.

In this issue of *Enrichment*, we want to challenge your thinking on church planting. For those who think you could never plant a church, we want you to consider the possibility of planting or mothering a church. For those who would like to plant a church, but don't know how, we have provided or pointed you to the information you need. For those who think, *America doesn't need another church*, we want you to pray about the masses of people in our country who have not been reached for Christ. And finally, for you who feel God wants you to plant a church but don't think you can, we want to encourage you to go for it.

When talking to church planters, there is a common fear. They have all wondered, *Is this going to work?* In his book, *The Purpose-Driven Church*, Rick Warren says, "The Bible clearly teaches that God has given us a critical role to play in accomplishing His will on earth. Church growth is a partnership between God and man. Churches grow by the power of God through the skilled effort of people. Both elements, God's power and man's skilled effort,

must be present. We cannot do it *without* God, but He has decided not to do it *without us*. God uses people to accomplish His purposes."<sup>1</sup>

### SHOCKING NEWS, A WAKE-UP CALL

In *SoulTsunami*, Leonard Sweet says, "For the first time in U.S. history...we are in the midst of a massive spiritual awakening that the Christian church is not leading. Americans are exhibiting the highest interest in spiritual matters in 50 years, but Christianity is registering the least amount of interest and energy in 50 years.

"The percentage of US American adults attending church has remained about the same during the '80s and '90s, with Protestant church membership actually declining. Forty-nine percent of US Americans attended traditional religious services in 1991, compared with 37 percent in 1996. Eighty percent of the growth through church-growth principles is through transfer, not conversion. There is *not one* county in the US that has a higher percentage of church people than a decade ago."<sup>2</sup>

George Barna recently reported that, "overall, about 7 percent of the adult population—approximately 14 million people—describe themselves as atheistic or agnostic. America has more atheists and agnostics than Mormons (by a 3-to-1 margin), Jews (by a 4-to-1 margin) or Muslims (by a 14-to-1 margin). The total number of atheists and agnostics is equivalent to that of evangelicals."<sup>3</sup>

Agnostics and atheists are looking for

meaning in life; they want meaningful relationships with other people. Most of these people maintain some kind of connection to a Christian church—though it might be inconsistent.<sup>4</sup>

### GOOD NEWS: WE HAVE THE ANSWER

We can't become paralyzed by a fear. We have what people are looking for. We can help them find the real meaning of life, develop healthy relationships, have a positive influence on people, and live morally in an immoral world. The challenge is finding ways to more effectively address the issues with which people are struggling without changing the message. We need to make the Christian faith relevant and comprehensible to those who are disillusioned with Christianity. Church planting can do this because it is invigorating, fresh, and new. As a church builds momentum, it influences a neighborhood or a city. **e**

*Wayde I. Goodall, D.Min., is executive editor of Enrichment and national coordinator of the Ministerial Enrichment Office, Springfield, Missouri.*

### E N D N O T E S

1. Rick Warren, *The Purpose-Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 60.
2. Leonard Sweet, *SoulTsunami* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 410.
3. George Barna, *The Barna Report*, October–December, 1999, 4.
4. Ibid.



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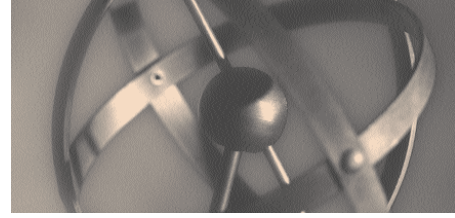












## ASK THE SUPERINTENDENT— Raising Up New Churches

**God is placing in the hearts of people the desire to plant churches. In the Book of Acts, believers went to other towns and planted churches because the Spirit led them.**



*With over 70 churches in America closing their doors each week, it is incumbent upon the church at large to raise up new churches and new leadership. Thomas E. Trask visited with *Enrichment Journal* to discuss church planting. In this quarterly interview, he offers sage advice to church planters.*

### **WHY IS CHURCH PLANTING CRITICAL TO OUR FELLOWSHIP?**

**TRASK:** Church planting is critical; it is the follow-up to evangelism. If people are being saved, there must be an established church to disciple new converts. Church planting places a church in a community to help believers become salt and light. In Mark 2, Jesus told the man who was healed to go back home. Why? Because they knew him and could see the transformation that had taken place in his life.

Church planting must be a priority for the Assemblies of God. Planting new churches is one of the best things that can happen to us as a Fellowship—not because it is a program or because someone said to do it. God is placing in the hearts of people the desire to plant

churches. In the Book of Acts, believers went to other towns and planted churches because the Spirit led them.

### **CAN YOU GIVE EXAMPLES OF CHURCHES AND DISTRICTS THAT HAVE STRATEGIZED AND PLANTED NEW WORKS?**

**TRASK:** A great example is James River Assembly in Springfield, Missouri. The church was in the middle of a major building program, yet they mothered Timbercreek Assembly of God. The pastor of Timbercreek, Paul Kirk, was on staff at James River. He was given 136 committed people to help him start the church. Timbercreek is now averaging between 325-350 in attendance, and they are getting ready to build a new facility. John Lindell, pastor of James River, said the church's growth did not decline during this time, and they are now in their new building. This is a great example, but it must be in the senior pastor's heart to mother or plant a church.

When a district, church, fellowship, or an individual uses the biblical principle of

sowing, they will reap. When I pastored in Detroit, we helped mother seven churches. As a mother church, we gave people, staff, and finances. We never missed these resources and continued to grow. The Michigan District has launched three new churches in the inner city of Detroit, and all of them are doing well. It is because it is God's program. It is right, and it is biblical.

### **WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND TO BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD TO MOTHER A CHURCH?**

**TRASK:** The best way for larger churches to mother new congregations is to buy property in new suburbs. Larger churches can do this because they generally have the financial means. The mother church

staff, this is one of the best ways to plant a church.

### **HOW CAN CHURCHES DECIDE WHERE TO PLANT A CHURCH?**

**TRASK:** First they need to conduct a demographic study to determine where the people are and their social-economic status. (Are they ethnic, minority, blue-collar or upper class?) God isn't fussy who is saved, and we shouldn't be fussy about who we go after. He said go into all the world, not some of the world. Our vision needs to be broad enough to encompass everybody. But a demographic study helps a church know which methods to use in reaching people in the church-plant area.

they will be living and working. The BootCamp is excellent.

If an associate pastor feels called to plant a church, he should go to his senior pastor and say, "I need you to mentor me so when I plant a church, I can go with your blessing and come to you from time to time for counsel." The pastor who mothered the church in Surprise, Arizona, is my brother-in-law. He said to me, "My associate comes to me many times and asks, 'How do I do this? What do I need to do in this circumstance?' " Church planters need someone they can turn to for counsel and guidance.

### **MANY PASTORS ARE BIVOCATIONAL. WHAT IS YOUR COUNSEL TO THEM?**

**TRASK:** In the New Testament, Paul was bivocational; he was a tentmaker. There is nothing wrong with that. The Assemblies of God owes a debt of gratitude to those individuals who were bivocational in the past and who are today. God will reward them. God is aware of the sacrifice they are making. But some churches need to by faith support their pastor so he does not need to work another job.

I went to a church of 28 people that had always had a bivocational pastor. I said, "It's time for someone to believe God to provide for a full-time pastor." There was a time of testing for us, but the bivocational dependency was broken, and the church began to take responsibility for a full-time pastor. When they did, the church began to grow. You may ask, "When does that time come?" Only God knows. The danger comes when pastors try to continue both vocations indefinitely, without ever breaking the cycle, and they can never give themselves to full-time ministry. **e**

## **Church planting places a church in a community to help believers become salt and light.**

can then ask members who live in the area to commit themselves to being a part of the new work. The mothering church can take a staff member and place him or her as pastor in the new church. The mother church then provides finances for the new pastor.

In our situation in Detroit, we paid the new pastor's full salary for the first year so he could devote himself to the work of the Kingdom. We also provided half his salary for the first 6 months of the second year. By the ninth month of the second year he only received a quarter of his salary from us. By the end of 2 years, he was receiving his total support from the daughter church. By having the mother church provide some support in the first 2 years, the pastor was able get on his feet and achieve some financial stability. If a church has the resources, people, and

It's also important to remember that the message of the gospel never changes, but methods can and do change. We need to adapt to meet the needs of the community. It's important to think through the strategy and determine your audience before you go into the church-planting process.

### **PREPARING ONESELF TO PLANT A CHURCH IS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE NEW WORK. HOW IS THIS DONE?**

**TRASK:** The Assemblies of God Division of Home Missions has BootCamps. These camps acquaint people with what they can and should expect when planting a church. The BootCamps prepare planters for some of the hurdles they will face. It is the same as missionaries becoming acquainted with the culture in which





# Church Planting— The Most Successful Form of Church GROWTH

BY ROBERT E. LOGAN



When I ask, “What is the fruit of the apple tree?” many people look at me as if to say, *What a dumb question—apple trees produce apples.* But this is an incomplete answer. The apple is a package of seeds. Within each apple are seeds designed to produce more apple trees. The body of Christ is like the apple tree—producing individual disciples and more congregations.<sup>1</sup>

Fruitful churches produce more and better disciples. Like the apple tree, every church contains seeds that can produce more churches. Healthy churches multiply churches.

The relationship between gospel proclamation and church planting is so intimate it cannot be divorced without doing violence to the mission of the church. The primary mission of the church is to proclaim the gospel and gather believers into local churches where they can be strengthened in their faith and made effective in service. God has placed within all churches the potential to grow and reproduce. In fact, church planting is the most effective means of evangelism and church growth.

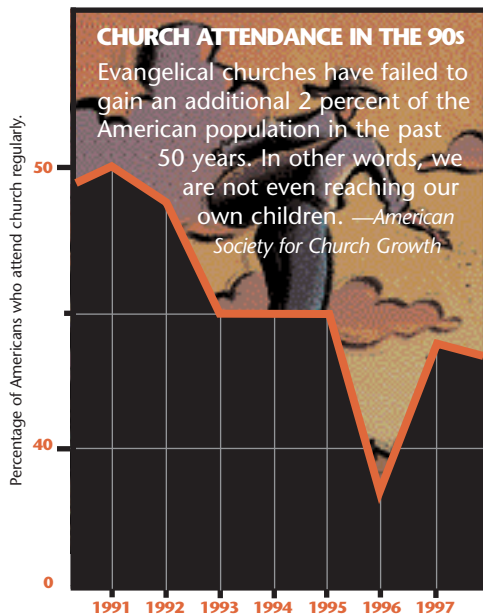
## WHY PLANT NEW CHURCHES?

### New Churches Reach More People

Would you rather have 1 church of 1,000 or 10 churches of 100? Which will reach more people for Christ? Christian Schwarz surveyed over 1,000 churches from 32 countries and 6 continents. He discovered that small churches (averaging 51 in attendance) were 16 times more effective in winning new converts to Christ than megachurches.<sup>2</sup>

Having more entry points into the kingdom of God increases the possibility of people coming to faith in Christ. Ron Gladden, a church-planting leader, asks: "If your city had only one restaurant, would more people eat out?" The answer is obvious. More restaurants increase the possibilities of more people eating out. The same is true for churches. If there are more churches, there is a greater potential for reaching more people with the gospel.

The Valley Foursquare Church is a small congregation in southern California with an average attendance of 43. Yet in the past 6 years they have helped establish more than 20 multiethnic churches. The total attendance of 15 of these churches is more than 2,000.



New churches have life and are vitality attractive to the unchurched person. This is often a necessary component for catalyzing that person's receiving Christ. There is little in life more exciting than the birth of a new baby—such an event

## HOW TO KNOW WHERE CHURCH PLANTING IS NEEDED

List the churches in your area. Find out the seating capacity of each one. Total the number of available seats. Double that number, assuming that two services are needed to hold all the people in every congregation. Compare that number to the total population in the area. You will have a very conservative estimate of the number of people who still need to become disciples of Jesus.

Unless your Jerusalem is extremely small, there is probably a need for at least one more church in your local area. There are undoubtedly many people who will not or cannot be reached by existing churches because of limitations relating to style or physical capacity. Think about increasing your local disciple-making capacity by establishing the need for new churches near your home base.

Jesus said, "Open your eyes and look at the harvest." The opportunities to reach people for Christ through church planting and multiplication are all around us.

—Robert Logan

softens and energizes even the hardest countenances.

### New Churches Reach New People

We are aware of the need for new churches throughout the world. But 70 percent of people in the United States have no meaningful church relationship. The harvest fields surround us. Many people will not be reached without new churches.

Jesus would still tell us today, "Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35).<sup>\*</sup> Look around and you will see that the harvest is very plentiful.

The harvest is also diverse. A motto for many urban centers across North America could be: Walk our streets and tour the world. In the United States, daily newspapers are printed in more than 45 languages. Over 200 groups of foreign origin live here.

One church cannot reach everyone. Rick Warren says, "It takes all kinds of churches to reach all kinds of people." This is true when people speak a different language. But even when the same language is spoken, there are incredible differences.

Consider generational differences. Congregations that are effective in reaching baby boomers are often not as effective reaching Generation X. I discovered this while I was pastoring a primarily boomer church. Dieter Zander, one of our interns, had a vision for reaching people in their twenties. He said the established church did not relate to younger people. The music was too slow and too soft. Sermons about marriage and raising kids and other boomer topics did not relate to single, young people. So, New Song Church was established and grew to 1,000 people, reaching people primarily from Generation X. Most of these people would not have been reached by our boomer church.

New churches can be started to reach every segment of society. The diversity of harvest requires a diversity of churches to make disciples of all people groups.

### New Churches Release New Leaders

Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few" (Matthew 9:37). Church planting provides an opportunity to raise more workers for the harvest. When I graduated from seminary, I spent several months looking for a ministry in an established church. When nothing opened up, my denominational leader approached me about starting a new church. Many leaders realize their full potential by establishing new churches from unchurched people.

We should not send unqualified people as church planters. Careful assessment of the character and competencies of potential new church developers is important. However, my experience in over 20 years of church planting has confirmed that God calls pastors for existing churches and church planters for establishing new churches. Let's not overlook the potential for a greater harvest by finding, developing, and releasing new leaders for church planting.

### New Churches Increase Growth Potential

Christianity has always expanded through the multiplication of churches. The Book of Acts records how Christianity expanded



## WAYS TO START NEW CHURCHES

Decide how your church will be involved in church-planting ministries. There are numerous ways to help start new churches.

### 1. PIONEERING

Commission a church planter (ideally with a small team) to evangelize and make disciples, forming a new church primarily from the harvest.

### 2. BRANCHING

Recruit, train, and send a core group from the parent church to form the nucleus of a new church.

### 3. PARTNERING

Cooperate with one or more congregations to start a new church.

### 4. SUPPORTING

Provide finances, resources, and prayer for a new church with primary leadership and direction coming from another source (denomination or church-planting organization).

### 5. RESTARTING

Close a dysfunctional or dying church and rebirth a new church with new leadership.

### 6. MISSIONS

Invest in apostolic leaders who work cross-culturally to establish church multiplication movements.

—Robert Logan

to the uttermost parts of the world using this method. And this has been true throughout every generation. The church is only one generation away from extinction. You and I are Christians because those who preceded us faithfully reproduced their churches through church planting.

## HEALTHY CHURCHES GROW AND REPRODUCE

Schwarz confirmed that healthy churches are growing churches, making more and better disciples in loving obedience to Christ. His study also showed a clear, positive correlation between the quality of a church and the number of churches it had planted within the last 5 years. Hardly anything demonstrates the health of a congregation as much as the willingness and ability to give birth to new congregations. The opposite is true as well. Hardly anything is a more clear indication of illness than

structures that hinder church multiplication, or at best permit it as an absolute exception.<sup>3</sup>

Reproduction is a basic principle of life for all organisms, including the body of Christ. Churches are not designed by God to be unfruitful; they are designed to grow and reproduce other churches. As churches multiply, the potential harvest increases proportionately. Yet, many pastors and church leaders make excuses about their congregation's lack of involvement in church planting.

Smaller churches think they need to get bigger before giving birth. But a small church with a vision for reaching the unchurched can train workers for the harvest. Tom Nebel, pastor of Community Church in Whitewater, Wisconsin, planted a church in a nearby town when his church attendance was 125. The new church had its first worship service on the Sunday the parent church celebrated its third anniversary.

Larger churches often get distracted with other things and forget the harvest. Since God has entrusted more resources to larger congregations, more will be expected in terms of investing to reach the harvest. Starting new congregations is one of the best ways to reap a greater harvest and maintain evangelistic effectiveness. Rick Warren, founding pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church, while growing the congregation to over 10,000 people, started at least one congregation every year.

## THEREFORE, GO...

Every church can, and should, be a strategic player in fulfilling the Great Commission through starting and multiplying new congregations. Church planting is the most effective way to advance God's kingdom.

Set your eyes on the world, just as Jesus directed His disciples when He told them to begin in Jerusalem and go to the uttermost parts of the earth. Seek the Lord's guidance as you develop a strategy to multiply congregations in loving obedience to Christ's command. **e**

*\*Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.*

Robert E. Logan is executive director of CoachNet, a consulting and training organization that equips leaders to multiply disciples, groups, leaders, churches, and movements. Through [www.coachnet.org](http://www.coachnet.org), pastors and leaders can access resources and network with other practitioners to reap a greater harvest.



## E N D N O T E S

1. David Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: A Guide for Home and Foreign Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980).
2. Christian Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches* (Carol Stream: ChurchSmart Resources, 1996), 46–48.
3. *Ibid.*, 69.



When we planted this church, we had 12 members and I always knew who was absent.



When our church reached 40, I always knew which leaders were absent.



When we broke the 200 barrier, I always knew how many old timers were absent.



When we reached 800, I knew how many civic leaders were absent.



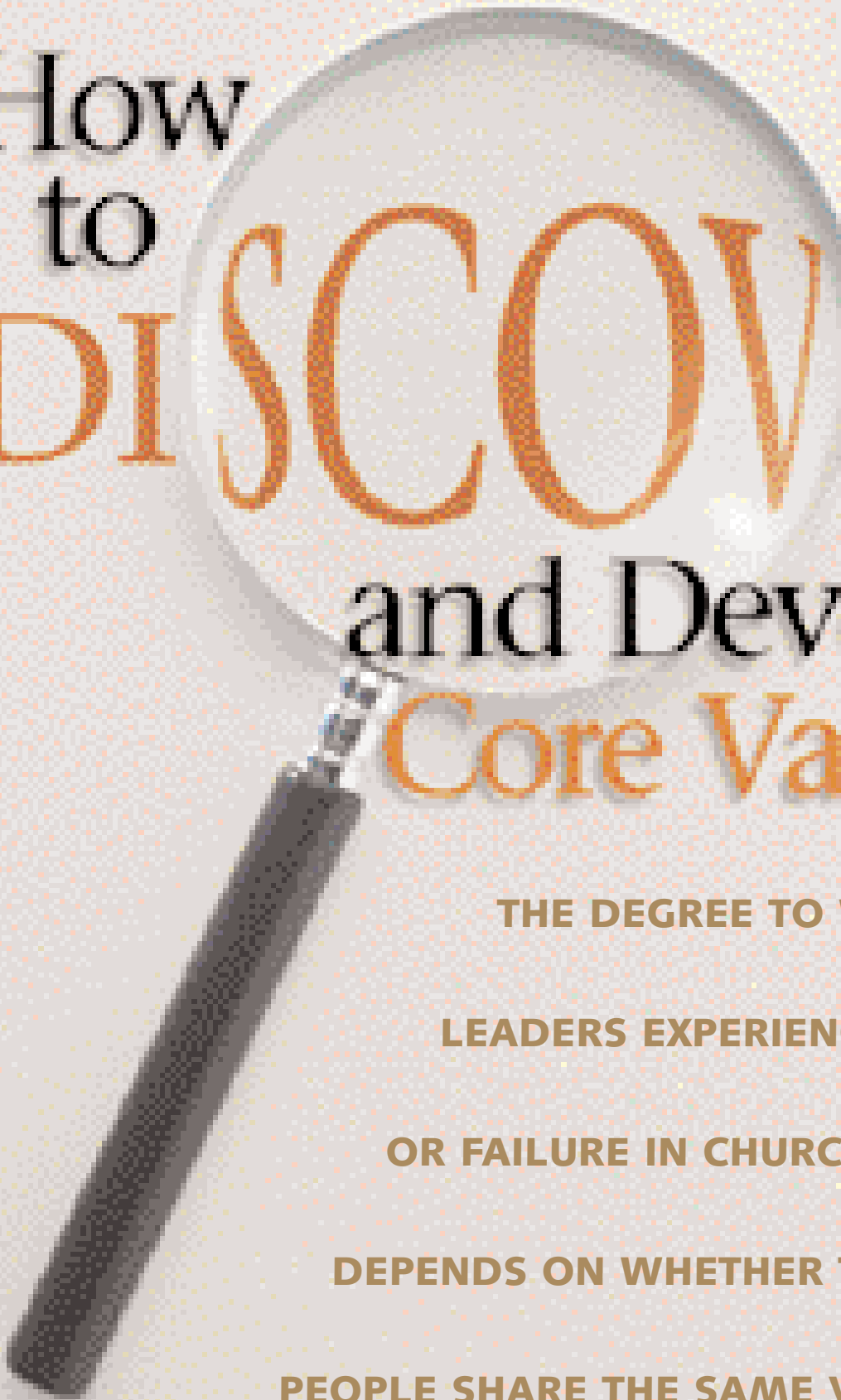
When our church broke 2,000, I always knew what percentage of our county was absent.



No wonder my wife calls me the absentminded pastor.







How  
to  
DISCOVER  
and Develop  
Core Values

THE DEGREE TO WHICH  
LEADERS EXPERIENCE SUCCESS  
OR FAILURE IN CHURCH PLANTING  
DEPENDS ON WHETHER THEIR CORE  
PEOPLE SHARE THE SAME VALUES.

**F**rom the church planter's perspective, vision and strategy are critical to the vitality of the church. However, discovering and developing core values is also a key to successful church planting. A church's values answer the fundamental ministry question: Why do we do what we do? Proper core values are foundational; they are the essence of what makes a great church. Tell me the core values of the church you're going to plant, and I'll tell you about your church.

**B Y A U B R E Y M A L P H U R S**

#### **THE IMPORTANCE OF CORE VALUES**

Why are an organization's core values important?

**1. Values determine a church's ministry distinctives.** No two ministries are alike. Some churches focus on biblical preaching and teaching, others on evangelism, and still others on counseling or the family. This is why it is acceptable to start churches even when there are other churches nearby. Different churches reach different people. The determiner is the essential values.

**2. Values dictate people's personal involvement in the church.** Church planters can spare themselves and their churches grief by communicating their values to all who are considering becoming a part of the church. Communicate the values early in the life of the church and repeatedly throughout the life of the church. Encourage those with similar values to join. (I call this values alignment or a ministry match.) Encourage those with different values to look for a church that is more in line with their values.

**3. Values communicate what's important.** Values signal your ministry's bottom line and make it clear

what you believe is God's heart for your church. If a core value is evangelism, make it known.

**4. Values help people embrace positive change.** Changes in American society are having an impact on churches. Some of the changes have been good and some bad. The key question is: Does this change agree with or contradict the ministry's core values? Reject that which contradicts, and accept that which agrees.

**5. Values affect the church's overall behavior.** Values shape the entire organization, determine the ministry's direction, and dictate every decision you make and every dollar you spend.

**6. Values inspire people to action.** The shared beliefs of leaders and followers are the motivators that energize people to take action. Values infuse ministry with meaning. They touch people at a deeper level that provides a sense of cause and brings significance to their lives.

**7. Values enhance credible leadership.** Many leaders, as well as their churches, are values-driven and the ministries they build reflect those values. As go the leaders, so goes the

church. Leaders with good values build ministries of integrity.

**8. Values shape a ministry's character.** Values are the qualities that make up an organization's character. This character determines how an organization conducts its ministry.

**9. Values contribute to ministry success.** An organization's ingrained ownership and understanding of its core beliefs make it possible for its people to be successful in ministry.

#### **DEFINING CORE VALUES**

A church's primary values are defined as its constant, passionate, biblical core beliefs that drive its ministry. This definition has five key elements.

**1. Core values are constant.** Core values change very slowly. Change usually takes from 2 to 4 years. This is why it is hard to revitalize an established church. It takes time to change people's values. Consequently, it's critical that you begin with the right values.

**2. Core values are passionate.** *Vision* is a seeing word; *passion* is a feeling word. Core values touch the heart and elicit strong emotions. They stir

## STATING CORE VALUES

A church leader asked, “Is there a way to express our church’s aspirational values?” The church was in a revitalization process, and an important step was the discovery of core values. When the leaders audited the ministry’s core values, a lack of certain vital values startled them. The same process applies to a church plant to discover if it is missing certain vital values.

There are several ways a ministry can articulate its actual and aspirational values. A ministry needs to communicate the values it has implemented as well as those it wants to implement. The following method focuses on the credo that is key for values communication. The Core Values Statement adds the aspirational values at the end.

### CORE VALUES STATEMENT

The following presents the core values of First Church. We desire that these values define and drive this ministry in the context of a warm and caring environment.

### CHRIST’S HEADSHIP

We acknowledge Christ as the Head of our church and submit ourselves and all our activities to His will and good pleasure (Ephesians 1:22,23).

### BIBLICAL FOCUS

We strive to teach God’s Word with integrity and authority so seekers find Christ and believers mature in Him (2 Timothy 3:16).

### AUTHENTIC WORSHIP

We desire to acknowledge God’s supreme value and worth in our personal lives and in the corporate, contemporary worship of our church (Romans 12:1,2).

### PRAYER

We rely on private and corporate prayer in the conception, planning, and execution of all the ministries and activities of this church (Matthew 7:7–11).

### SENSE OF COMMUNITY

We ask all our people to commit to and fully participate in biblically functioning small groups where they may reach the lost, exercise their gifts, be shepherded, and grow in Christlikeness (Acts 2:44–46).

### FAMILY

We support the spiritual nurture of the family as one of God’s dynamic means to perpetuate the Christian faith (2 Timothy 1:5).

### GRACE-ORIENTATION

We encourage our people to serve Christ with love and gratitude rather than guilt and condemnation (Romans 6:14).

### CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

We will constantly evaluate our forms and methods, seeking cultural relevance and maximum ministry effectiveness for Christ (1 Chronicles 12:32).

The following are the aspirational values of our church. While we’ve not yet arrived, we’re working to make them a reality in this congregation:

### LOST PEOPLE

We value unchurched, lost people and will use every available Christ-honoring means to pursue, win, and disciple them (Luke 19:10).

### MOBILIZED CONGREGATION

We seek to equip all our uniquely designed and gifted people to effectively accomplish the work of our ministry (Ephesians 4:11–13).

### MINISTRY EXCELLENCE

Since God gave His best (the Savior), we seek to honor Him by maintaining a high standard of excellence in all our ministries and activities (Colossians 3:23,24).

—Audrey Malphurs, Ph.D.

feelings that can move people to biblical, Christ-honoring ministry.

**3. Core values are biblical.** The true test of a credo or values statement is: Does it square with Scripture? The statement doesn't have to be found in the Bible, but it shouldn't contradict the Bible.

**4. Core values are core beliefs.** People use various synonyms for values: *precepts, principles, tenets, standards, or assumptions*. (Some of these terms may not equate with values.) Values are your primary or core beliefs. A belief is a conviction or opinion you hold to be true based on limited evidence or proof.

**5. Values drive the ministry.** Values are the deeply ingrained drivers behind the behavior of a church. This includes the decisions made, money spent, risks taken, problems solved, goals set, and priorities determined.

## KINDS OF VALUES

We can refine the above definition by analyzing five different kinds of values a planted church may hold.

**1. Conscious versus unconscious values.** Most credo or values fall under the latter. Leaders must discover and articulate the church's primary values so members may know why they're doing what they're doing. This begins with leaders discovering their own values, because their values will shape the values of the emerging church. Leaders must move their own values from an unconscious to a conscious state.

**2. Shared versus unshared values.** The degree to which leaders experience success or failure in church planting depends on whether their core people share the same values. Shared values foster high levels of loyalty, provide a consensus over key decisions, promote a strong work ethic, and reduce levels of stress. Make sure people who join your team have the same values.

**3. Personal versus organizational values.** I ask my pastoral students to discover their organizational beliefs before they join a ministry. Those who take an established church must discover that church's credo and make sure their

values reasonably align with that church's values. Otherwise, the honeymoon will be short-lived. Church planters, on the other hand, bring their personal values to the planted church. Their values will become the church's organizational values. That's one of the advantages of church planting.

**4. Actual versus aspirational values.** Actual values are the beliefs that a church or church planter owns and acts on regularly. Aspirational values are not presently owned, but the church or church planter desires to attain to those values. It is important that a leader distinguish between the two because a leader risks losing credibility when drafting a values statement. For example, to state that a church values evangelism, but no one is being saved, hurts the church's integrity. Does this mean that a church can't include aspirational values in their values statement? (See sidebar for answer.)

**5. Good versus bad values.** Every ministry will have good and bad values. Bad values are beliefs such as compromise, prejudice, intolerance, or the abuse of power. It is important for the church to become aware of bad values and change them.

## DISCOVERING VALUES

Church planters determine the core values of their church by discovering their own core values. Several techniques will assist you in values discovery.

1. Brainstorm with other church leaders to uncover key beliefs. Record the results on a sheet of paper.

2. Collect and study various value statements or credos of other churches. Appendices A–C in my book, *Values-Driven Leadership*, provides samples.

3. Use the storyboard process to discover your vital values. This is the process I use when I work with churches to help them discover their values (*Advanced Strategic Planning*, pages 30–32).

4. Take the following abbreviated Core Values Audit.

## CORE VALUES AUDIT

Rate each of the core values below from


1 to 5, 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. Be very stingy with assigning 5s.

- \_\_1. Godly servant leadership
- \_\_2. A well-mobilized lay ministry
- \_\_3. Bible-centered preaching/teaching
- \_\_4. The poor and disenfranchised
- \_\_5. Creativity and innovation
- \_\_6. World missions
- \_\_7. Passionate evangelism
- \_\_8. Authentic worship
- \_\_9. Intercessory prayer
- \_\_10. A well-kept facility
- \_\_11. The status quo
- \_\_12. Strong families
- \_\_13. Cultural relevance
- \_\_14. Lost people
- \_\_15. Warm fellowship
- \_\_16. Biblical community
- \_\_17. Social justice
- \_\_18. Faithful service
- \_\_19. Giving/tithing
- \_\_20. Civil rights
- \_\_21. Other

List the core values—no more than 10—that received a rating of 4 to 5.

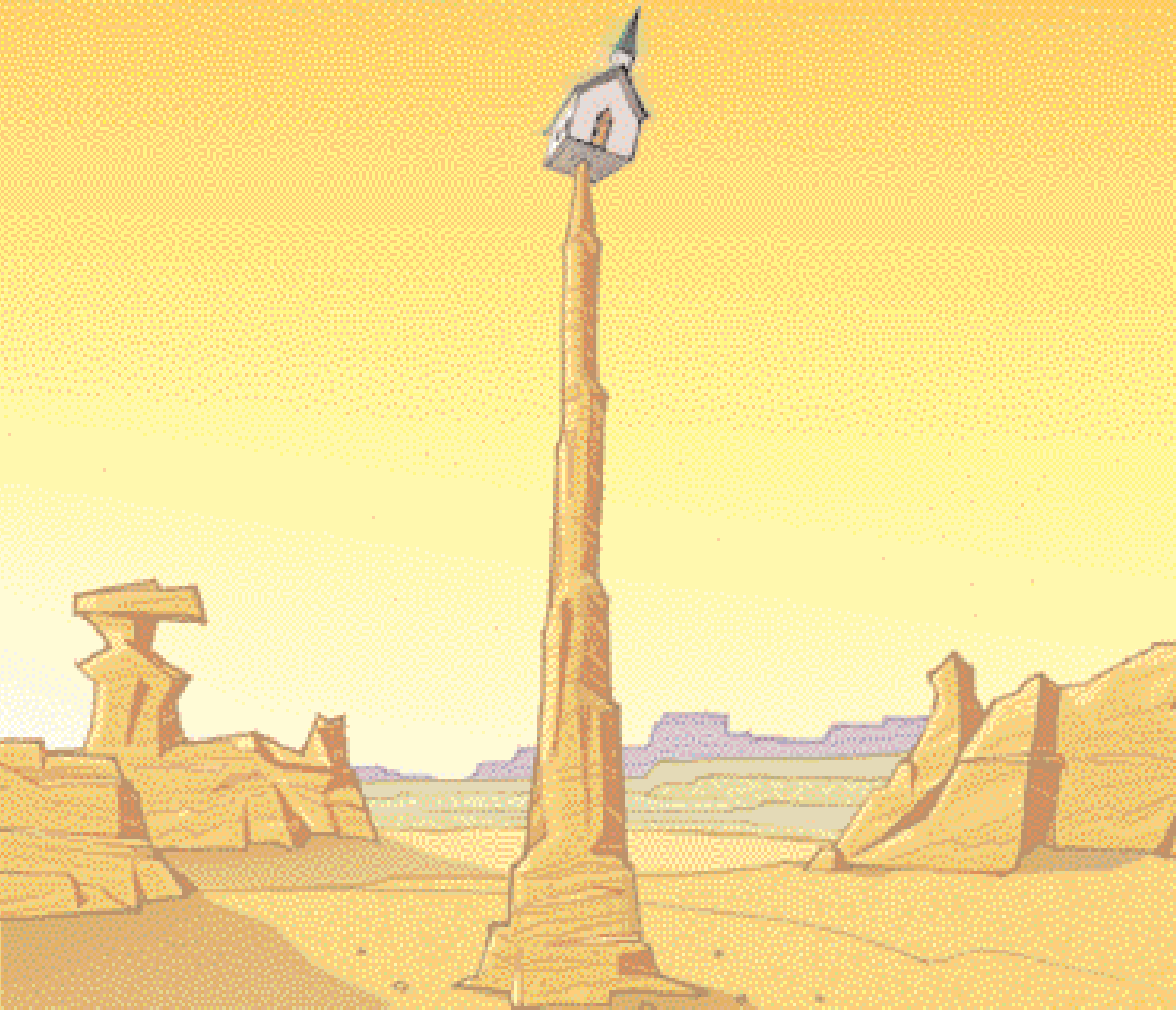
## DEVELOPING CORE VALUES

Once you've discovered your values, develop them. This involves writing your values statement or credo. Publish this credo and make it available to those who are a part of or desire to be a part of your ministry. There are numerous ways to articulate a values credo (see Appendices A–C in *Values-Driven Leadership*).

A key concept in church planting is vision. Vision is important. However, of equal if not greater importance are ministry values. As a church planter, discover, discuss, develop, refine, and display your ministry core values. God will use this in your ministry to have a significant spiritual impact in the 21st century. 

*Aubrey Malphurs, Ph.D., former pastor and church planter, currently teaches at Dallas Theological Seminary and has a training and consulting ministry with churches and denominations. He has written several books on church ministry and leadership.*





**TOO MANY CHURCHES RACE HEAD FIRST INTO  
NO-MAN'S-LAND, AND THEN LANGUISH, NEVER BREAKING  
THROUGH THE CRITICAL GROWTH BARRIERS  
NECESSARY TO FLOURISH.**



Every year, over 1 million people in this country start a business. Forty percent of them will close by the end of the first year. Within 5 years, more than 80 percent of them will fail. Of the 20 percent that make it past the first 5 years, 80 percent won't make it past the second 5.

The statistics are about the same for new churches, and church-planting studies with denominations bear this out. Just as there are reasons why new businesses fail, there are reasons for new church failures. Having worked with church planters for several years and having planted a new church, I have seen some common problems in

must be present within the founding leaders. These gifts are: leadership, communication, and evangelism. Be brutal on this evaluation. There is a difference between wanting to lead and being gifted to lead. And when it comes to communication, have someone besides your spouse and family affirm your ability to speak. Ministry is through spiritual gifts; and if the proper gifts are not present, the going will be tough.

**Lack of Money**

New churches cost more and tend to bring in less during the first few years through offerings than church planters

Denominations must give church planters the resources they need, and church planters must make sure they have the proper funding.

**Wandering in No-man's-land**

New churches also fail because they are wandering in no-man's-land regarding the people they are trying to reach. This is particularly the case for those churches wishing to be contemporary rather than traditional, or seeker-targeted rather than oriented toward the already convinced.

No-man's-land is when you are too seeker-sensitive to reach large numbers

# WHY NEW

churches that fail or do not flourish.

Proverbs 21:31 says, "The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the Lord" (NIV). God brings whatever victory may result from our efforts, but the horse is ours to prepare.

At Mecklenburg's New Work Conference, we cover dozens of critical issues related to new church health and growth, including a session outlining

think. Many new churches submerge because they don't have sufficient capital to stay afloat. Too many let trite phrases, such as "God's work done God's way will never lack God's supply," flow from their lips in response to this critical need. In reality, the New Testament speaks of churches in financial need, without any indication of a lack of spirituality on the part of the church itself. This provides a

of believers, but you're not seeker-targeted enough to reach large numbers of seekers. By being in the middle, you end up reaching no one. If your vision is to be seeker-targeted, be seeker-targeted. Don't have 30 minutes of highly participatory praise and worship for believers, followed by a Christianity 201 or 301 message, and then throw in an offering disclaimer, casual dress, and drums, and think you're a seeker-

# CHURCHES FAIL

the top 12 reasons new works fail. Here are five that often contribute to a church's failure to prepare for the battle.

**REASONS WHY CHURCHES FAIL**

**Lack of Ministry Gifts**

Many new churches fail because the point leader or leadership team lack the ministry gifts needed to plant a successful church. Certain gifts are essential for a successful start of a church. One person does not need to have them all, but they

responsibility for more mature churches to step up their giving (2 Corinthians 8). New churches must have working capital to sustain themselves and invest in growth until they are self-sufficient. Lack of money sets up a self-defeating cycle. Since there is barely enough money to get by, a church can't invest in growth through additional staff, better facilities, or efforts such as direct mail campaigns. Yet without growth, the church remains financially stagnant.

targeted church. You're not. Define your vision for the church, and then be pure in its presentation and operation. Too many churches race headfirst into no-man's-land, and then languish, never breaking through the critical growth barriers necessary to flourish.

**Failure To Contextualize**

Other new works fail to contextualize. They take something from outside their context and put it into a form for their

context. The impetus behind many new churches is an excitement about a particular church that sparked the imagination and vision of those desiring to plant a church. These leaders try to replicate or model that church. When leaders do this, they often fail to do the hard, creative work of taking that model and shaping it to their unique situation. The principles and philosophies behind most of the large, successful, fast-growing churches will translate anywhere, but there are some areas that need to be adjusted: type of music, degree of participation that a seeker may want or need, the style of worship, dress code, and the selection of sermon topics.

Mecklenburg Community Church is known as a seeker-targeted church. But when compared to other well-known churches, such as Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago or Saddleback Valley Community Church outside of Los Angeles, there are major stylistic and structural differences. It's great to have models, but let the model be just that—a model, not a monolith.

### Small-Church Mentality

A final mistake common among new churches is a small-church mentality that permeates the entire community of

faith. Tom Watson, founder of IBM, was asked why the company had become successful. Here are his words: "IBM is what it is today for three special reasons. First, at the very beginning, I had a clear picture of what the company would look like when it was finally done. Second, once I had that picture, I asked myself how a company like that would need to act. Third, IBM has been successful because after I had a picture of how IBM would look when the dream was in place and how such a company would need to act, I realized that unless we began to act that way from the very beginning, we would never get there. For IBM to become a great company it would need to act like a great company long before it ever became one."

One of the keys to Mecklenburg's rapid growth as a new church—from a single family to over 2,000 in average weekly attendance in 6 years—was that we began as a small church with a big-church mindset. This played itself out in every conceivable way—every service and every event was done as if a thousand people were going to show up. And that is one reason why a thousand people eventually did. In many churches, just about everything they do—announcements, recognizing people,

demeanor, levels of quality—is done as a little church, in little church style. This may seem laid-back and cozy at first, but it breeds a small-church mentality that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

### IT'S JUST PLAIN HARD

While these five reasons explain why many new works fail, there are many more of equal importance. The bottom line is that planting a church is hard work. I laugh every time I hear someone say that starting a church—instead of working toward the transition or revitalization of an existing church—is the easy way to go. They obviously have never planted a church. Different problems? Yes. But easier? Hardly. But it can be done. The key is preparing our horse for battle and then trusting God for the victory. **e**

*James Emery White is the founding and senior pastor of Mecklenburg Community Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. He is the author of Rethinking the Church and A Search for the Spiritual. His most recent book is You Can Experience a Spiritual Life.*



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**Church planter's first ministerial meeting.**

### CHURCH PLANTERS CONFERENCE

The New Work Conference, sponsored by Mecklenburg Community Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, is an international conference uniquely designed for church planters and their teams who wish to plant contemporary churches designed for the unchurched. Offered each year in March and September, the New Work Conference is unique in its concentration on the critical issues facing new churches from conception through the first 5 years. For an informational brochure, call 1-704-598-9800, or log on to Mecklenburg's web site at [www.mecklenburg.org](http://www.mecklenburg.org) for access to conference and registration information.







WHY

ANOTHER

CHURCH?



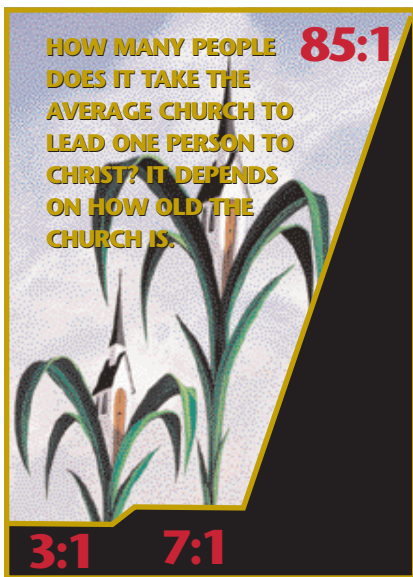
BY WARREN D. BULLOCK

**A** pastor was emphatically registering his concern. "A new church is not needed in this part of the city," he exclaimed. "My church will be affected negatively by a new church coming here. We have this area already covered."

This pastor was reacting to our district's Home Missions Department's decision to plant a church several miles from his assembly, but in the same general area of the city. This was not the narrow response of an inflamed pastor. This was a man with integrity, who sincerely believed that planting a new church was the wrong thing to do, especially when his church was struggling.

His concern cannot be discounted. Why should new churches be planted when many of our existing churches are struggling? Is it wisdom to keep adding churches when present congregations have plateaued or are declining?

Elmer Towns observes that “God’s primary method of evangelizing a new community is by planting a New Testament church to reach the area with the gospel.”<sup>1</sup> A study done by Fuller Theological Seminary draws these conclusions:



1-3 YEARS OLD 4-7 YEARS OLD 10 YEARS & OLDER  
—Fuller Theological Seminary study

- In a church that is 1 to 3 years old, it takes three people to evangelize one person.
- In a church that is 4 to 7 years old, it takes seven people to lead one person to Christ.
- In a church that is 10 years and older, it takes 85 people to win 1 person to the Lord.<sup>2</sup>

New churches are far more successful in bringing people to conversion than established churches. Even if none of our existing churches are struggling, we should plant churches for the sake of winning souls. That is the mission of our Movement—reaching a lost world for Christ. We concur with C. Peter Wagner who says, “The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches.”<sup>3</sup>

If this is true, why would any minister object to church planting, even in

his or her city? Several issues create problems for pastors when confronted with a new church planted not far from them.

### COMPETITION VS. MONOPOLY

The word *competition* more properly applies to the business or sports world, not the church. As church leaders we are not inclined to admit we view a neighboring church as competition. We are quick to affirm our yoke with fellow ministers in a common cause. We do not speak in terms of having a monopoly on a community or specific geographical area of a city. But let a church planter invade our territory, then both words—*competition* and *monopoly*—come sharply into focus. Like my pastor friend mentioned above, we may not initiate a frontal assault on the church-planting project, but we will do what we can to influence the decision to plant that church somewhere else.

Living in greater Seattle where Microsoft is located, we are deluged by media reports concerning whether or not Microsoft is a monopoly. The Justice Department alleges, and the judge has agreed, that Microsoft has developed into a monopoly by squelching competition, undercutting other companies, and buying out competitors. In other words, Microsoft wants to be the only computer game in town.

If pastors develop the Microsoft mentality, if they view their communities territorially, if any new venture is viewed as competition, then that pastor will oppose church planting no matter how effective it is in reaching people. That pastor’s turf-consciousness overrides his understanding of biblical mission.

### EFFECTIVENESS

No matter how effective and fruitful our churches might be, they are still no match for the thousands, even millions, who still need Christ. Since some churches are not effective and fruitful, then the need is even more overwhelming. More and more churches are needed to bring about the harvest for which we so earnestly pray.

When talking to objecting pastors about church planting, I often ask these questions:

- How much has your community grown in the last 5 years?
- How much has your church grown in the last 5 years?
- What is the projected growth for your community in the next 5 years?
- Based on your growth rate from the last 5 years, how many do you expect to win for Christ in your growing community in the next 5 years? Five years from now, will there be anyone in your community left to reach for Christ?

If the answer to the last question is, “Yes,” then maybe church planting is an option that needs to be considered.

I do not ask these questions to put pastors on the spot. I am trying to get them to understand that no matter how effective a church is, no matter how fruitful a group of churches may be, there are still more people to win than we are winning. If we can plant one more church where the gospel is preached, the lost have one more venue where they can hear the good news that Jesus loves them and died for them.

Some ministers believe that one large, effective church is better than four or five church plants that are just muddling along. That is probably true, but it speaks more to our methods of church planting than to the principle of whether they should be planted. The fact “50 percent of all Assemblies of God church plants close within 5 years of opening”<sup>4</sup> tells us we can be more effective in our church-planting methodology. But that does not annul the fact more churches reach more people.

### A/G CHURCH CLOSINGS BY THE DECADE

<b>1971-80</b>	1,362—136.2/yr.
<b>1981-90</b>	1,648—164.8/yr.
<b>1991-98</b>	1,701—212.6/yr.

—Sherri Doty, A/G statistician

Reporting periods have varied through the years. As of December 1981, reports are based on the calendar year ending December 31.



## TOP 10 OBJECTIONS TO PLANTING CHURCHES

The following are statements spoken by some who are opposed to or disinterested in planting new churches. Thank God many do not feel this way. But consider these actual objections, their possible meanings, and the offered insight.

1. "It is the district's responsibility to start new churches, not our church's."

**Possible interpretation:** We don't believe it is our responsibility. Or, we don't want to accept the responsibility.

**Consider this:** God created every living organism to reproduce after its own kind. This means that plants reproduce plants, animals reproduce animals, humans reproduce humans, Christians should reproduce Christians, and churches should reproduce churches.

2. "We don't want to be just another church of 100 (or any specific size)."

**Possible interpretation:** We want to grow big; and if we start another church, it will hinder our own growth because it will take away from our church and be in "competition."

**Consider this:** This view looks at planting another church as "losing people." God wants us to view it as investing. Investing is done in faith believing that there will be a bountiful return.

3. "We don't need more small churches."

**Possible interpretation:** I don't believe that new churches will grow any larger than the other small ones I see.

**Consider this:** Most churches that are large started small at some time. Very few large churches started with many. We must believe that God will take our efforts and create a large church with every new church plant.

4. "But we first need to grow until we're large before we should consider parenting another church."

**Possible interpretation:** We want to ensure our own security by being large before we have someone else preaching the same gospel in our town.

**Consider this:** This often is a self-centered attitude, an inward look. Church planting develops outward-looking attitudes that helps one's church become more evangelistic. Therefore, the parent church also grows.

5. "But we don't have any people with whom to start a church."

**Possible interpretation:** I am not aware of any person(s) that God has prepared to receive Christ and/or be a part of the new church.

**Consider this:** It was when the priests stepped into the water that the Jordan began to recede. Sometimes it takes a step of faith before we become aware of the preparations God has already made.

6. "I don't believe in adding another small church to the many small churches already in our city. I believe a large church can have a bigger impact on a community."

**Possible interpretation:** I believe a large church can reach everyone or at least more who are reachable. We don't think another church can be justified because the measure of their impact will not be as great as a large church.

**Consider this:** A larger church may have a larger overall impact on a community at large. But it is a fallacy to think that a single church, though large, can impact everyone. Other churches will make contact with people and impact people whose lives may never be touched by the large church.

7. "I don't want another church in my town."

**Possible interpretation:** I am against someone else preaching the gospel of Christ in my town. I want the only spotlight to shine on my church and me.

**Consider this:** There's no need to comment on this.

8. "Why do we need another church in my town? Can't everyone just come to my church?"

**Possible interpretation:** I think we should be able to please everyone. Or I think they should accept our church and our ministry even if they feel uncomfortable or it is not to their liking.

**Consider this:** Every church has its own personality, Christian culture, and style. Seldom can one church minister adequately to everyone. It takes many churches to reach all types of people.

9. "We don't have the money. I don't see how we can do it."

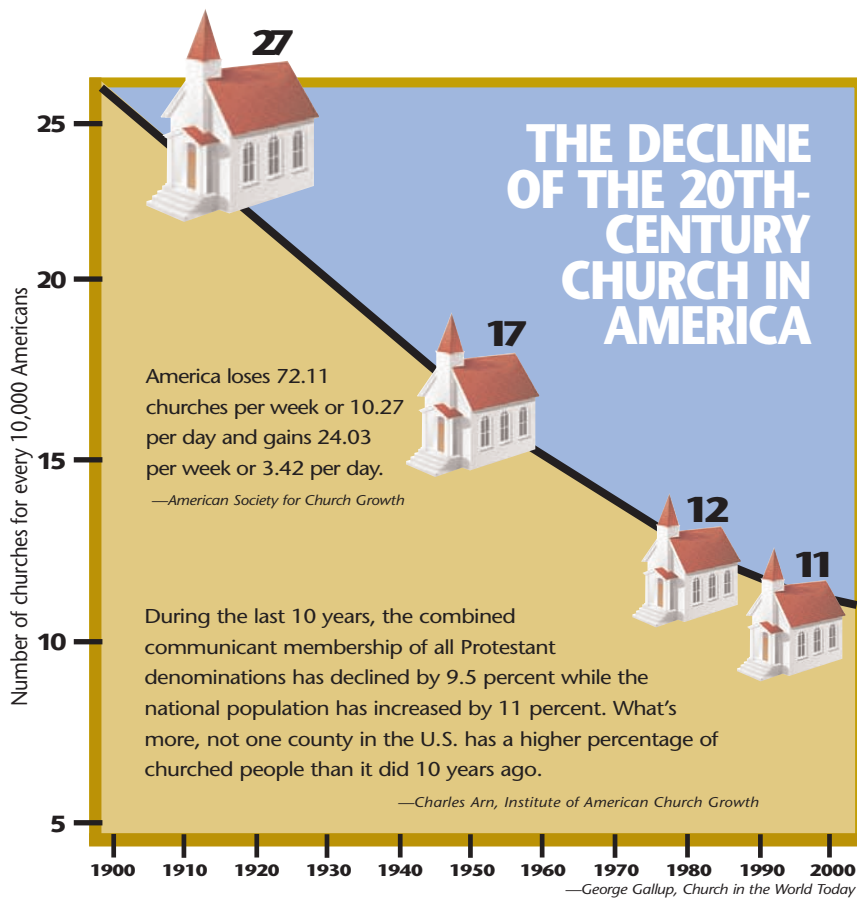
**Possible interpretation:** I'm not sure God will provide if we begin moving in the direction of starting another church.

**Consider this:** "God owns the cattle on a thousand hills." He can sell some anytime He needs the cash. Begin to do something great for God, and He will supply the money.

10. "We are too small a church to parent another church."

**Consider this:** Small churches have often been involved in starting other churches. Do what you can. Perhaps two or more churches can cooperate to plant a new church.

*Arden K. Adamson is secretary and Home Missions director for the Wis./N. Mich. District. Reprinted from American Horizon, volume 8, number 4. Used with permission.*



### PASTORAL INSECURITY

Pastors can live at high levels of denial. They can oppose church planting from a demographic perspective, base their case on Assemblies of God policy, and argue for quality not quantity. But they have yet to come to grips with the inner realities. They may deny it, but their objections to church planting are rooted in threats to their security. They may be concerned about:

- The loss of people. "Maybe the new pastor will be so charismatic that he will draw some of my people away from my church."
- The loss of reputation. "Is the district planting a church in my area because they think I haven't done a good job?"
- The sense of failure. Perhaps their church is struggling and declining, and the new church simply adds to their frustration over lack of growth.

These concerns are not invalid, but the Lord must help us see that Kingdom issues are more important than you and me. Church planting is not about us, but about the lost. Our own insecurities dare not inhibit what God wants to do in building His church. Our sense of failure

and loss must be brought to the Cross for release and acceptance. Our security rests in the One who was nailed to that Cross and has now been raised from the dead. We trust confidently in Him.

One further question remains. As a district superintendent, I have often heard it: "Why not help the struggling churches instead of planting new churches?" Or, "If I received as much money, personal attention, and help as the church planter, my church would do just as well as his."

From my perspective it is not an either/or situation, but both/and. It is not a matter of only planting churches and doing nothing for those who are struggling. We must do both. But turning a declining church around is often more difficult than planting a new church. Both require sacrifice and hard work, but the payoff comes much faster in the new work.

Our district has had some success in mothering struggling churches. Just as a larger church would mother a new church, we ask a larger church to take an existing church under its wing and nurture it to health. It requires commitment of ministry and financial resources. It may, but does not always, require release

of people to that smaller church. It may even mean a change in pastoral leadership. This is why the adoption by the mother church may be best completed during a pastoral transition.

The biggest challenge in this process is getting the smaller church to accept the mothering of the larger church. This is especially true when the smaller church is sovereign. In some cases, the congregation would rather preserve its independence than submit to help from a nurturing church. Consequently, the church continues to fossilize and becomes a great argument for a new church plant. However, when both of the churches and pastors agree on the mother-daughter relationship, it can provide the means to develop a struggling, unhealthy church into a thriving, healthy church.

Both planting churches and helping struggling churches must be done. If we do one to the exclusion of the other, we can become unbalanced and lose focus.

When we consider the lostness of humanity, the numbers of people yet to be reached for Christ, and the nearness of Christ's return, we don't have time to quibble over how to extend Christ's kingdom. If church planting is the answer in a certain city, let's do it. If undergirding and strengthening an existing church is the answer, let's do it. If doing both is what's needed, let's do it. Let's cooperate in fulfilling Jesus' promise, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). **e**

Warren D. Bullock is superintendent, Northwest District of the Assemblies of God, Everett, Washington.



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2. Division of Home Missions, "Fuller Theological Study" in *American Horizon* (Vol. 8, No. 4), 13.
3. C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura: Regal Books), 11.
4. Jim Allen as quoted in *American Horizon*, (Vol. 8, No. 4), 13.



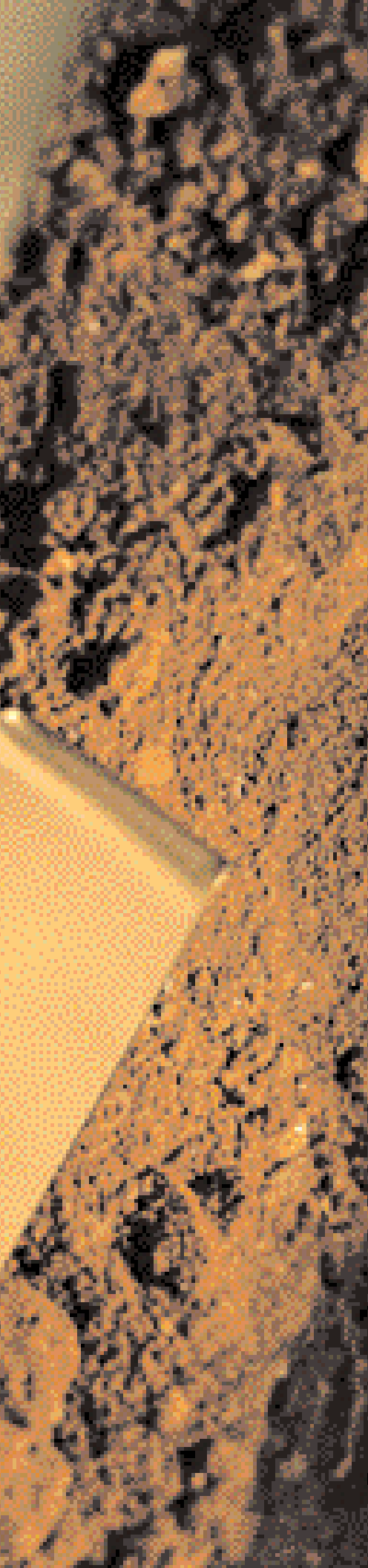




# The Plan in Planting

B Y P A U L E . D R O S T

CHURCH PLANTING IS THE HEART OF GOD, AND HE IS CALLING HIS CHURCH BACK TO THE PRIORITY OF BIRTHING NEW CHURCHES. THE LAST DECADE HAS NOT BEEN GOOD FOR THE AMERICAN CHURCH. THERE HAS BEEN AN OVERALL DECLINE IN CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND AN INCREASING LACK OF KINGDOM EFFECTIVENESS. CHURCH CLOSINGS OUTNUMBERED CHURCH OPENINGS THREE TO ONE. EVEN THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD EXPERIENCED A DECLINE. HOWEVER, THERE IS SOME GREAT NEWS.



In recent months there has been a tremendous interest in church planting. This interest has not only been in the Assemblies of God but across all denominational lines. Church planting is the heart of God, and He is calling His church back to the priority of birthing new churches. This interest has come from the bottom up rather than top down.

As a result of a grassroots need and input from districts, the Church Planting Department has been formed to sound the call and facilitate the planting of successful churches. Our purpose for existence is found in our mission statement: The Church Planting Department exists to facilitate the Assemblies of God and its constituents in planting a higher quality and greater quantity of healthy, effective, reproducing churches.

Our reason for being comes out of several foundational beliefs or core values. Core values are more than good ideas; they are nonnegotiable beliefs that give direction, priority, and future to existing organizations and ministries. The local church is the center from which evangelism and ministry must spread to the community and the world. There is no greater investment. Jesus said He would build His church. Our business is to grow strong, healthy, reproducing churches. Church planting is the best evangelistic method under heaven. The priority of church planting is necessary to maintain the blessing and touch of God upon our Movement.

Along with a renewed call to plant churches, God has brought together plans, people, and resources to put tools into the hands of planters so they can get the job done. It is truly a God thing when Kingdom-hearted men of both Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal fellowships share their vision, experience, and training to help each other reach the harvest. This networking is God ordained and will result in a multiplication of effectiveness. Psalm 133 says, "How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity...for there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forever" (NASV).

## THE PLAN

The plan in planting is intentional, reproducible, and successful. The plan is the cumulative experience of several church-planting groups who have tooled it out and proven its success. The plan is successful because it does three things: it answers our long-time problem of a 50-percent survival rate for Assemblies of God churches planted in the nineties; it creates a climate that produces a higher number of new churches; and it attracts a higher quality of planter. Districts are reporting a rise in their church-planting temperature after implementing this plan. They are planting more and healthier churches, people in unprecedented numbers want to be involved, and the survival rate is now 90 percent or better. Joe Woodruff, church planting director for the Foursquare Church in southern California, reports that of the last 50 churches planted using this plan, the survival rate has risen from 37 to 100 percent.

There are four indispensable and interdependent steps in making the plan work:

**Step 1: Assess the potential church planter.** Church planting candidates go through a thorough 2-day interview by a trained team of assessors. This helps them clarify their call and determine whether they should be the lead planter or one of the ministry partners in the new church. It also identifies strengths and weaknesses to be addressed. This is a matter of stewardship for the district or mothering church, the planter, his or her family, and the people who will be involved in the new church. In one Pentecostal fellowship, assessment has doubled the survival rate.

**Step 2: The cornerstone—BootCamp.** This is by far the most exciting part of the process. BootCamp is an intense, weeklong training, equipping the planter for the birth and maturing of a church. The planter is taught vital skills: how to recruit and mobilize people, communicate vision, conduct strategic planning, and discover the vital role of the Spirit in a

Pentecostal church. We have had hundreds of comments attesting to the value and necessity of the BootCamps. One church planter said, "In all my years of ministry, I have never been to anything that even comes close in helpfulness and practicality for ministry."

"The BootCamp is an idea whose time has come. The Executive Presbytery has adopted a policy requiring all church planters to attend," states H. Robert Rhoden, Potomac District superintendent.

Charles E. Hackett, executive director of the Division of Home Missions, adds, "The BootCamp is a proven method of

## BOOTCAMPS

**SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2000**

Rocky Mountain District

**OCTOBER 2-5, 2000**

Oregon District

**NOVEMBER 6-9, 2000**

Pennsylvania-Delaware District

preparing church planters to plant successful churches. It is the best plan I have ever seen for church planting. I strongly support this approach."

**Step 3: Coaching.** Highly effective coaching techniques are employed by

trained pastors to help planters reach their full potential. A coach walks with the planter to fill the critical role of encourager, equipper, safety net, and prayer partner.

**Step 4: Churches reproducing churches.** This is the key to any significant and lasting church-planting movement. It is vital that churches get involved in parenting other churches. It is good for the parent church and for the new church. Districts do not have enough resources, energy, and personnel to plant all the churches needed. When a good church gives birth, its spiritual DNA is implanted in the new church. The new birth produces excitement and joy in the church family—just like the arrival of a new baby—and, correspondingly, the parent church nurtures the new church.

### OTHER RESOURCES

We offer two other resources to help ensure healthy, reproducing churches. One is in the area of financing; the other is Reboot or Revitalization Training for the struggling or plateaued church.

While revitalizing churches and church planting might seem to be on opposite ends of the spectrum, there are more similarities than differences. The ultimate goal of establishing a strong, reproducing church and the principles of getting there are the same. If we are to have healthy churches, we cannot have an either/or attitude between church planting and revitalization; it must be a both/and emphasis. Because of this we offer a Rebooting track with our BootCamps. The material is outstanding and has been forged in the fires of experience—proven "turnaround" pastors teach it.

Second, through the vision and cooperative effort of the Assemblies of God Foundation, the Church Planting Department has been given oversight of \$15 million in interest-only loans to help quality church plants with their first acquisition of property and facilities. The churches are loaned financing at interest-only for 5 years. The

## CHARACTERISTICS OF CHURCH PLANTERS

Following are 13 qualities characteristic of successful church planters.

**1. EXERCISES FAITH.** How well can he exercise faith? How has he experienced God at work in response to his trusting Him?

**2. VISIONARY CAPACITY.** Does he have a visionary capacity? Has he taken a project from nothing and made something out of it?

**3. INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED.** Is he a self-starter? Does he have a drive that works from the inside rather than from the outside?

**4. CREATES OWNERSHIP OF MINISTRY.** Can he create ownership of the ministry among the people he leads? Can he pass the ministry baton on to others?

**5. REACHING THE UNCHURCHED.** Does he go beyond relating to the unchurched to actually reaching them for Christ?

**6. SPOUSAL COOPERATION.** Does he have true cooperation from his spouse?

**7. EFFECTIVELY BUILDS RELATIONSHIPS.** Can he effectively initiate and build meaningful relationships?

**8. COMMITTED TO CHURCH GROWTH.** Is he committed to church growth rather than merely to maintenance hoping it will grow? Is there a strong focus on quantitative as well as qualitative growth?

**9. RESPONSIVE TO COMMUNITY.** Is he responsive to the community by understanding the culture, and does he build bridges to it?

**10. UTILIZES GIFTEDNESS OF OTHERS.** Does he know how to utilize the giftedness of others? Can he help people discover their gifts? Does he know how to develop these gifts and then deploy them in ministry?

**11. FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE.** Is he flexible and adaptable, able to balance or juggle several jobs, shift gears, and use innovative methods while keeping the goal in focus?

**12. BUILDS GROUP COHESIVENESS.** Can he build group cohesiveness by developing a nucleus group as a foundation and quickly incorporate newcomers into a network of relationships?

**13. RESILIENCE.** Is he resilient? Can he bounce back from a loss?

—Information supplied by Paul Drost.



## STRATEGIES FOR CHURCH PLANTING

**CHURCH PLANTING NEEDS TO BE AGGRESSIVE.** In the Rocky Mountain District, we are taking an aggressive approach to church planting in Colorado and Utah. We are thankful to God for the 40,000-plus adherents we have in 151 churches. But when we compare our church numbers with the combined state population of 6.2 million, our penetration level as a district is only 0.65 percent.

We have planted 10 new churches in the last 2 years. Our 10-year goal is to plant 50 A/G churches in Colorado and Utah. We hope to average at least five new churches per year. Why new churches? Statistics prove that new churches reach the lost more effectively than older, established churches.

Churches that have plateaued or declined will continue to receive district support. However, we will ask God for quality church planters, and we will invest our dollars and energy into them and new church projects.

At the close of 1999, there were more A/G churches within the city limits of Salt Lake City (seven), than in the city limits of Denver (five). The harvest is huge. Of the 945 Denver residents that attend an A/G church, another 499,055 residents do not.

District superintendents must be bold in their vision for planting churches in their districts. Superintendents can provide leadership by organizing task forces comprised of experienced church planters. Superintendents can also provide training for their church planters through BootCamps. (For more information on BootCamps, see Paul Drost's article, "The Plan in Planting.")

**CHURCH PLANTING INVOLVES DIVERSITY.** One of the strengths of the Assemblies of God is that not all of its churches are the same. Each church shares the same doctrine, but there is diversity in how each proclaims the gospel. Not all A/G pastors preach the same, and not all worship leaders use the same style of music. Different styles of worship, preaching, and teaching reach different people groups.

**FOCUS ON SMALLER COMMUNITIES.** We cannot neglect our smaller towns, especially those with no Pentecostal witness. In Colorado, the district is targeting 23 towns without an A/G church whose populations are at least 1,000. We need church planters with a burden for small communities. We are looking for planters who understand the rural culture. Though most new churches are being started in large cities, it is possible for quality, growing, exciting churches to be planted in smaller areas.

**DEVELOP CHURCH PLANTERS.** Pastors of larger churches can mentor the men and women on their staff to become church planters. Experienced, mature pastors can also be church planters.

—G. Robert Cook, Jr., is superintendent of the Rocky Mountain District.  
He lives in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

mortgage is then converted to a permanent mortgage. During the interest-only period, a church's monthly payment is significantly less. This allows the new church to invest in other ministry areas and grow quickly to a fully mature church.

There is no ministry more rewarding or productive than church planting. God is renewing our passion and desire for it. At the same time, resources are being placed in our hands so we can fulfill our calling. May those who come behind us find us faithful. Let it be said of us that we served Him with no reserve, no regret, and no retreat. **e**



Paul E. Drost is director of the Church Planting Department, Springfield, Missouri.

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**"Let's see. We need to incorporate; we need a church constitution; we need to file articles of incorporation; we need bylaws; and we need volunteers."**









# Strategic Church Mother Church



# Planting: The Perspective

BY DONALD E. ROSS

The Lord has blessed every church that has birthed, blessed, and released people from its congregation to start a new work. One of the reasons church planting will be a strategic part of our future is because the same energy found in the daughter church can also be found in the mother church.



"I'm not sure what I want to do in the future," Richard said. "I may stay here for a while or go into missions."

"No problem," I replied, "we'll get together in a few months and talk about your future again. In the meantime, we'll continue to pray and see what develops."

That concluded the first meeting I had with my associate regarding church planting. In July 1996, I had been pastor of North Seattle Christian Fellowship for 1 year; Richard, age 50, had served on staff for 25 years. He had been asked by the board to serve as interim pastor for the 4 years prior to my coming, after a church split produced an 80-percent loss in attendance. He had stabilized and rebuilt the church during his time as interim pastor, but his long-term future did not lie at this church, and we both knew it.

Over the next 6 months, we began developing a strategic plan that would provide an opportunity for Richard and open a new chapter for our church—we would plant a daughter church that he would lead. In June 1998, one-third of our church left to plant this church, located about 5 miles away. The planting was a planned departure without animosity on the part of the leadership or people. Just prior to their departure, we held a joint service where Richard and I both preached. The launching of a daughter church was a success, but not without pain.

The percentage of people who left the church to help plant the daughter church was higher than normal, but we survived. Richard's long-standing relationship with many of the people was a critical factor.

It has been nearly 2 years since the church plant and new people are replacing the members who left. We also added another Sunday morning service. The daughter church, under Richard's leadership, has almost 200 in attendance. This is what happens when a church helps mother a new church. The adventure produces good, along with some stressful experiences. The best we can hope for is to wisely choose our troubles as we advance Christ's kingdom. Planting a daughter church is not problem-free, but I'm glad we did it.

Since 1995, we have been actively involved at various levels in helping plant two other churches. These churches are part of a cooperative effort with several other churches.

Pastors like to think that the best time to plant a church is when things are going well with their church. This may be true, but not always. Severe persecution produced church planting in the New Testament. The turbulence the church was facing couldn't keep the men from Cyprus from talking to the Greeks and starting a church in Antioch (Acts 11:19–24).

### **BENEFITS OF CHURCH PLANTING**

If a church is plateaued, mothering a church can get it going again. Church planting activates members of the body of Christ who were sitting on the sidelines. People who are doing very little in a stagnated church may become involved in developing a new congregation. Mothering a new church creates new opportunities for leaders. The vision for a new church draws people. There is excitement surrounding the

adventure, and people want to help.

New churches usually do a great job of outreach. The energy surrounding a new work can be infectious. I have seen people who were almost dormant get excited about inviting their friends to their new church. Leith Anderson, author of *Church for the 21st Century*, said, "When churches are new, they are outreach oriented and entrepreneurial, because they have to be. By the time most churches reach their 12th birthday, most have turned inward."

One of the reasons church planting will be a strategic part of our future is because the same energy found in the daughter church can also be found in the mother church. This is not always immediately apparent, but over time it has proved true for us as new people have found places of meaningful ministry.

In the 1950s, America had 27 churches for every 10,000 people. The churches were smaller, but starting new congregations was common. Now, there are less than 12 churches per 10,000 people. In addition to that, 4,000 churches are closed every year in America. The need has never been greater to start new churches. Why don't we do it more? (See *Not for Megachurches Only* sidebar.)

Many pastors and churches believe that planting a new church would be harmful to the mother church, with only few lasting benefits. The truth is just the opposite.

One aspect of a growing church is that new people make up a large percentage of the congregation. According to Charles Arn, if 50 percent of the church started attending in the last 5 years, then the chance of the church continuing to grow is high. If 50 percent





of the congregation has been in the church for up to 12 years, then the potential for growth is medium. If 50 percent of the congregation has been there over 15 years, there is a low chance the church will experience growth.

In a new church, all the people are new, even if they had relationships in the past. A new church creates a new environment that attracts new people and creates a climate for growth. The excitement propels the church forward.

The same is true for the mother church. When we offer people the chance to leave their church and help start a new congregation, their leaving creates a vacancy. The vacancy is soon filled with new people, who have connections to other people. They tell their friends about what God is doing in their lives, and the result is the mother church also receives an influx of new people, with new energy and excitement.

Someone from Richard's church who previously attended our church visited one Sunday. He said, "It seems like a new church; I can't believe all the new people. Where did they come from?" I must be honest; scores of new people did not show up the week after we started the new church. But over the past few months we have seen a significant number of new people start attending our church.

The Bible declares we reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7). It also declares, "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously" (2 Corinthians 9:6, NIV). The biblical principles of sowing and reaping are clearly illustrated in church planting. Do

## STRATEGIC CHURCH PLANTING: THE DAUGHTER CHURCH PERSPECTIVE

In the last 2 years, several new church plants in the Seattle area have grown at phenomenal rates. This is due partly to the time in which we are living, but it is also due to the way these churches were planted. More and more large churches are allowing new church plants to incubate within the church before they are sent out. This gave them time to develop a significant numerical base and a deeply embraced vision. Over the years I have watched as churches were planted by sending out young, rookie pastors with little or no support, to remote areas to do their best to make a church grow from a home group to a sovereign church. The attrition rate has been high in these cases, and pastors and people have been injured because of the failure of these efforts.

Our church developed in the safe and loving environment of a mother church. Everyone knew, far in advance, what was going to happen. No one was left to guess whether or not my departure was due to some secret problem between me and the senior pastor. People were asked to pray about whether or not God wanted them to join this new work.

To plant churches in this model requires a measure of faith by the senior pastor. There are elements of risk involved. Our natural tendency is to be possessive of what we have. We take it hard when anyone leaves our church for another. This is contrary to God's way. Jesus said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom" (Luke 6:38). The Lord has blessed every church that has birthed, blessed, and released people from its congregation to start a new work.

There is hardly any experience that can be compared to the process of conceiving and birthing a child. This process is both exciting and a cause for apprehension, but both parents and child are blessed by the experience. Most people who have joined us from other churches say they have been born again as a result of having an opportunity to start over with a passion for outreach.

On our first Sunday 186 people attended. Some were merely well-wishers, but most were mature Christians who were ready, even longing, for adventure in their walk with the Lord. Because of the careful preparation and maternal care of a mothering church, the daughter church was an instant success.

—Richard A. Vicknair, senior pastor, *The Westside Church of the Assemblies of God, Seattle, Washington.*

## NOT FOR MEGACHURCHES ONLY

One of the most effective methods of starting a new church is for an existing congregation to plant a new church. It is natural to assume that large churches (1,000+) are in the best position to accomplish this. They have resources beyond those of small and midsized churches. However, there are several significant reasons why small (under 200) and midsize (fewer than 1,000) churches can plant churches.

### REASONS FOR PLANTING CHURCHES

#### WE CAN DO IT.

I came to a congregation of about 50 in July 1994. There was no church less likely to plant another church than ours. Just keeping our financial head above water was a major issue. As we grew, God gave us a burden to start another church. We didn't have much to give. We could spare no people or money; yet, we believed it was possible.

Not only was it possible, it wasn't all that hard. Our people gave, the district provided guidance and some financial help, we creatively used our resources, and a new church was born. Now, 4 years later, that church (Woodland Worship Center) is constructing a new building for its growing congregation and our fourth church plant is well on its way. Today our congregation averages 400–500 on Sunday morning. In addition to our growth, we have multiplied our efforts through starting other churches. We have accomplished through church planting what many would think impossible for a church our size.

Up the street from my house is an affluent subdivision. We watch our neighbors drive by in their expensive vehicles. My wife has a 1995 Ford Escort. The Escort doesn't have the size, power, speed, or luxury of our neighbors' cars, yet it gets us where we need to go.

In a similar way, we cannot plant churches as fast or with as much power as a larger church could; we don't have the resources. But we don't let our limits keep us from doing what is possible. Midsize and even small churches can plant churches. The ability to plant a church is not so much a factor of size as it is attitude. Any healthy church can and should be involved in parenting churches.

#### WE BENEFIT FROM IT.

Church planting does cost. Our congregation has invested thousands of dollars in parenting new churches. In addition, we contribute a substantial amount of noncash support. We do it willingly because this investment pays great dividends. A significant part of our growth can be attributed to our church-planting activities.

There are numerous ways a church benefits from church planting. When a congregation turns outward, growth is the inevitable result. Church planting brings excitement and victories; it builds momentum. We ask our people to do three things when we plant a church: pray, give, and spread the word. In addition, they also pray, give, and talk more about our church. We have always come out of a church-planting project better than when we began. The benefits of church planting are available to all churches. Why should large churches have all the fun? Just as every church can participate in foreign missions, every church can help start a new church and enjoy the benefits of the process.

#### WE ARE THERE TO DO IT.

Large churches are, for the most part, in suburban areas in and around large cities. Their church-planting involvement is also similarly situated. But the need to plant churches extends beyond large cities. If it took a megachurch to plant another church, our city would be in trouble. None of the Assemblies of God churches in our city are large. With over 100,000 unchurched people in our county, we couldn't put off addressing the need. Waiting until we became a megachurch meant delaying God's work.

Large churches are the minority; there are more midsize and small churches. If the need for new churches is to be met, we must respond—no matter the size of the parent church. God places churches strategically to reach a given area. If we defer the responsibility to others who we consider better equipped, the task will not get done.

#### IF WE DON'T DO IT, IT WON'T GET DONE.

As of December 31, 1998, there were 149 churches in the Assemblies of God that reported a Sunday-morning attendance of 1,000 or more. That same year, 271 Assemblies of God churches were closed. If every large church in the Fellowship planted a new church every year, we would not even replace the churches we close. Clearly, church planting cannot be left only to the elite few.

If the Assemblies of God is going to continue to grow, church planting will need to be embraced by a broad spectrum of churches. Churches of 1,000 or more make up only 1.2 percent of our congregations. This is not a large enough base from which to launch a major church-planting effort. Midsize and small churches need to carry a significant portion of the load if we wish to successfully increase the number of churches in America. The major churches of our Fellowship serve as examples. Many of the good things we do were first developed in one of these leading churches. They set the pace for us in church planting.

### GET IN THE GAME

Many believe they must become a megachurch before getting involved in church planting. I am thrilled when I hear how a large congregation has started a new church. They do it so well. Hopefully their stories inspire us rather than intimidate us. We may not be able to accomplish the task as quickly or on the same scale as our larger counterparts. Nevertheless, we can get the job done. Parenting churches is like having children. Not everyone is equally equipped for the task. However, if you are healthy, take advantage of available resources, and learn from the experiences of others, you can be successful.

A professional football team relies on its star players, but it takes everyone playing his best to win. In the same way, successful church planting will require every church doing its best. Some churches can do it by themselves, others can get involved in joint efforts, and a few can be stars. The important thing is to get in the game. It is a responsibility and a joy to be shared by all.

—Paul C. Hamelink is senior pastor of First Assembly of God, Green Bay, Wisconsin.



you want more people to grace the doors of your church? Then allow members of your church to be sown into the harvest field through a new church plant. If you generously sow as a church, you will reap a bountiful harvest.

### THINGS WE LEARNED IN CHURCH PLANTING

We were unprepared for the loss of people from our church who were part of the planting process. Two concerns surfaced. First, some families were torn by the choice they were forced to make concerning where their family would attend church. The children wanted to go to the daughter church; the parents felt committed to the mother church. In a couple of instances, the wives felt one way and the husbands the other. This could have been avoided if I had asked families to pray and discuss their decision prior to asking them for commitments. Next time I will give better leadership to this issue.

Second, we had members who did not want to go with the new church, but didn't want their friends to go either. Change did not come easy for these people, no matter how beneficial it was to the kingdom of God. Consequently, when they came to church, their personal emotional loss was reinforced because their friends were at the daughter church. After about 3 months, most of them accepted the new change.

No church wants to lose people, but every church will experience a cer-

tain amount of loss. We lose people to death, transfer, and irritation. However, there isn't a more noble purpose for losing people than through a church plant.

I also learned that if we plant another church I will discuss the idea with the board sooner. When Richard and I began talking about mothering a church, we put a plan together and simply announced it to the church board. Because of his long-standing relationship with these men, we were successful and the board agreed to the plan. When key leaders are in agreement with the decision to plant a new church, the process goes much smoother.

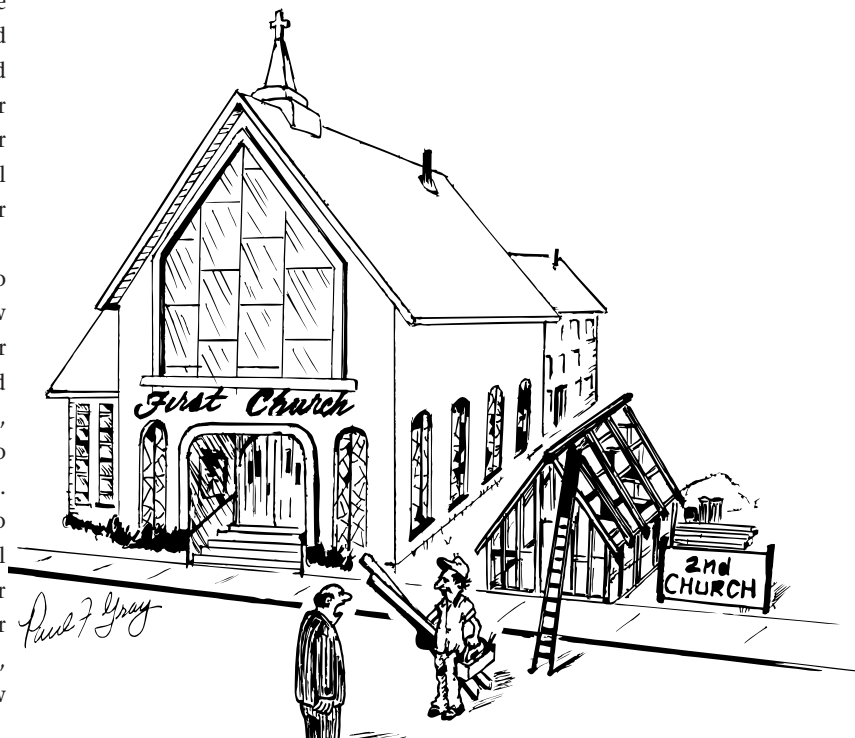
Though we are not ready to mother another church, we will do it again. In the meantime, we will cooperate with other churches and help them plant new churches.

Recently Richard and I had breakfast together. I said, "Your church has been alive for over a year and a half. If you had it to do over again, would you go through the process of planting a church?"

Without hesitation he answered, "Yes, I would. Even with the search for facilities and the weekly set up and take down, it is well worth it."



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**"Brother, we evidently did not make ourselves clear when we said we'd help out by mothering your new church."**

# interview

WITH JOE B. FUITEN AND  
GREG S. WINGARD

## Working Together To Plant a Church



JOE B. FUITEN



GREG S. WINGARD

*Since 1981, Joe Fuiten has been the pastor of Cedar Park Assembly of God, Bothell, Washington. In 1981, Cedar Park's average attendance was approximately 70 people. It now averages 1,250. Greg Wingard was on staff or associated with the ministry at Cedar Park Assembly for about 10 years and is now pastor of Redwood Hills Church, Woodinville, Washington. Redwood Hills is a church planted by Cedar Park that began services September 13, 1998. The average attendance at Redwood Hills is over 400.*

*It has been almost 2 years since Redwood Hills Church held its first service. Wayde I. Goodall, executive editor of Enrichment Journal, visited with Joe and Greg as they reminisced on the church-planting effort and the unique challenges and issues each church faced.*

### WHEN DID YOU START DREAMING ABOUT PLANTING A CHURCH?

**WINGARD:** I initially started dreaming about church planting when I was a youth pastor with Joe. We had several conversations where Joe talked about team leadership concepts. At that time he mentioned mothering a church, and I started thinking he would be open to that.

**FUITEN:** We specifically started talking about planting a church while Greg was an evangelist and had an office in our church. He came to my office with a

vision of starting a new church in our area. The key to a successful church plant is to have good leadership. I had always admired Greg and his ability. From the time he was a student, Greg had demonstrated strong leadership skills. We decided that he would join our staff for about 4 years; then we would help him plant a church. If I could harness a great guy with great abilities for a few years, then he could have a couple hundred of our people because he would have built good relationships with them.

### HOW DID YOU DECIDE ON THE AREA AND THE STRATEGY WHEN PLANTING REDWOOD HILLS?

**WINGARD:** We discussed possible locations. During prayer, Woodinville kept coming to mind. I talked with Joe, and he felt good about it. The district leaders said that Woodinville was where they wanted to put another church, so I felt a confirmation that this was where we needed to plant the church.

In terms of timing, we continually worked through that detail. We changed the time of the launch because I wanted to start in September rather than wait until April. We put a plan together regarding when we would announce it to the congregation. Joe, the board, and I met several times to

discuss the recruiting parameters and other specifics.

We also set an upper limit of approximately 130 people from Cedar Park (roughly 10 percent of the congregation) to join the new work. About 115 people came to our prelaunch rally. We did two rallies and a barbecue, and we had the number we talked about.

Church planting in the Assemblies of God up until the seventies was largely about geographics. When I went to college in the eighties, nobody was planting churches because we thought we had conquered all the areas. In the nineties, we realized that as we became a niche culture. There was a need within

going to be geared toward a different population group. There are two classifications of the underreached: underreached areas where there aren't enough churches and underreached sociological groups. Woodinville was an underreached area. Greg wanted to reach people who didn't have a church background. Greg is an evangelist in his gifting, so we decided it would be OK to be geographically close because we would be sociologically different.

**FINANCING A CHURCH PLANT IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE?**

**WINGARD:** Cedar Park contributed

Jason was on staff at Cedar Park, and he joined our staff to help us plant the new church. We used about \$50,000 for salaries and about \$110,000 for other start-up costs (including buying two buses and converting them into Sunday school rooms for children and buying multimedia sound gear).

**FUITEN:** A church plant must have enough people for critical mass. And it must have enough money so it's not limping. This is especially true in Woodinville, because they are professional people. The church had to be sharp. The money didn't come solely

**In all of my years associated with Cedar Park, the year we did the church plant was one of the most difficult for Cedar Park.**

**—Wingard**



communities for more Assemblies of God churches that have different strategies and are targeting different demographic groups.

**FUITEN:** We used to believe that churches should be no closer than 3 miles from each other. But that bases too much on geography and doesn't consider sociology.

Initially I would have preferred that Greg be a greater distance away in another underreached area, but we decided that the style of his church was

\$170,000 toward the church plant for the start-up costs. Some mother churches agree to underwrite a salary for a year, but I didn't ask for that. I asked Joe to provide enough cash for critical mass at the beginning, then we would no longer need assistance or monthly support from the district or the church.

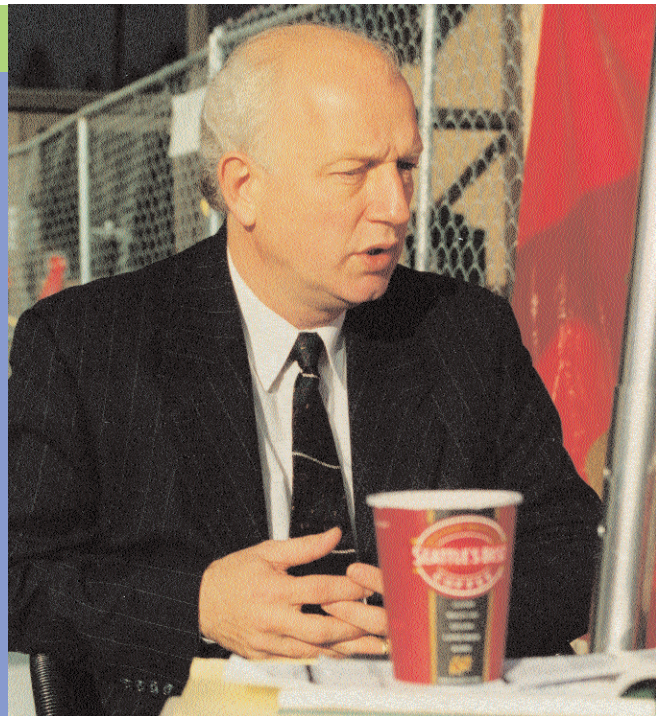
I went off staff at Cedar Park 6 months before the launch, and my salary during that time was paid from the start-up funds. We also paid Jason Shirley's salary for about 5 months.

from special offerings, although we did that. After we decided who would go with Greg, we set aside their tithes in a separate fund to be used for Woodinville. This weaned us away from that money and also made the transitions smoother.

**HOW HAS THIS CHURCH-PLANTING VENTURE DIFFERED FROM OTHERS YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN?**

**FUITEN:** Over the years, different ministers have come to our church wanting to start churches. We had one in

If I could harness a great guy with great abilities for a few years, then he could have a couple hundred of our people because he would have built good relationships with them.— Fuiten



Woodinville, one in Northshore, and one in Kirkland. In each case, I invited these ministers to come to our church and share their vision. I told our people that those who wanted to help plant a new church could feel free to do so. In one case, we allowed a minister to teach a class for a couple of months so he could gather some people out of the congregation. In each case, only a few people went with the new church plant.

Greg's situation was different. He had been a part of the church for a decade. We gave him permission to find people in the congregation who would resonate with his vision. Since he had built relationships with the people, he was able to cultivate those relationships, establish a group of people, and take more people with him. We never felt a part of those other church plants to the extent that we felt a part of the Redwood Hills church plant.

**WAS THERE EVER A TIME WHEN YOU QUESTIONED WHETHER THE WORK SHOULD GO FORWARD?**

**FUITEN:** When it came time for the church plant, we were building two buildings. To send away a group of

people at that critical time didn't make sense. Greg, having the interest of our church at heart, came to our board and me and said, "If you don't think we should go through with this plan, then we'll pull the plug on it." He was willing to put it back on the table, and frankly I was nervous. We asked our board whether we should wait another year. The board assured me they felt like everything would go fine. We not only survived that much money and that many people leaving, but our income increased by 17 percent during the following year. This church plant did not hinder our church's ministry at all.

**WINGARD:** One of the things I had expected in planting a church is that Christians from other churches would come just because of the excitement of a new church. We would then have to work to stay consistent with our vision to reach unchurched people. The opposite has happened. We've had very few people come from other churches.

It's amazing how easy it has been to reach the unchurched, and the number of unchurched people who are bringing their friends to our church. There have been Sundays where I've met 10 first-

time guests and only 1 or 2 of them were Christians. I've told Joe to add whatever new Christians he has on Sunday and then add ours to his figures. This is the total impact Cedar Park Assembly is having.

**SOME MIGHT EXPECT JEALOUSY OR ENVY ISSUES TO SURFACE BETWEEN THE TWO OF YOU. HAS THIS EVER BEEN AN ISSUE?**

**FUITEN:** No. On Redwood's first anniversary, Greg sent over a gift certificate to a nice restaurant in town and said thanks for the good launch. We don't meet together on a regular schedule. I am happy he is doing well; he is happy we are doing well. We are on the same team. We are building on a decade of respect.

Greg's church is sociologically diverse from our church. One thing that could create a problem is the diverseness of the new church. But pastors from the mother church need to realize there is more than one way to do things and not try to force their methods on the new church.

**WINGARD:** There is no question that the decade of relationship was key, but we have had the envelope pushed on

our relationship. In all of my years associated with Cedar Park, the year we did the church plant was one of the most difficult for Cedar Park. There were so many ways it could have not worked. Joe and I had to be committed to each other and committed to integrity.

The biggest challenge I faced was to communicate the vision of Redwood Hills in a compelling way without sounding like I was knocking what Cedar Park was doing. I spent a lot of time praying before each 4-hour membership class; because, during the classes, I spent 45 minutes talking about our Sunday morning service and how it was going to be different from Cedar Park's service. I had to find a balance between fully affirming Cedar Park, yet clearly articulating what we were going to do at Redwood Hills. I didn't want people coming and thinking it was going to be Cedar Park/Woodinville, and then becoming upset because they thought I had told them something different. I had to communicate Redwood Hills' goals, yet continue to show my total support for Cedar Park. When you're planting a different type of church, you must think

through and pray through to do it right.

**YOU WENT INTO THIS PROJECT WITH SOME BASIC CORE VALUES. WHAT WERE THEY?**

**WINGARD:** We wanted to be purpose driven. Before I ever heard of Rick Warren, I was committed to the We Build People concept. Second, our orientation starts with the unchurched—it's a mission mentality. If I went to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to plant a church, my starting place would be, How do I connect with these Muslims? You start by building a relationship, then earning the right to be heard. Third, there must be a team approach to ministry. Everything we do is oriented around our team. Fourth, our goal is to communicate the eternal truths of the Kingdom and the gospel in our culture, in our community, in the demographic area that we are trying to reach.

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER CHURCHES WANTING TO PLANT A CHURCH BUT ARE AFRAID TO TRY?**

**FUITEN:** Get over it. It is God's work.

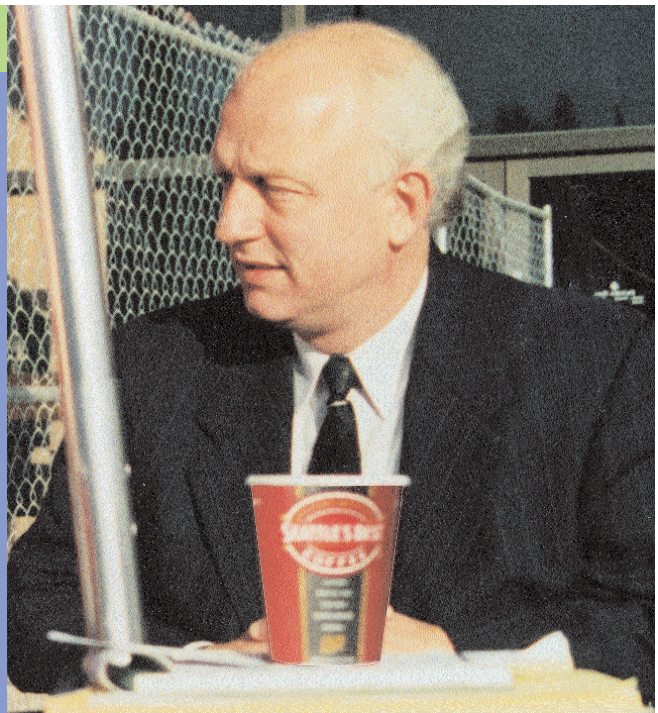
If you have someone you can trust and who will have the interest of both the church plant and the mother church at heart, you have the foundation you need to get started. I am convinced that you don't lose by giving—you only win. There are benefits we want to see. The more Assemblies of God churches there are in a community working together, the better it is.

A church plant needs a philosophy of ministry, and it needs a plan. It is the old story of plan your work and then work your plan. Greg had a consistent philosophy of ministry; he also had a plan, and that plan has worked.

**WINGARD:** We haven't had people wander from Cedar Park to Redwood Hills or vice versa—probably a maximum of two to three families. We are just 8 minutes away from each other. This is one of the fears pastors might have about church planting. If it were going to happen, it would have happened here where I had been associated with the church for a long time. But we were targeting a different group. **e**

**We not only survived that much money and that many people leaving, but our income increased by 17 percent during the following year.**

**— Fuiten**





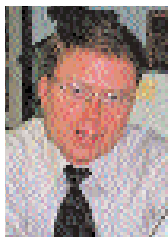




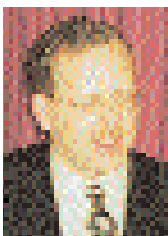
# interview

WITH STEVE LARSON,  
DENNIS DICKSON, CHRIS GRAY  
AND DARREN WIDNER

## Church Planting in the Small Community



**L: STEVE LARSON**  
**R: DENNIS DICKSON**



**L: CHRIS GRAY**  
**R: DARREN WIDNER**

**M**any church-planting efforts are focused on larger cities. Church planters target areas with large populations to reach a greater segment of people with the gospel. But there are many people who live in small towns in America who need the gospel. Paul Drost, director of the Church Planting Department for the Assemblies of God, visited with four pastors who have successfully planted churches in small communities. Steve Larson planted a church in Byron, a town of about 3,100 people, 10 miles west of Rochester, Minnesota. Dennis Dickson is pastor of Southside Assembly of God in Bend, Oregon. Prior to coming to Southside, he planted a church in Grants Pass, Oregon, a town of about 12,000 people. Chris Gray planted Greater Valley Assembly of God near three communities: Sayre and Athens, Pennsylvania, and Waverly, New York. There are 15,000 people in this area. Darin Widner, is restarting a church in Harrisonville, Missouri. Darren has also planted a church close to Poplar Bluff, Missouri. These pastors shared their vision for planting churches in small towns along with their successes and struggles.

**MANY CHURCH-PLANTING EFFORTS TARGET LARGER COMMUNITIES WHERE THE RESOURCE OF PEOPLE IS GREATER. WHY PLANT A CHURCH IN A SMALLER COMMUNITY OR A RURAL AREA?**

**GRAY:** Statistics show that whether you are in a large city or a small town, about two-thirds of the people are unchurched. In our area of 15,000, there are over 10,000 people who have no church affiliation.

People in small communities still have problems. I know of several people in our community who are in abusive relationships. We need to see that people without Christ in small communities are lost.

**DICKSON:** There are people who like the family-size church. We have ministers who are geared for that size church. They are father figures who want to know everybody in the church intimately. This is their personality.

**LARSON:** I felt called to a small community. I have a heart for the small town and church.

One of the dynamics of small-town ministry is being able to know many people in your town. When you go to the post office, you can have casual conversations and build relationships with people outside of the church.

**WIDNER:** There are many people in small communities who don't know the Lord. In small towns there is sometimes a greater concentration of

alcohol abuse. We shouldn't exclude any area, because people in small towns need the Lord too.

### **IN WHAT WAYS DID THE DISTRICT OR SECTION SUPPORT YOUR CHURCH-PLANTING EFFORTS?**

**WIDNER:** In Poplar Bluff, the district gave us permission to plant a church and sent money. But most of the support came from the section. They put about \$80,000 into the building. At that time, I was not getting the personal support that I'm getting now. I was working a second job.

**GRAY:** The district and section have been behind me. I received support

people. When I need something I know whom to contact. Churches have also helped. Pastors have invited me to speak, and they have blessed us financially. I can call them and they will pray for me.

**DICKSON:** The district home missions committee was involved from the inception. We sat on the mother church board and the mother church's board was our board. Later we had a sectional board of three pastors who were church-planter mentors. They sat in on our board meetings. The people seemed to receive that better and didn't feel like a stepchild. The mother/ daughter

### **WHAT WERE SOME OF THE SUCCESSFUL THINGS YOU DID TO REACH YOUR COMMUNITY?**

**LARSON:** We have had success using direct mail. Going door-to-door would have turned off people in our community because Jehovah's Witnesses go door-to-door. When we send out a 3,500-piece mailing, our attendance generally increases by about 20–30 as a result. We look at what we do as an experiment. We record results. We aren't afraid to try new things.

Having a clearly defined vision is important. We major on majors. We defined two or three things we wanted to do and stuck to them. We also remind our people what we are about.

**In a small town, it's important to have a building. Some people think, They won't last because they don't have a building. This is a credibility issue.—Larson**



from the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Keyman Fund for home missions pastors. These funds come from churches that support home missions. I received \$800 a month to help offset living expenses. Initially this was for a year, but I had a year extension.

District Superintendent Philip Bongiorno and others from the district have provided moral support. They have also provided resources: access to an audio-visual library, and they have helped me network with

relationship has a different dynamic, but the daughter church wants to grow and be its own church.

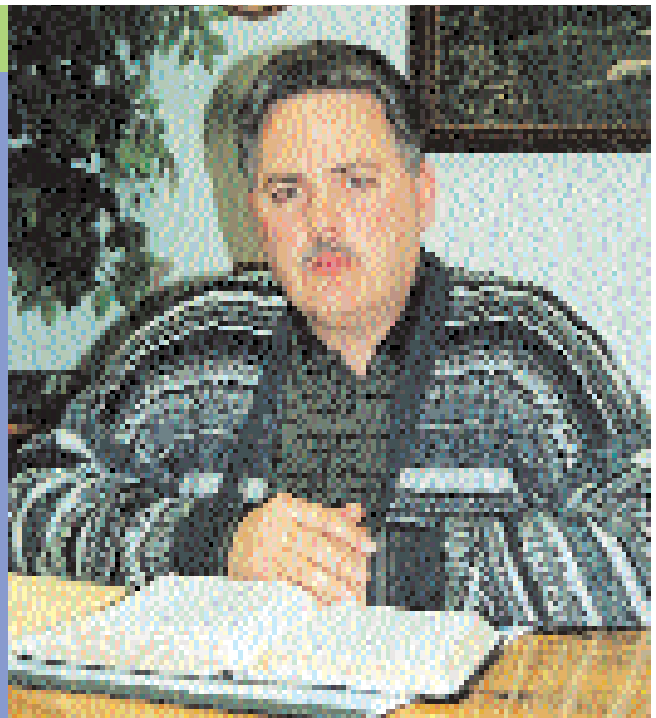
**LARSON:** The district gave us \$500 a month. Some of the churches in the section invited us to preach and take an offering. Roger Stacy is in charge of church planting in the district. He has been a big help. The district sent us to a church-plant BootCamp. There I was able to connect with other church planters.

Everyone has a place in the ministry. We have what we call the open chair. At the end of the service I pray that the Lord will show our people who they can invite to church.

The Lord has blessed us with influential people from the community. A dentist who has been in the area for 30 years is coming.

**DICKSON:** We emphasize Royal Rangers, Missionettes, and our men's and women's ministries. We tell people

**We didn't try to become a community church. We put the name Assemblies of God on everything. The church is stable because of that.—Dickson**



we are supported by the district and on a national level. We didn't try to become a community church. We put the name Assemblies of God on everything. The church is stable because of that. People want to know you are Assemblies of God because they know what you believe.

We work at reaching boys and girls. When parents see that we love their children, they come.

**GRAY:** Getting people to network and build relationships has been important. When people come to our church, they find a caring and loving environment. People outside the church sense the camaraderie. We have people from every class of life. They come in jeans or a suit; it makes no difference. People feel accepted. We also try to make everything we do relevant to their situation.

In our community, there was no Pentecostal church. Our goal was to reach the unsaved, nurture and build them up on a one-on-one basis. However, because there was no Pentecostal church in the area, people were traveling to other communities for church. Others stayed home or went to another denomination. When we

started our church, a number of these same people began to attend. This was a benefit, but it also caused us to shift our focus. Instead of going out to talk with individuals about Christ, I encourage people to bring their friends. We still reach the unsaved, but these people coming in have given us a healthy foundation on which to build.

**WIDNER:** I planted a church near Lake Wappapello, just north of Poplar Bluff, Missouri. We got to know the people and became their friends. I drove a school bus and this helped me get to know students and parents.

You can't reach a smaller community unless the people accept you. We did everything with integrity. This also happened to us in Glide, Oregon. There we took a church of eight that we were rebuilding. We had to correct some wrongs that had been done in the past. We built a new image and made a new name in the community, which helped to establish our credibility as a church.

#### **WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES IN PLANTING A RURAL OR SMALL-TOWN CHURCH?**

**LARSON:** One of our major challenges

has been a traditional religious spirit. People may not have been to church in 30 years, but they claim a denominational loyalty.

In a small town, it's important to have a building. Some people think, *They won't last because they don't have a building.* This is a credibility issue. Along with this is a lack of history in a community. We came to Byron in 1996, but didn't start the church until 1998. We spent 2 years building trust. Some people go to a small town and expect to start a church in 3 months. But you have to build trust.

There is also the barrier of momentum. If you are not moving ahead, people will think you are not doing anything. This is difficult in a small town because you don't have all the programs. Many people are used to Sunday school, confirmation, and other programs.

**GRAY:** Perhaps the greatest challenge for me was my lack of experience. This was my first church. Another was getting people to realize who we are. The Assemblies of God was unknown to most people in our area.

Our church is a blend of socioeconomic culture. There are farmers,

factory workers, and professional people—each with a different mind-set that we needed to work with.

One of our biggest challenges was gaining people's trust. This is especially true in a rural area.

**DICKSON:** The turning point for us was about 3 1/2 years into the work. The first few years are tough because in a rural setting people are thinking, *Let's wait and see if the people in this church are real.* This is especially true if you don't have a building.

We were in a high school for 18 months and averaged about 35 in attendance. People did not believe we were credible because we did not have a building. When we got into our own building, it was a different dynamic.

It is difficult, frustrating, and discouraging to haul equipment and set up each week. Some weeks you only have 8 or 10 people and want to quit. To avoid this, set a goal and tell your support people what your goals are. Ask them to help you stay steady. If church planters do not connect on a sectional and district level and get input from the national level, they will not be successful.

**WIDNER:** One of the biggest challenges

we are facing is getting the finances together to complete our building. We are moving into the old church, but we have to do quite a bit of remodeling.

#### **WHERE ARE YOU HOLDING SERVICES AND WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS TO RELOCATE OR BUILD?**

**DICKSON:** We started from scratch. We went into the local high school and rented a conference room. The first service we had eight people. At 18 months we were ready to admit that we weren't going to plant a church because we couldn't get beyond 35 people.

For the planter, it is necessary to attend district functions. Every time I went the speaker said something that kept me going. At one District Council I realized we had never held a missions convention. We invited a missionary and had a convention. The next week a man offered us 3 1/2 acres of commercial property for \$15,000. The district gave me permission to purchase the land and gave \$40,000.

Another group in our district said, "We have a team with 200 men that can come and build a church. We want to build your church." I went to the bank, and they offered me any amount of money I wanted because of the equity in

the property and the fact we were going to build a building. Then another guy came and drilled a \$3,000 well for free.

MAPS workers in our district also came. When we reach out beyond ourselves and help one another, you begin to understand what it means to be part of a larger Fellowship. None of the people in the church could deny the miracles they saw. Thousands of dollars of material and labor was donated to our church. When the project was complete, we had a \$90,000 debt loan. The day the builders walked, our property was worth about \$350,000.

One of the dangers of a church plant is building the sanctuary too small. To get enough people in the church to retire the debt, you have to plan. I built the sanctuary bigger than some wanted. Ask experienced people, "In this community, what size structure should we build for a long-term benefit?"

**GRAY:** The Lord has blessed us with a storefront church. We are meeting in a building that has other businesses in it. Decorators in our church have done a wonderful job of creating an appealing atmosphere—a place where people feel love and warmth.

**Statistics show that whether you are in a large city or a small town, about two-thirds of the people are unchurched.—Gray**



## THE 20 MOST SUCCESSFUL ASSEMBLIES OF GOD "RURAL" CHURCH PLANTS IN THE 90S

CHURCH	CITY	STATE	DATE OPENED	OPENING ATTENDANCE <sup>1</sup>	1998 ACMR ATTENDANCE	NUMERIC CHANGE	% CHANGE
First Assembly of God	Delphi	Ind.	08/29/90	58	365	307	529.3
Crossroads Assembly of God	Cameron	Mo.	04/02/91	70	400	330	471.4
Freedom Valley Worship Center	Gettysburg	Pa.	01/03/92	60	273	213	355.0
Centro Cristiano Hispano	Brandon	Fla.	06/11/91	58	235	177	305.2
Grace Assembly of God	Woodbury	Tenn.	12/28/92	26	105	79	303.8
Faith Assembly of God	Elburn	Ill.	11/30/92	29	112	83	286.2
Browns Bridge Assembly of God	Gainesville	Ga.	10/28/91	48	180	132	275.0
Resurrection Assembly of God	Clinton	N.Y.	11/13/92	40	150	110	275.0
Celebration Worship Center	Georgetown	Ind.	12/22/97	30	105	75	250.0
Marysville Christian Fellowship	Marysville	Kans.	07/27/92	26	85	59	226.9
Brandon Valley Assembly of God	Brandon	S. Dak	01/07/91	50	134	84	168.0
Trinity Assembly of God	Morganfield	Ky.	03/16/90	57	140	83	145.6
Shepherd of the Valley Assembly of God	Milford	N.J.	05/11/92	51	120	69	135.3
Cornerstone of Faith Assembly of God	Dry Ridge	Ky.	01/25/90	80	170	90	112.5
Mount Hope Assembly of God	Portland	Mich.	02/18/91	83	167	84	101.2
River of Life Assembly of God	Cold Spring	Minn.	09/27/93	110	210	100	90.9
Christ Chapel of the Assemblies of God	Platte City	Mo.	05/26/92	80	150	70	87.5
Centro Cristiano 'Rey De Reyes'	McAllen	Tex.	03/31/93	80	150	70	87.5
City of Joy Assembly of God	Nanakuli	Hawaii	02/07/94	120	200	80	66.7
Raymore Assembly of God	Raymore	Mo.	07/03/96	220	340	120	54.5

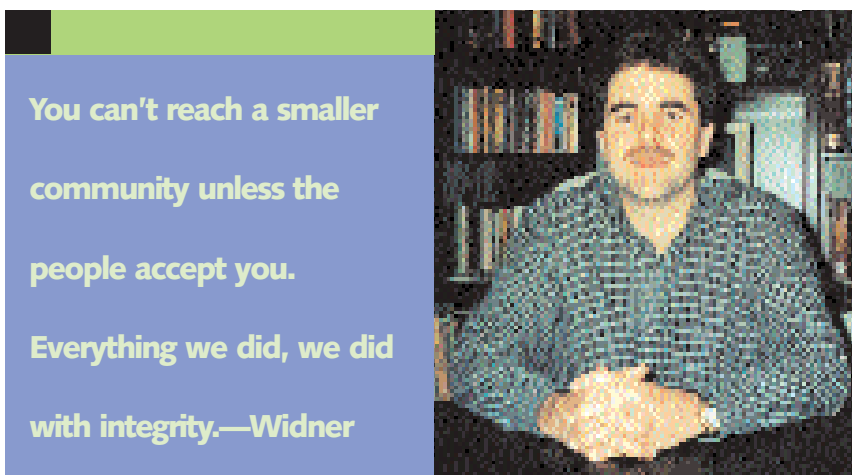
1. As of the date they became official with the Assemblies of God

We are in the process of looking for another facility or land for a building. We need something permanent.

**LARSON:** We are meeting in a legion hall located near a major highway. The church's location is one of our best sources of advertising, because people go by on Sunday mornings and see the packed parking lot. Not having a permanent building has hindered our growth. However, we just purchased some land on which to build.

### WHAT HAS CHARACTERIZED YOUR APPROACH TO MINISTRY?

**DICKSON:** We are a high expectation church. We tell people who come to our services who we are and what we believe. I give them a brochure on the Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God and I emphasize membership, accountability, and responsibility to God. We base our ministry on worship, discipleship, fellowship, and evangelism. We also find needs in our community



and develop ministries to meet them.

Large churches can afford singing groups and other special events. In a rural setting you can't afford these so you develop your people to use their gifts.

I want an aggressive, growing church. The size of a church is based on administrative strategy and philosophy.

**GRAY:** I am more of a teacher than a preacher. People know that what they are hearing from the pulpit is a biblical

message. Second, I try to make my messages relevant. People are discovering how the gospel relates to their lives. Third, we emphasize the experiential.

**LARSON:** We use children as ushers. When kids are involved, they bring their parents. This ties in well with people of Lutheran background. On Sunday morning we have a children's sermon as part of the service. Parents like to see something for the children. **e**



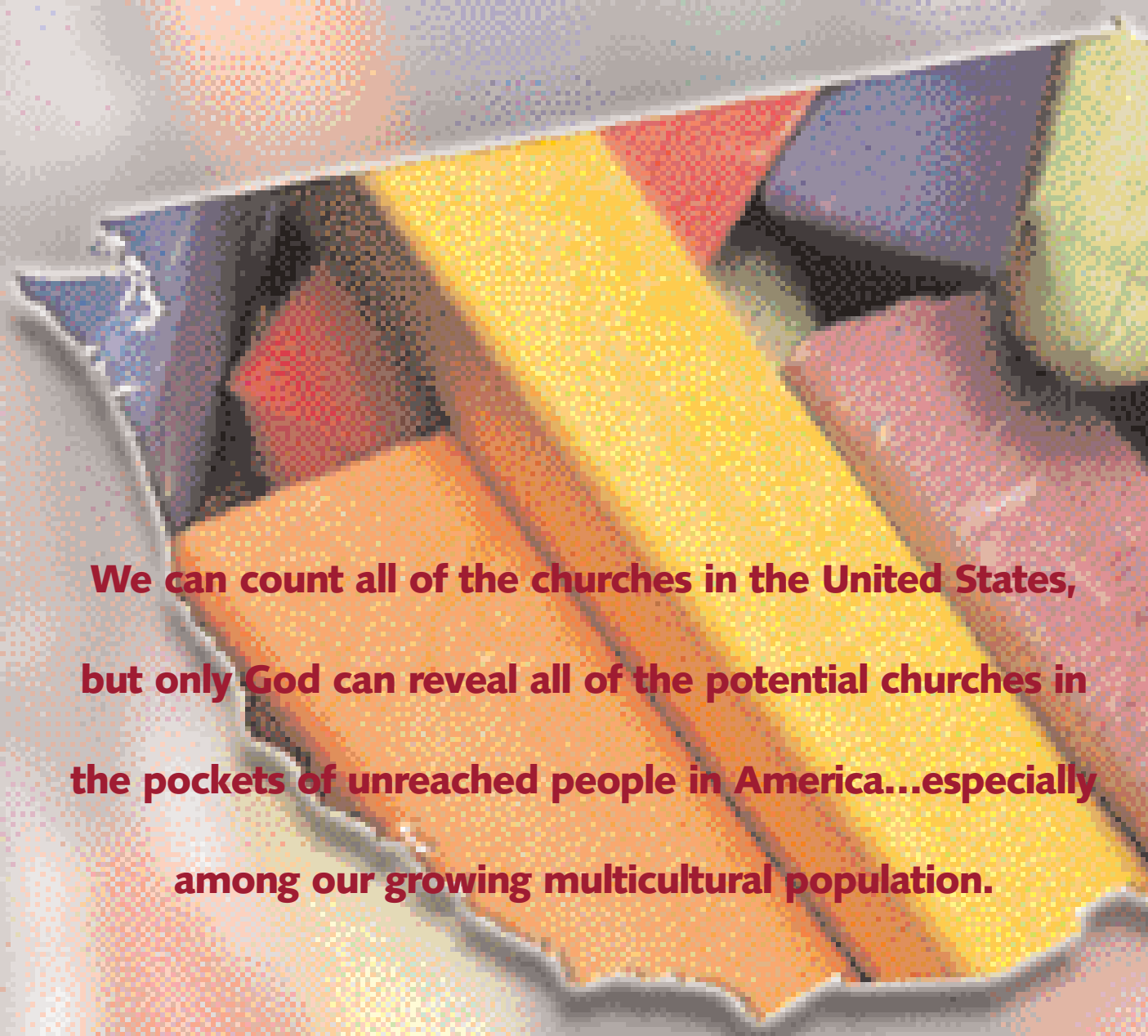






# New Church Planting

## The Cutting-Edge Ministry In Ethnic/Language Group



**We can count all of the churches in the United States, but only God can reveal all of the potential churches in the pockets of unreached people in America...especially among our growing multicultural population.**

## BY EFRAIM ESPINOZA

It may be called an outreach, a home Bible study, cell group, branch Sunday school, a mission (*una misión o campo blanco*), or other similar terms. In most cases where it involves an ethnic group, it signals a potential new church plant.

Church planting, while not a new concept, is making a difference in the American church scene, with ethnic church planting leading the way.

During the Decade of Harvest, the Assemblies of God opened 2,940 new churches. The language districts opened 908, or 30.88 percent of the total number.

### The Church cannot afford to ignore the realities of cultural diversity.—George Barna

Net gain of new churches in the 1990–99 Decade of Harvest was 863; 452 came from our language districts. Among other major church groups—United Methodist, Southern Baptist, and Church of the Nazarene—a major part of their new church openings have been among the ethnic minorities.

#### THE COLORING OF AMERICA

Aubrey Malphurs, in his book, *Vision America*, calls the changing complexion of our nation the “coloring of America.” He quotes from an article written by Laurie Wilson, in the December 4, 1992, *Dallas Morning News*. Wilson’s article, “Bureau Predicts Population Surge,” cited the following Census Bureau predictions:

- Hispanic population will increase from 24 million in 1992 to 81 million in 2050.

- African-American population will grow from 32 million in 1992 to 62 million in 2050.

- Asian population will rise from a projected 9 million in 1992 to 41 million in 2050.

- Impact on our population will be that the non-Hispanic white population will drop from 75 percent of the total population in 1992 to 53 percent in 2050.

By the year 2050, 47+ percent of the U.S. population will be ethnic or racial minority.<sup>1</sup>

George Barna, in, *The Second Coming of the Church*, describes the double-digit population growth among African-Americans, Asians, and Hispanics as “America’s escalating ethnic diversity.” He highlights this fact by stating that “more than 35 million people in America do not speak English.”<sup>2</sup> The minority population growth is attributed to two factors: increased immigration and the fact minority populations have a greater number of children per family. Barna states that “the Church cannot afford to ignore the realities of cultural diversity.”<sup>3</sup>

#### CHURCH PLANTING AMONG THE HISPANICS

Leading the way in ethnic-church planting has been the Hispanic churches. Iglesia Cristiana Misericordia, a church that began in 1994, is an example of a self-started church-planting endeavor under the leadership of Pastor Gilberto Velez.

Gilberto and Velma Velez, who were

originally from Puerto Rico, were serving as associate pastors at El Sendero de la Cruz A/G in San Antonio, Texas, while practicing their medical professions. They moved to Laredo to join the staff at a hospital in that border town. The challenge of the 300-mile round-trip to San Antonio on Wednesdays and weekends to serve at El Sendero led them to begin a home Bible study in Laredo with a handful of people in March 1995.

Little did Velez dream that this mid-week Bible study would blossom into a Hispanic church-planting project. After several years of bivocational ministry in the church, Velez and his wife left their medical careers to become full-time pastors. God honored their step of faith and a fellow medical doctor paid their

### NEW LIFE IS NEW CHURCH PLANTING


Bill Sullivan, director of Evangelism and Church Growth for the Church of the Nazarene, writes that new-church planting must address the growing multicultural population in America today. Among the values of new-church planting that Sullivan gives are the following:

- Newer churches account for most of the net membership gain.
- Newer churches showed strong gains in worship attendance.
- Newer churches had Sunday school attendance gains, but older churches showed losses.
- New churches are increasingly multicultural.<sup>4</sup>

Ethnic-church planting in the Assemblies of God can be a Hispanic-church planting in Iowa, Arkansas,

United States as “the most incredible patchwork of peoples and cultures—one nation with 125 distinct cultural communities.” In *The American Mosaic*, Moore issues the challenge: “If we do not know how to bridge the cultural and language gap, it is time to learn. The church must minister the good news to all kinds of people. When the world’s largest Christian church is in Korea and the world’s largest Buddhist temple is in Los Angeles, we must reconsider our missionary priorities.”<sup>5</sup>

In Kingdom building, the ethnic challenge in America has become the missions priority. In his article, “Reaching Out to Latinos,” in *Christianity Today*, Rodolpho Carrasco wrote, “Church networks are cooperating to launch congregations in unlikely U.S. locations.”<sup>6</sup>

The lyrics of a song declare, “You can count all the seeds in the apple, but you can’t count all the apples in a seed.” We can count all of the churches in the United States, but only God can reveal all of the potential churches in the pockets of unreached people in America...especially among our growing multicultural population. 

*Efraim Espinoza is special projects coordinator for 2000 Celebration and editor for the Spanish edition of the Pentecostal Evangel.*



### E N D N O T E S

1. Audrey Malphurs, *Vision America* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 62.
2. George Barna, *The Second Coming of the Church* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1998), 2–4.
3. *Ibid.*, 52, 53.
4. Bill Sullivan, *The NewStart Strategy: A Statistical Analysis* (Kansas City: Nazarene International Headquarters, 1998), 4–13.
5. David Moore, *The American Mosaic* (Springfield, Mo.: Intercultural Ministries, Assemblies of God Division of Home Missions, 1997).
6. Rodolpho Carrasco, “Reaching Out to Latinos,” *Christianity Today*, 6 September, 1999, 32.

## Church planting, while not a new concept, is making a difference in the American church scene, with ethnic church planting leading the way.

support for 3 months. At the end of the 3 months, the income of the church was sufficient to meet the needs of the pastors and the ministries of the church. In January 2000, the Iglesia Cristiana Misericordia averaged over 500 on Sunday. They purchased facilities from a private school. Their expanded sanctuary, completed in April 2000, seats 800.

### ETHNIC CHURCH PLANTING IN CALIFORNIA

James Braddy, assistant superintendent for the Northern California-Nevada District, reports that “ethnic church planting has to be a priority if the church is going to reach the unchurched in our nation.” Braddy states that the district’s congregations are ministering to people from 84 language groups. Some groups have numerous churches and have organized into fellowships. They include the Fijian, Samoan, Hispanic, Tongan, and African fellowships.

Florida, or Mississippi. Some new church planters are self-starters with little or no financial support, while others are sponsored by a language or geographic district. Others are cosponsored by the language and geographic districts, locally sponsored by a larger geographic or language church, or a combination of the above. It may be a German District church in Michigan planting a Hispanic church, or it may be a California church sponsoring a Vietnamese or Samoan congregation. It may be a Memphis church allowing a Hmong group and a Hispanic group to begin a new church in its facilities. Ethnic-church planting in Alaska includes churches for native Alaskans and a flourishing Hispanic church in Anchorage. It is God’s church fulfilling the Great Commission. It is birthing new life through new-church plantings to reach all people groups.

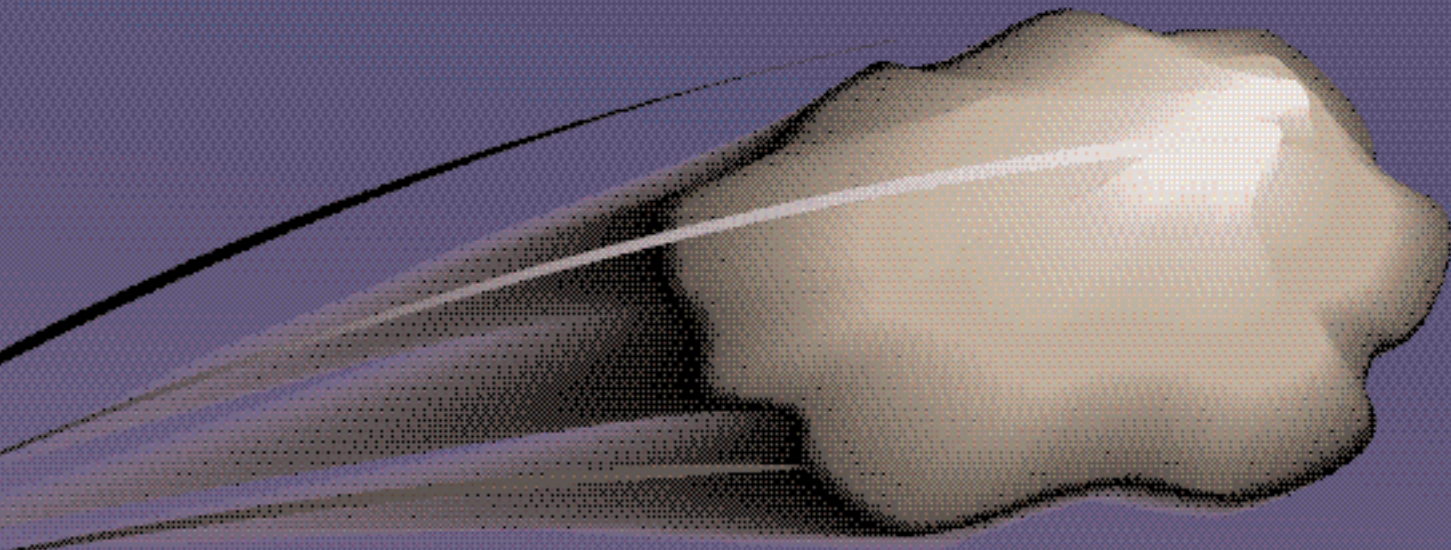
David Moore, director of Intercultural Ministries for the Assemblies of God, has described the





# Anointed Mavericks



**BY H. ROBERT RHODEN**



**M**AVERICKS HAVE PUNCTUATED THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD FROM ITS INCEPTION. THE 300 PEOPLE WHO ASSEMBLED IN HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS, IN 1914, WERE CONSIDERED MAVERICKS BY MANY IN THE CHURCH WORLD.  WE HAVE MADE ROOM IN THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD FOR PEOPLE WHO COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES. THE CLASSIC STORY THAT SURFACES AMONG MINISTERS IS ABOUT ONE OF OUR WELL-KNOWN PREACHERS WHO MADE SOME LESS THAN COMPLIMENTARY REMARKS ABOUT HIS SPIRITUAL LEADERS. WHEN CONFRONTED BY THE CADRE OF LEADERS HE REPLIED, "IT'S AMAZING WHAT YOU SAY UNDER THE ANOINTING."  WE LAUGH NERVOUSLY WISHING WE HAD BEEN CLEVER ENOUGH TO CREATE SUCH AN ANSWER. BUT THIS PERSON, WHO WAS SOMETIMES CONSIDERED A MAVERICK, HAD A PROFOUND IMPACT ON THIS CHURCH AND THE EXTENDED EVANGELICAL WORLD. MAVERICKS ARE ACCEPTED WHEN THEY HAVE AN EFFECTIVE MINISTRY AND THERE IS AN OBVIOUS ANOINTING ON THEIR LIVES. WE SEEM TO BE LESS TOLERANT WITH LOWER-IMPACT MINISTRIES AND MINISTERS.



**"You work your side of the street, and I'll work mine."**

**These were tough words for a young visionary church**

**planter to hear from a veteran pastor.**

Mavericks are not the same as rebels. Rebels defy the system and have no regard for spiritual authority. Mavericks challenge the system by pushing the boundaries of change, but they respect those in spiritual leadership.

I applaud the long overdue effort to assess and train church planters. The statistics on church openings and closings are like a revolving door. We expect the results to be more like an ascending staircase. As we take these important steps to use a filtering system to choose the right kind of leader (a person with the appropriate gift mix—people skills, passionate, spiritual, emotionally stable, adequately prepared), it is critical that we leave room for the mavericks.

### **MAVERICKS FOCUS MORE ON VISION AND EXPERIENCES THAN ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

"You work your side of the street, and I'll work mine." These were tough words for a young visionary church planter to hear from a veteran pastor. That's how I was greeted at the first sectional fellowship meeting I attended in 1969 as a church planter. Perhaps my fellow pastor was reacting to the longer hair or the untested confidence of a 26-year-old. On the other hand, maybe my seasoned colleague was reflecting some frustration in his own life.

The district had approved the church plant in Richmond, Virginia, but I was not tuned into the policies, methods, and general culture of the district. My attitude was not rebellious, but I was thinking outside the box of the traditional Pentecostal church. Our vision was to plant a church to reach people in the western suburbs. We wanted to be a

Pentecostal church with a worship experience and teaching format that made sense to the community. Our intention was to be a bridge church—a place where people who were curious, searching, or seekers hungry for spiritual truth could feel welcome and accepted. While some colleagues may have questioned our methods, they were affirming of the growth and outreach of the church.

Several times when I met with the district presbytery to respond to their questions, I began to understand the importance of denominational structure. Now that I am sitting on the other side of the table as district superintendent, I try to make room for those who focus more on vision and experience than on policy and procedures. The reality is, it can be both/and rather than either/or.

### **MAVERICKS WALK ON A SLIPPERY SLOPE**

We approved a church plant several years ago in the Potomac District, knowing the pastor was one of our mavericks. The presbyter of his section strongly supported him and asked us to work with him. The church had a fast start and gathered about 100 people. The pastor reached out to hurting people, including a couple of pastors of small churches who needed some attention. In the process, however, the pastor became more aloof and even critical of the district leadership. Without permission, he merged his congregation with another church and then moved to another part of the country. In less than 2 years, I began receiving E-mails from this brother indicating he wanted to

come and make things right with the district leadership.

It was a beautiful day when he and his wife met with the district presbytery, and in model humility, asked for forgiveness and pledged his support and loyalty to us. With our blessing he became interim pastor of a very dysfunctional church and has led the church through a time of repentance with a seminar entitled, "Setting Your Church Free." Vision and hope have been restored. There is every evidence the church will make him the permanent pastor this year.

What happened when he slipped? He was going through a season in his life where he had challenges with his children; he was bitter about a district leadership decision in the past; he was struggling with a theological issue; and he was experimenting with a new model of pastoral leadership. God has graciously brought him through that season and now he is reaching a new level of leadership.

If we believe in the Lord of the harvest, we can know He will lead us in working with mavericks who slip on the slippery slope.

### **MAVERICKS HAVE A PROTOTYPE IN BIBLICAL MODELS OF LEADERSHIP**

I like George Barna's definition of leadership: "A leader is someone who effectively motivates, mobilizes, resources, and directs people toward the fulfillment of a jointly embraced vision."<sup>1</sup> Leaders are complex, multifaceted beings who possess a unique blend of three special elements:

1. Calling or anointing
2. Godly character
3. Leadership competencies<sup>2</sup>



# Mavericks challenge the system by pushing the boundaries of change, but they respect those in spiritual leadership.

Some biblical leaders are compulsive like Moses, narcissistic like Solomon, paranoid like Saul, codependent like Samson, or passive-aggressive like Jonah.<sup>3</sup>

The Scriptures are replete with prophetic mavericks who took risks. It may be surprising to think of David, Peter, and Jesus as anointed mavericks. Let's take a closer look at them.

David, the youngest son of Jesse, was anointed king by Samuel. When David volunteered to take on Goliath, he tried on Saul's armor. He wisely said, "I cannot go in these...because I am not used to them.... Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:39,40\*). The rest is familiar history.

David also protected Saul, refusing to lay his hand on him because he was the Lord's anointed (1 Samuel 26:9). Mavericks may not always use the company armor, but they do kill giants and respect God's anointed leaders.

Peter was an impetuous maverick. He was constantly in trouble. Jesus predicted Peter's denial and was not surprised by his return to fishing after the Crucifixion. It was the experience at Caesarea Philippi, however, that galvanized his place in the Kingdom.

I'm not sure how to make room for people like Peter at the church-planting assessment meeting. It does make me pause to think that Peter could have been overlooked for the Day of Pentecost. This tension between the impetuous maverick profile and the model leader profile may be one dilemma that keeps us on the cutting edge.

Jesus challenged the system and associated with publicans and sinners. He threw His critics a curve when He said, " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:37-40).

Jesus always submitted to the will of His father, no matter what the cost. Some might resist calling Jesus a model maverick. But for the point I'm making, it is appropriate.

Thinking of mavericks as a category may give a negative connotation. Seeing them as individuals can help us appreciate their value. We need people who will challenge us when we merely rearrange our prejudices

and call it thinking.

May there always be room for God's anointed mavericks in our Movement. **e**

*H. Robert Rhoden, Fairfax, Virginia, is superintendent of the Potomac District of the Assemblies of God.*



*\*All Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.*

## E N D N O T E S

1. George Barna. *The Second Coming of the Church* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1998), 106.
2. Ibid. 107.
3. For further reading on these descriptions see Gary L. McIntosh and Samuel D. Rima, Sr., *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997), 85-137.

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**"The neighbors have been complaining about your new outreach program, Pastor."**

# Church-Planting Resource Guide

This list of resources may be helpful to those interested in church planting. Inclusion in this list does not represent endorsement by *Enrichment* Journal or the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

## ORGANIZATIONS

### Center for Rural Church Leadership

Web site: [www.seorf.ohiou.edu/~xx042/r\\_ctr/r\\_ctr.html](http://www.seorf.ohiou.edu/~xx042/r_ctr/r_ctr.html)

### Church Growth, Inc.

P.O. Box 541  
Monrovia, CA 91017  
Phone: 818-305-1280  
Web site: [www.churchgrowth.net](http://www.churchgrowth.net)

### The Church Multiplication Training Center

3214 Summersworth Run  
Fort Wayne, IN 46804  
Phone: 219-434-0090  
Fax: 219-459-0597  
E-mail: [info@cmtcmultiply.org](mailto:info@cmtcmultiply.org)  
Web site: [www.cmtcmultiply.org](http://www.cmtcmultiply.org)

### Church Planting Ministries

223 Driftwood Dr.  
Lafayette, LA 70503  
Phone: 337-991-9909  
E-mail: [jim@plantingministries.org](mailto:jim@plantingministries.org)  
Web site: [www.plantingministries.org](http://www.plantingministries.org)

### ChurchSmart Resources

350 Randy Rd., Suite 5  
Carol Stream, IL 60188-1831  
Phone: 1-800-253-4276  
Outside U.S. 630-871-2598  
Fax: 630-871-8708  
E-mail: [churchsmart@compuserve.com](mailto:churchsmart@compuserve.com)  
Web site: [www.churchsmart.com](http://www.churchsmart.com)

### Church Resource Ministries

1240 N. Lakeview Ave., Suite 120  
Anaheim, CA 92807

Phone: 714 779-0370  
800-777-6658  
Fax: 714-779-0189  
E-mail: [crm@crmnet.org](mailto:crm@crmnet.org)

### CoachNet

1786 Sunny Heights Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90065  
Phone: 909-989-3599  
Web site: [www.coachnet.org](http://www.coachnet.org)

### Dynamic Church Planting International

P.O. Box 4119  
Oceanside, CA 92052-4119  
Phone: 760-940-2640  
800-255-0431  
E-mail: [service@dcpi.org](mailto:service@dcpi.org)  
Web site: [www.dcpi.org](http://www.dcpi.org)

### New Church Dot Com

Web site: [www.newchurches.com/](http://www.newchurches.com/)  
Easum, Bandy, and Associates  
554 Bayside Drive  
Port Aransas, TX 78373-4922  
Phone: 361-749-5364  
Fax: 361-749-5800  
E-Mail: [easum@easumbandy.com](mailto:easum@easumbandy.com)  
Web site: [www.easum.com](http://www.easum.com)

### Institute for Small Church Health

Western Seminary  
5511 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd.  
Portland, OR 98215  
Phone: 1-800-547-4546  
Web site: [www.westernseminary.edu/ichsmall.html](http://www.westernseminary.edu/ichsmall.html)

### The McIntosh Church Growth Network

Gary McIntosh, director  
P.O. Box 892589  
Temecula, CA 92589-2589  
Phone: 909-506-3986  
Web site: [www.mcintoshcgn.com](http://www.mcintoshcgn.com)

### Percept

151 Kalmus Dr., Suite A104

Costa Mesa, CA 92626-5988  
Phone: 1-800-442-6277  
Web site: [www.percept1.com](http://www.percept1.com)

### T-NET International

1750 S. Chambers Road  
Aurora, CO 80017  
Phone: 1-800-995-5362  
Fax: 1-303-745-1248  
E-mail: [tnetoffice@aol.com](mailto:tnetoffice@aol.com)  
Web Page: [www.tnetwork.com](http://www.tnetwork.com)

### Urban Ministries

P.O. Box 436987  
Chicago, IL 60643-6987  
Phone: 1-800-860-8642  
Fax: 1-708-868-7107

## RESOURCES

### Audio/Video

*Audio Church Planting School*, Church Planting Ministries, 337-991-9909, [www.plantingministries.org](http://www.plantingministries.org). An 11-hour audio instruction tool that enhances the *Church Planter's Blueprint* taught by Jim Allen.

Logan, Robert E. and Steven L. Ogne *The Church Planter's Toolkit* Church Smart Resources, 800-253-4276; (outside the U.S. 630-871-2598). Twelve audiocassettes and detailed checklist and action planning worksheets for church planters and their supervisors.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Churches Planting Churches*, ChurchSmart Resources, 800-253-4276. A 10-segment, 90-minute video designed to walk your church through the process of planting a daughter church.

Moore, Ralph. *Discovering Advanced Church Planting*, International Center for Leadership and Development (1-800-804-0777). Complement to *The Church Planter's Toolkit*.

## BOOKS

- Ahlen, J. Timothy, and J.V. Thomas. *One Church, Many Congregations: The Key Church Strategy*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.
- Chaney, Charles L. *Church Planting at the End of the Twentieth Century*, revised and expanded. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1991.
- Conn, Harvie M., ed. *Planting and Growing Urban Churches: From Dream to Reality*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997.
- Egli, Jim and Ben Hoerr. *The I Factor: How To Influence Your World*. Urbana, Ill.: North Star Strategies.
- Fairchild, Samuel D. *Church Planting for Reproduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.
- Hesselgrave, David J. *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: A Guide for Home and Foreign Missions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980.
- MacNair, Donald J. *The Birth, Care, and Feeding of a Local Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973.
- Malphurs, Aubrey. *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998.
- Mannoia, Kevin. *Church Planting the Next Generation: Introducing the Century 21 Church Planting System*. Indianapolis: Light and Life Press, 1994.
- Murray, Stuart. *Church Planting: Laying Foundations*. Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press, 1998.
- Romo, Oscar I. *American Mosaic: Church Planting in Ethnic America*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1993.
- Shenk, David W., and Ervin R. Stutzman. *Creating Communities of the Kingdom: New Testament Models of Church Planting*. Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1988.
- Schaller, Lyle. *44 Questions for Church Planters*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.
- Schwarz, Christian. *Natural Church Development*. Carol Stream: ChurchSmart Resources.
- Wagner, C. Peter. *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest: A Comprehensive Guide*. Ventura: Regal Books, 1990.
- Warren, Rick. *The Purpose-Driven*

*Church; Growth Without Compromising Your Message and Mission*. Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.

## PERIODICALS

### Cell Church

Randall Neighbour, ed.  
TOUCH Outreach Ministries, Inc.  
P.O. Box 19888  
Houston, TX 77224  
Web site: [www.touchusa.org](http://www.touchusa.org)  
Quarterly

### Church Growth Today

John N. Vaughan, ed.  
Southwest Baptist University  
1202 E. Austin  
Bolivar, MO 65613  
Bimonthly

### Journal of the American Society for Church Growth

Office of Continuing Education  
Fuller Theological Seminary  
135 N. Oakland Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91182  
Phone: 1-626-584-5293  
Web site: [www.ascg.org](http://www.ascg.org)  
Three times per year.

### Mikros: A Newsletter Written for Small Church Leaders

Glenn C. Daman, Ed.  
Western Institute for Small Church Health  
5511 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd.  
Portland, OR 97215  
Phone: 1-800-547-4546  
Bimonthly

### Net Results

5001 Avenue N.  
Lubbock, TX 79412-2993  
Phone: 806-762-8094

## WORKBOOK/KITS

*Church Planter's Blueprint*, Church Planting Ministries (1-337-991-9909)

Becker, Paul. *Dynamic Church Planting: A Complete Handbook*. Oceanside, Calif: Dynamic Church Planting International, 1992. (1-800-255-0431)

\_\_\_\_\_, and Dr. Mark Williams.

*Dynamic Daughter Church Planting Handbook*. Oceanside, Calif: Dynamic Church Planting International, 1998. (1-800-255-0431)

*Handbook for House Churches*  
The Fellowship of Church Planters  
75 Capron Farm Dr.  
Warwick, RI 02886

Easum, Bill, *Bill Easum's Church Planting Workbook*  
Easum, Bandy, and Associates  
(1-361-749-5800)

## CHURCH PLANTING ASSESSMENTS

*Church-Planter Assessment*  
*New Church Site Selection Profile*  
*Mother or Partner Church Commitment Profile*  
*Mini-workbooks: The Profile Series*  
Order the above resources from:  
Dynamic Church Planting International (1-800-255-0431)

## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

*American Demographics Magazine*  
P.O. Box 10580  
Riverton NJ 08076-0580  
Phone: 800-529-7502  
E-mail: [subs@demographics.com](mailto:subs@demographics.com)  
Web site: [www.demographics.com](http://www.demographics.com)

### U. S. Census Bureau

Phone: 202-482-4883  
Web site: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

### FedStats

Web site: [www.fedstats.gov](http://www.fedstats.gov)  
More than 70 agencies in the United States Federal Government produce statistics of interest to the public.

—Resource list compiled by Steven R. Mills,  
leadership development coordinator for  
Sunday School Promotion and Training,  
Springfield, Missouri.

# interview

WITH RON F. MCMANUS

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP SERIES (PART 1)

If you don't care who gets the credit, there's no problem in leading through the influencers and seeing the Kingdom advanced and the church moving forward.



RON F. MCMANUS

**B**ecause leadership is, at its core, a spiritual activity, leaders and would-be leaders must give serious attention to mastering the art of spiritual leadership in both their personal and professional lives. This interview is the first in a series of three that will explore the nature and issues surrounding spiritual leadership. *Enrichment's* executive editor, Wayde I. Goodall, visited with Ron F. McManus, an Assemblies of God minister and president of EQUIP, a nonprofit ministry founded by John Maxwell. EQUIP seeks to provide leadership training for pastors internationally, in the urban centers of America, and on college campuses. In part two, McManus will discuss the challenges in spiritual leadership.

#### WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

**MCMANUS:** Leadership is sometimes viewed as a position or a title; but leadership is influence. People follow a leader. Leaders are not necessarily elected. There are people in a church who do not have a position or title, but they are the leaders in that church.

#### SOMETIMES THE PASTOR MAY NOT BE THE LEADER. EXPLAIN.

**MCMANUS:** Sometimes people think that having a position or title makes them leaders. Position does not make a leader; a leader makes the position. When a pastor is new to a church, and there are members who have been in leadership roles and

influence for years, that pastor needs to understand it will take time to build credibility and become the leader of that church.

Pastors ask, "What do I do if I have two or three people who are the influencers?"

My response: "You must influence the influencers. That's how you lead. If you don't care who gets the credit, there's no problem in leading through the influencers and seeing the Kingdom advanced and the church moving forward."

Our egos are sometimes tied to our positions and we try to prove we are in charge. I tell pastors, "If you need to keep telling people you are the pastor, you're probably not the leader."

#### HOW DO YOU FIND OUT WHO THE INFLUENCERS ARE?

**MCMANUS:** For the pastor who has just come to a church, the church board meeting is a good place to determine who the influencers are. During the first meeting or two, there will be one or two people who, when they say something or give an opinion, others agree with them. You know you have an influencer when you see people follow an individual, whether he or she is on the church board or in the congregation.

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE INFLUENCERS OF THE CHURCH?

**MCMANUS:** The worst thing a pastor can do is to challenge the leadership of the church. If he does, he will lose. If a pastor has been at a church a year or two and feels he is not the leader and wants to challenge the major influencers, he had better buy stock in U-Haul, because he will need it. Position is not what makes a leader; it's the ability to build relationships, credibility, and integrity. The way we function and lead helps people connect with us.

Learning the principles of leadership involves continuing to provide resources for our lives, growing in our understanding about working with people and leading them.

These men had the other gifts, but when they came back from Canaan they were unable to influence the other people. An individual can have other qualities; but if you can't get people to follow you, you will still be in the wilderness.

### EXPLAIN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP.

**MCMANUS:** As Pentecostals and charismatics, we sometimes think spiritual leadership involves the spiritual gifts and the work of the Holy Spirit. This is



We teach levels of leadership in our conferences. A person moves from a positional leader to a leader who has built relationships with people. This is moving up the relational ladder. The greater the relationship, the more effective the pastor is in leading.

### DESCRIBE THE QUALITIES OF A HEALTHY, EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN LEADER.

**MCMANUS:** There are four main qualities of a healthy, effective Christian leader. The first is character. The character of a leader will ultimately be manifested. If a leader does not have character, his other gifts do not matter. The second is perspective. A leader must see the big picture. Vision is the third quality. Leaders see what does not exist. The fourth quality is influence. Joshua and Caleb are examples of leaders who did not have influence.

true—spiritual leadership does involve understanding the various gifts God puts in the Body and in the lives of leaders who are anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Some people want to separate spiritual leadership from principles of leadership, but they cannot be separated. Some think, *I'm going to learn to depend on God, or I'm going to learn to be a leader*, when in fact, those are not two different options.

The Lord expects us to grow, to become all He has called us to be, and to invest our lives in other people. We talk about success in ministry, which includes knowing our calling and purpose, and reaching toward our potential in God. But learning the principles of leadership involves continuing to provide resources for our lives, growing in our understanding about working with people and leading them.


When I graduated from Bible college, I thought I had all the answers. Thirty years later, I have all the questions. I know more today about being a leader than I have ever known, but I'm more dependent on God than I have ever been. Spiritual leadership and principles of leadership are not dichotomous. We need men and women who will take the leadership principles found throughout Scripture and grow in their understanding about how to be effective leaders. At the same time these men and women need to understand that leadership will only bring eternal results if it is empowered and anointed by the Holy Spirit.

### HOW CAN LEADERSHIP BE LEARNED?

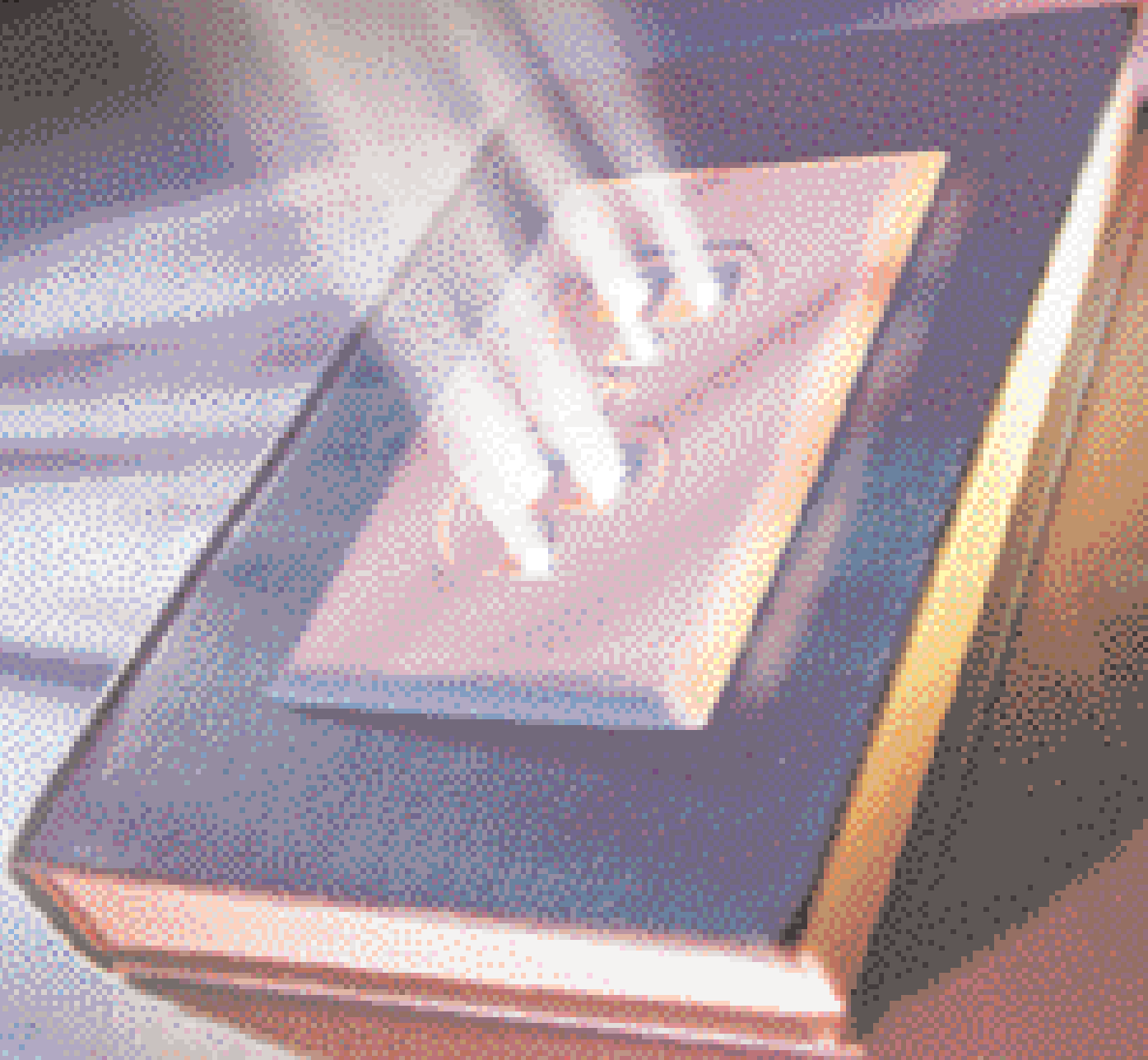
**MCMANUS:** God gives people different gifts, and some people have greater leadership gifts than others. But everyone can become a better leader. We can grow in our understanding of effective leadership.

We talk about the difference between a manager and a leader. Those who lead churches need to understand the leadership gift. Managers take things that are presently in place and organize them. Leaders are visionaries. Leaders create things that do not exist. That is why church planters need to be leaders; it takes a leader to see what is not there. We need to grow in our understanding of seeing what God sees.

I challenge pastors to become leaders in two ways: If your church is ordained of God, then God has a plan and a vision for your church. Do you know what it is? Second, what is your church going to look like 5 years from now? Can you see what God sees? Can you see the potential of what God wants your church to be?

If you are pastoring and can't see anything different in your church 5 years from now, you need to let someone who can see what God sees pastor that church. God has a plan to reach your community, and He wants to use you and your church to do it. God wants to help you grow in your understanding about what a leader really is—a person who can see what does not exist. 

# Preaching With



BY STEPHEN F. OLFORD

# Power

**With the redemptive power there was also a persuasive power**

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:1–7. Thessalonica, capital of Macedonia, was one of the most popular towns in Paul’s day with a population of some 200,000. Located on the main road to Rome, it was as prosperous a city as Corinth or Ephesus, but thoroughly materialistic. While Paul taught in its synagogues to godly men and God-fearing Greeks, most of

**that recognized these men as men of God who spoke the**

the population was composed of pagans. The apostle was a strategist; and it is a wonderful study, in and of itself, to see how this man planted the gospel flag of our Lord Jesus Christ in these strategic centers of Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, and, of course, Rome.

He knew that the highway from Thessalonica to Rome was full of people who, when they

**truth of God, and they identified themselves with them.**

came to grips with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, would become missionaries to the far ends of the earth. As Paul said in verse 8: “For from you the word of the Lord...sounded [or trumpeted] forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.”\* What a commendation for a church!

What impresses me is the way in which the Word of God penetrated this pagan city with such effectiveness in so short a time. Some scholars maintain that Paul returned at other times to Thessalonica—a theory we cannot prove; but his first visit to Thessalonica lasted 3 to 4 weeks at the most. Persecution eventually forced him out of Thessalonica and brought him to Berea where he had a wonderful reception. But the same Jews who created the tumult at Thessalonica followed him there and he had to go on to Corinth

their hearts, so that they became the elect of God (1:4).

First, consider:

#### THE DELIVERY OF THE MESSAGE

Paul said, “Our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power” (verse 5). Or to put it positively, “Our gospel came to you not in word alone, but also in power.” Look at those two expressions, “Our gospel...in word” (verse 5). As we proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ—whether in edifying saints or evangelizing sinners—

**When we do not center our message on Jesus and Him crucified, we fail to preach the gospel. True conviction of sin is a refusal to acknowledge Christ's lordship.**

where he wrote this letter. Meanwhile, Timothy was sent back to find out how the saints were faring and returned with a glowing report. True, there were problems. Some of the young Christians believed that the Lord Jesus was coming back so soon that they didn't need to work. Paul had to scold and remind them, “If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10). Nowhere in Paul's writings is the doctrine of our Lord's return expounded so explicitly as here. Amazingly, Paul brought a church into existence in a matter of weeks, and the two letters he penned after he left contain basic doctrines they could understand at one reading. That shows the depth, power, and penetration of his preaching.

With that preamble I want to work through verses 5 and 6 to discover what Paul delineates as the delivery of the message (how the message was delivered); the dynamism of the message (how it came with power); and the decisiveness of the message (how they “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,” 1:9); and how that “work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope” (1:3) were born in

there are two characteristics that are implied in those phrases “Our gospel...in word.”

The first expression refers, of course, to:

#### The Inerrant Word

“Our gospel...in word” (verse 5). The word “logos” speaks of the Word of God in general. It is the word used to describe God's holy Word and implies our solemn responsibility to be the mouthpieces of that Word.

You and I have an incredibly awesome, yet honorable task, to proclaim that inerrant Word. In fact, the authority of our ministry is wrapped up in the way we understand and communicate that Word.

Remember, Thessalonica was a heathen city. There had been no advance delegation to set up an office, publicize the crusade, and train counselors. There had been nothing but the invasion of a team—Paul, Silas, and Timothy—into the city of Thessalonica. They started out in the synagogue (see Acts 17, ff.), discussing, debating, and preaching the inerrant Word.

But, second, they came proclaiming:

#### The Incarnate Word

“Our gospel [came] to you” (verse 5). The thought is that of men who could claim God's Word as “our gospel.” Observe that Paul doesn't say, “We came with God's gospel” or “Christ's gospel,” but “our gospel” (verse 5)—that which had become real to him, real in him, and real through him. He came explosively into a pagan culture with an incarnate gospel—the gospel on two legs, the gospel of a glowing heart in a body marked and scarred by persecution. “Our gospel [came] to you” (verse 5). That's what made the difference.

As I've said so often throughout my ministry, what is not incarnational is not redemptive, and what is not redemptive is not life-transforming. We cannot be detached from the message we preach. We can do that with other disciplines, such as lectures on physics, engineering, mathematics, or geography and be totally detached—merely memorizing information, research, and then speaking. But that's not giving ourselves; that is not incarnational. Unfortunately, all across pulpits in America today, we preach the sermon, pronounce the benediction, and dismiss the congregation. But there is nothing saving about that. Paul writes, “Our gospel...[came] to you in word”—logos (verse 5). It came as “our gospel,” the incarnate Word.

The next thought that commands our attention is:

#### THE DYNAMISM OF THE MESSAGE

“Our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power” (verse 5). The term “power,” as most of you know, is the word *dunamis* from which we get dynamism. Many believe it could possibly carry the idea of signs and wonders that followed Paul's preaching.

#### It Was a Redemptive Power.

In the opening words of Paul to the saints at Rome, he writes: “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first



and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16). That is redemptive power!

When we preach the inerrant and incarnate Word, a power comes upon us that is redemptive and saving. The writer of the Book of Hebrews said it this way: “The Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

I long—and I say this from the depths of my heart—to have such dependence, such faith, such trust, such reliance in the redemptive power of the Word of God that I don’t need to cajole, persuade, or do anything to see people transformed on the spot.

During my crusading days I had a decision card that was completed by all who came forward to confess the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the questions read: “At what point in the service did you

was not only a redemptive power.

#### **It Was a Persuasive Power.**

“You know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit” (verses 5,6). Despite the riots and outward persecution on every hand, the people at Thessalonica saw the incarnational outworking of the gospel Paul preached and the triumphant power by which these men lived. They could have easily said, “Listen! If we are going to be stoned, stabbed, and run out of our homes, we’re having nothing to do with Christianity.” But the Scripture says they “became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit” (verse 6). I love that.

So with the redemptive power there was also a persuasive power that recognized these men as men of God who

much assurance. It’s just put in our English there to make the sense. The phrase “much assurance” is that from which we get the idea of “fullness of assurance.” Some translations read “in much conviction.” There was a decisiveness about this ministry. People did not halt between two opinions; they made commitments that were decisive.

I want to pause on this concept of conviction. I don’t believe anyone can preach with authority unless he or she is anointed with the Spirit of God. Christ did not launch His messianic ministry until He fulfilled three conditions that I often speak on—a life of holiness, a life of yieldedness, and a life of prayerfulness. At His baptism the Spirit of God came upon Him, recognizing Him as the anointed of God (Matthew 3:17). Then later, having risen from the dead, He declared to His disciples—and to us, “Tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until you are endued” or “clothed” (Luke 24:49). The filling is inward; the clothing (anointing) is outward. If you are not clothed then you stand in the pulpit naked and are subject to every attack of the enemy.

The Holy Spirit is mentioned here in verse 5—“And in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance [i.e., with full conviction].” This is a two-fold conviction. It is the conviction with which they preached. These men meant what they said. Everybody, however hostile, knew the team meant business because conviction was there.

But I believe there is a deeper implication here. The text says, “In the Holy Spirit...in much assurance [or with full conviction]” (verse 5). Before the Lord Jesus went to the cross He said in John 16:8–11, “When He [the Holy Spirit] has come [to you], He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” Then He qualified those words “of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler [prince] of this world is judged.” I am persuaded that when a person speaks

**If we are going to know the living righteousness of Christ imputed and imparted, we must preach not only a crucified Savior but a risen and reigning Lord who demands holy living.**

trust Christ?” To the glory of God I can say that 85 to 95 percent of people said, “While you were preaching.” A good number were also saved during the invitation, when I led them in a prayer and asked them to commit their lives to Christ. A smaller proportion were saved after they had been counseled.

But I’m asking myself, who else—except for Silas and Timothy—could have counseled the people who eventually became the embryo of that church at Thessalonica? Paul preached to pagans—religious, Hellenistic Jews—and they were saved on the spot. What’s wrong with our preaching today? Why aren’t people saved right in their seats while the message is being preached? That’s the concern I have. But notice it

spoke the truth of God, and they identified themselves with them.

I encourage you to develop young men in your church who are the result of your own ministry, and who want to be preachers. That is how it should be. Jesus trained 12 men, even though one of them was a dud. He poured himself into those men, and I urge you to do the same.

A third element we must observe is:

#### **THE DECISIVENESS OF THE MESSAGE**

“Our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake” (verse 5). Actually, the prepositional phrase “in the Holy Spirit” carries the thought of

under the anointing of the Holy Spirit three things always happen.

### **The Holy Spirit Convicts of the Nature of Sin.**

“He will convict the world of sin” (verse 8). If I were to ask you how people should react to conviction, I wonder what your answer would be? Many people would say, “Well, obviously, the Holy Spirit would convict of smoking, of drug taking, of laziness, of jealousy, and so on.” That answer reflects a shallow reaction to the effects of sin, but has nothing to do with the Holy Spirit’s main function: conviction “of sin, because they do not believe in Me” (verses 8,9). The centrality of our message is Christ. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul says, “I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2). The word crucified is emphatic. I believe that when we do not center our message on Jesus and Him crucified, we fail to preach the gospel. True conviction of sin is a refusal to acknowledge Christ’s lordship.

### **The Holy Spirit Convicts of the Need of Righteousness.**

“He will convict...of righteousness, because I go to My Father” (John 16:8,10). That is a wonderful statement. “[He] was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification” (Romans 4:25). If we are

going to know the living righteousness of Christ imputed and imparted, we must preach not only a crucified Savior but a risen and reigning Lord who demands holy living. That’s why, in 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul bears down on the holy life. “This is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). The apostle was charging them not to engage in the sex-perverted living that was so prevalent in pagan Thessalonica, but to use their bodies honorably because the Spirit of God indwelt them. He reminded them that, “God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness” (1 Thessalonians 4:4-7); and then he finishes his epistle with that beautiful prayer: “May...God...Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23). In fact, the theme of 1 Thessalonians is holiness in the light of the Lord’s return. That’s what happens when you preach in the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **The Holy Spirit Convicts of the Nearness of Judgment.**

“He will convict the world of...judgment” (John 16:11). True biblical preaching must be prophetic. We must announce the coming of Christ and the nearness of judgment.

Some months ago my wife and I were in Raleigh, North Carolina, to conduct

the funeral service of Jean Phillips, wife of Dr. John Phillips, who is a guest lecturer at our center. Dr. Phillips requested that I preach on the text that brought Jean to Christ as a young Canadian girl of 16, namely, 2 Corinthians 6:2—“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” I did that and God honored His Word. When I gave the invitation, grandchildren were converted and other people surrendered their lives to the Lord. It was one of the most moving funeral services I have ever conducted. I dwelt on that phrase, “Now is the accepted time.” I warned, “Don’t miss the time of salvation; don’t miss the truth of salvation. ‘Now is the accepted time.’ ”

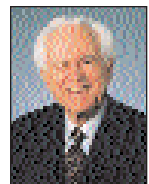
Paul underscores it: “Behold, now,” and that sense of urgency must be in our preaching. If the Holy Spirit is operating when we speak, He not only convicts of the nature of sin, not only of the need of righteousness, but of the nearness of judgment.

So we have looked at preaching with power. The delivery of the message: it is an inerrant Word; it is an incarnate Word. We spelled out the dynamism of the message—a redemptive power—“the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16). But it is also a persuasive power, because it immediately draws from a pagan culture disciples who are prepared to follow, even at the cost of affliction and persecution. Last, it is a decisive message, because when the Holy Spirit speaks there is conviction of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

So I charge you to go forth to preach the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit with much conviction.

Preaching with power—  
Is God’s will for all;  
This is the hour—  
To answer His call. **e**

*Dr. Stephen F. Olford is founder of the Stephen Olford Center for Biblical Preaching, Memphis, Tennessee.*



**“Great sermon, Pastor.”**

*\*Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version.*



S U B M I S S I O N M U S T

*By What*

A L W A Y S B E B A S E D

*Authority?*

O N L O V E , N E V E R O N L A W

**BY ROBERT L. BRANDT**

**Authority is a**  
much misunderstood  
**and abused subject. The**  
notion of taking authority and  
**exercising authority is**  
overworked. In the world,  
**authority may be earned,**  
conveyed, or usurped. It may  
**also be inherited. But how**  
does one gain authority in  
**the spiritual realm, and**  
in particular in the  
**Christian arena?**



In the spiritual realm, a person's authority for acting on behalf of God is in direct proportion to his or her submission to God—no more, no less. For Christians, authority has to be given; they do not possess it merely because they presume they have it.

God to give him wisdom. He sensed God saying, "I am giving you authority to handle the matter."

The superintendent, along with the assistant district superintendent, met with the pastor, his associate, and the board members to discuss the problem.

As another member of the board spoke, the superintendent perceived that this board member was at the heart of the problem. With an authority not his own, the superintendent said, "Brother, I perceive you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." He spoke with an authority that he had never before experienced. Suddenly the board member's countenance changed. Everyone in the room noticed it. This board member also resigned and the problem was resolved. This superintendent experienced a God-given authority that brought closure to a difficult situation and set the stage for the church to go forward.

There is a biblically established authority, a God-prescribed chain of command. Paul proclaimed it clearly: "But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 1:13). Headship and authority are synonymous. The God-established order is (1) God, (2) Christ, (3) man, (4) woman, and (5) child (Colossians 3:20). And in every case, submission to the higher authority is required, but in no case is authority equated with tyranny. Furthermore, submission must always be based on love, never on law. It must always be at the initiative of the submitter (except perhaps in the case of a child), never at the demand of the authority figure. For if it is at the demand of the authority figure, it is really not submission at all, but slavery or tyranny.

There is an authority inherent in an office, especially a Spirit-assigned office. In the secular world, this can be illustrated by a sign on former President Harry Truman's desk that read: The buck stops here. He was the highest authority figure for the U.S. government.

The Scriptures assign authority to specified individuals. Even then it is a defined and a restricted authority. For example, Peter wrote to pastors, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by

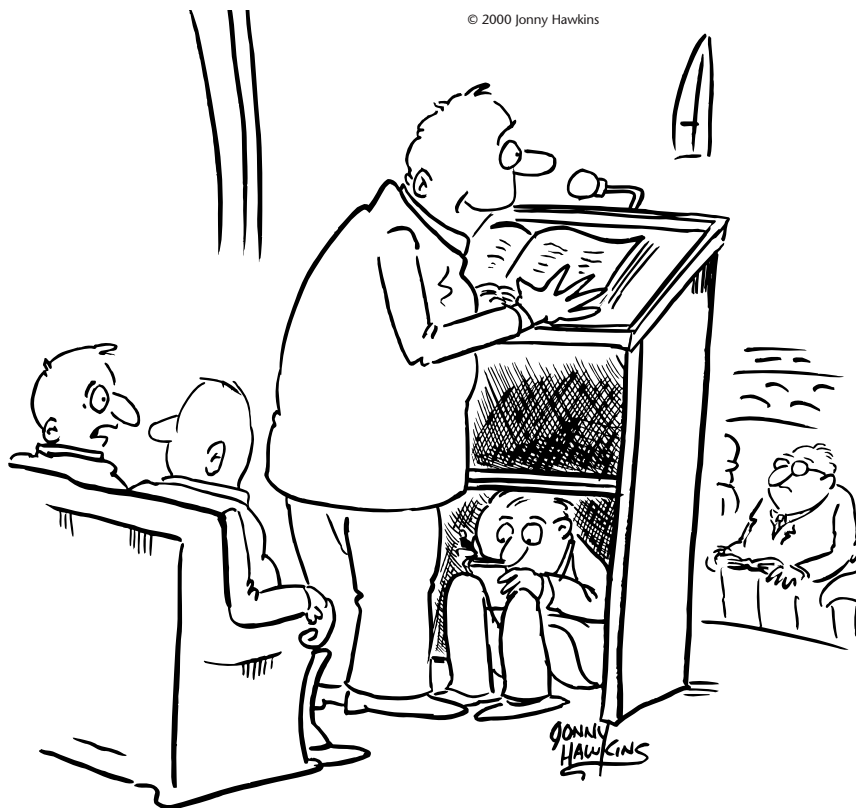
**Authority springs not from mouthing His name, but from being vitally connected to Him, and directed by the Holy Spirit.**

Nor do they acquire it by their own devices. Jesus "called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases" (Luke 9:1). The disciples' power and authority was contingent on their relationship. The Twelve were His disciples; they walked with Him.

A district superintendent was invited to arbitrate a pastor-board conflict. He had heard some of the story, but felt inadequate to settle the dispute. While driving to the church, he asked

The superintendent let each person explain what he perceived to be the problem. As they proceeded, a young board member insisted vehemently that the issues be decided according to the teachings of the Bible. The superintendent agreed, but soon realized that the young man had a very limited knowledge of the Bible. The superintendent said to him, "I believe you want to do God's will, but I sense that it is not in your best interest to serve on this board. I suggest you resign." And he did without hesitation.

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**"That's his understudy."**

constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:2,3). Whenever authority is translated into lordship over the church, it exceeds its God-intended bounds. On the other side of the coin is the unmistakable directive to all believers, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls" (Hebrews 13:17).

Complementing and accompanying the biblically assigned authority related to spiritual authority—apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher—is an authority bestowed by the Holy Spirit. This is what separated Jesus from the scribes, Pharisees, and other religious leaders. "For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:29). Jesus himself, in declaring His mission, cited the Holy Spirit as the source of His authority: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (Luke 4:18), and He proceeded to declare His mission.

More important, there is an authority that may spring up in a Spirit-filled believer as occasion demands. Jesus promised, "But ye shall receive power...and ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8). There is no greater

direction and in His own timing, Peter and John suddenly possessed an authority and in an instant the poor man was healed.

It is noteworthy that Peter addressed the crowd who quickly gathered and explained the source of the authority by which the miracle occurred. Listen to his witness: "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power (authority) or holiness we had made this man to walk?" The Jews had killed the Prince of life, but "faith in his name, hath made this man strong" (Acts 3:12,15,16).

The believer's authority is usually manifested through the gifts of the Spirit, and those gifts are at the Spirit's disposition. "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (1 Corinthians 12:11).


A man devoid of the Holy Spirit has no spiritual authority. The seven sons of Sceva in Acts 19 learned this to their chagrin. They sought to exercise an authority they did not possess. "And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame

from mouthing His name, but from being vitally connected to Him and directed by the Holy Spirit. We do well to remember that, lest we find ourselves as Sceva's sons.

Finally, there is an authority derived from study, application, and experience. It is certainly honorable for a person to become an authority in his field. Such authority is earned, not conferred. However, such authority must never be confused with the authority conferred by the Holy Spirit. Both are important, but possessing humanly acquired authority does not negate the need for spiritual authority.

Our human tendency is to rely on academic accomplishment for our authority, while at the same time overlooking our profound need for spiritual authority. Human authority springs out of human attainment and accomplishment, while spiritual authority has its source in a vital relationship with God and in a revelation from God. Only the man who hears from God in heaven has supernatural authority to act for God on earth.

In summary, we arrive at five distinct conclusions:

- Spiritual authority comes through submission and is always at the same level as the submission.
- Submission is required toward those whom God has placed over us.
- Authority assigned to spiritual leaders is not to be abused by a spiritual officeholder, nor is it to be rejected or refused by those for whom it is intended.
- Genuine spiritual authority is bestowed at the Spirit's command, and cannot be exercised apart from His impartation and direction.
- Authority gained by application, study, research, and experience is not to be invalidated, but it is not to be substituted for Spirit-imparted authority. 

**In the world, authority may be earned, conveyed, or usurped. It may also be inherited. But how does one gain authority in the spiritual realm, and in particular in the Christian arena?**


witness for Christ than a believer empowered by the Spirit, exercising that authority. The Book of Acts demonstrates it well. And it should be noted that Spirit-given authority operates only at the Spirit's direction, never at the wish or whim of man.

Peter and John had probably passed the lame man at the temple gate numerous times (Acts 3:2), just as Jesus and many others had, without any unusual happening. Yet, at the Spirit's

them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded" (Acts 19:15,16). It should also be understood that there is no magic in the name of Jesus. Merely pronouncing His name, as the sons of Sceva did, in an effort to gain certain ends, is as meaningless as waving a magic wand. Apart from a vital relationship with Jesus and the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the use of His name is a hollow exercise. Authority springs not

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A painting depicting a man in a white robe standing in a desert landscape. He is surrounded by camels and a tent, suggesting a scene from the Bible. The man is looking towards the viewer. The background shows a vast, open desert under a blue sky. The overall style is that of a classical or religious painting.

**THE SCRIPTURES INDICATE THAT ONE UNDERLYING IDEA OF THE ANOINTING HAS TO DO WITH "AROMA." EXODUS 30 OUTLINES THE FORMULA FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE ANOINTING OIL USED IN PREPARATION FOR TABERNACLE WORSHIP. THE BLEND OF MYRRH, CINNAMON, CANE, CASSIA, AND OLIVE OIL PRODUCES A STRONG, PUNGENT ODOR. THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF THIS PERFUMED OIL WAS ASSOCIATED WITH TABERNACLE WORSHIP. AS A RESULT, PEOPLE WOULD BE CONDITIONED TO EQUATE THIS AROMA WITH THE HOLY.**



**M**uch is being said today about the anointing. Some claim they have the anointing, implying others do not. Some tell us we must pursue God in the hope that we might become one of the “anointed few.” Some even tell where to get the anointing. “If you will only make this pilgrimage, and have a certain person pray over you, you’ll be guaranteed a special anointing.” Jim Cymbala, pastor of Brooklyn Tabernacle, said, “This approach to anointing is no less than witchcraft. While it’s true that the anointing was limited to certain individuals and places in the Old Testament, this Old Testament thinking must not skew our understanding of the anointing in these “post-Pentecost days.”

One popular notion being promoted today is to equate the anointing with gifting. Someone says, “I have an anointing to teach,” meaning that the ministry gift of teaching has been bestowed on him or her. Others say, “Find out what your anointing is,” or “Minister within your anointing.” Using the term *anointing* in this way

The aged apostle states the matter simply and succinctly in 1 John 2:20: “You have an anointing from the Holy One.”\* Again in verse 27, “The anointing you received from him remains in you.” The language clearly indicates the source of the anointing is not a man, whatever kind of messenger he may claim to be. The anointing doesn’t flow from a ministry, regardless of all the wonderful, powerful manifestations that may be happening. The anointing isn’t found in a revival center or simulcast. You don’t capture the anointing by chasing it down. Dear children, you have it.

So, what is the anointing? The Scriptures indicate that one underlying idea of the anointing has to do with “aroma.” Exodus 30 outlines the formula for the composition of the anointing oil used in preparation for tabernacle worship. The blend of myrrh, cinnamon, cane, cassia, and olive oil produces a strong, pungent odor. The exclusive use of this perfumed oil was associated with tabernacle worship. As a result, people would be conditioned to equate this

# Anointing

causes us to minimize the basic meaning embodied in Scripture. Though the Greek words for gift (*charisma*) and anointing (*chrisma*) look and sound very much alike, they are two very different words. We understand the *charismata* of 1 Corinthians 12 are special manifestations of the Holy Spirit flowing through the believer for the edification of the Body. *Chrisma*, on the other hand, is the word from which the name Christ is derived—the Anointed One, the King, the Messiah. A biblical understanding of the anointing is much more than a description of certain giftings in a believer.

aroma with the holy.

Everything pertaining to tabernacle worship was to be anointed with this oil—the utensils, the furnishings, the priests who would serve, even the tabernacle. Application of this oil was not simply a little dab behind the ears or an application of room freshener. This 5-gallon bucket of anointing oil was to be poured out. In Psalm 133:2, we get a picture of Aaron’s anointing, with the oil being poured on his head, running down his beard, and onto his priestly garments. After this anointing, the priests moved about performing their duties with the aroma of the anointing



filling the air. This aroma permeated the camp despite the multitude of noxious odors that were present. Imagine the smell of burning flesh and singed animal hair from the daily sacrifices. Imagine the odors produced by a camp of 2 million refugees and tens of thousands of animals. In the midst of this swill of repugnant odors, the distinct aroma of the anointed priest would still be clearly identifiable. It provided the people with a constant reminder of the presence of the Holy, Lord God Almighty.

This anointing had nothing to do with the expertise of the priest's performance. It had nothing to do with his oratory skills or organizational skills. The anointing of the priest had to do with the aroma in the camp, a clearly identifiable aroma that people immediately associated with the lordship of Jehovah God.

It is still God's intent that the aroma of His anointing permeate the camp. In a sense, the human race is 6 billion refugees living under the tyranny of a demonized despot—Satan himself. We find ourselves drowning in a deluge of moral filth and decadence. Though the

oppressive, nauseous odors of this fallen world may threaten to overpower our senses, the aroma of God's anointing must still rise and permeate the camp. We have anointing from the Holy One.

In 2 Corinthians 2:15, Paul testified, "We are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing." Notice the aroma of His anointing is at work both among those who are perishing and those who are being saved. Verse 16 states, "To the one the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life." Strangely, the grammar construction connects the smell of death to the believers and the fragrance of life to those who are perishing. In this doomed world where all without Christ are hopelessly lost, the aroma of the anointing of Christ offers hope. You need not die in your sins; you need not drown in the dismal failures of your past. There is hope. "Whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). As we go about our priestly duties, the aroma of the anointing must be present. The anointing brings life to the perishing.

This aroma of anointing, on the

other hand, is the smell of death to believers. Where the anointing abides, flesh dies. No New Testament church of biblical record demonstrated more carnality than the church at Corinth. Even today, Corinthian-type conflict arises in our churches—factions, jealousies, feuding, fussing, and people wanting their own way and pouting when they don't get it. Insecure leaders pulling rank with their "It's my way or the highway" attitude. Where the anointing is present, a smell of death to self and the old carnal nature is in the air. Self will no longer rule. Personal preference is set aside for the common good. The anointing is evidenced on the one hand as an aroma of death to self within the community of believers, while on the other hand the fragrance of life to those who are perishing. The anointing is not primarily about manifestations or giftings. It is about believers dying to self and offering life—Christ's life—to the perishing of this world.

Galatians 2:20 summarizes it: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." We who are ministering Christ in this world must remember it is the anointing—the aroma of Christ—that validates our calling, empowers our life, breaks the yoke, and makes Jesus known to this world. We who are leaders in the Lord's church must embrace the anointing and set the example of the crucified life—death to self and alive to God. Remember, you have anointing from the Holy One. **e**

*This message was delivered at the 77th Illinois District Council ordination service on May 18, 1999.*

*Paul R. Martin is superintendent of the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God.*



*\*Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.*



**"The sermon lasted longer because I usually quit when my cough drop melts. Today I accidentally popped in a button."**

# Notifying Your Insurer of a Loss

BY RICHARD R. HAMMAR

**A** church's failure to comply with all of the terms and conditions in its insurance policy following a personal injury or damage to its property may result in a loss of coverage. One charity learned this lesson the hard way.

## BACKGROUND

A charity leased a building to use as a shelter for the homeless. The lease required the charity to maintain liability and property insurance coverage on the building. The charity purchased insurance and used the building for a few years. Shortly after the charity vacated the building at the end of its lease, it was sued by the property owner as a result of severe water damage that had occurred during the charity's lease. The charity notified its insurance company of the claim, and was asked by its insurer to submit a written proof of loss form within 60 days as required by the insurance policy. The charity did not submit the required proof of loss form until after the 60-day period had expired, and the insurer denied coverage on this basis.

**The court concluded that the charity's failure to comply with the proof of loss requirement resulted in a loss of coverage.**

The charity sued its insurer for breach of contract. The insurer defended itself by pointing to the charity's failure to submit written proof of loss in a timely manner, and its failure to cooperate with the insurer's investigation of the claim. The court agreed with the insurer, and awarded it \$20,000 in attorney fees.

## THE COURT'S DECISION

Did the charity's failure to submit written proof of loss within 60 days bar recovery under the insurance policy? The charity acknowledged that it failed to comply with the policy's proof of loss requirement, but it insisted that timely filing was not a legal requirement that should result in a loss of coverage unless the insurer was somehow prejudiced by the delay.

The court concluded that the charity's failure to comply with the proof of loss requirement resulted in a loss of coverage. It pointed out that the policy "unambiguously makes submission of written proof of loss within 60 days after request from the insurer" a precondition to coverage. The policy states:

- **Duties in the event of loss or damage.** You must see that the following are done in the event of loss or damage to covered property...send us a signed, sworn proof of loss containing the information we request to investigate the claim. You must do this

within 60 days after our request. We will supply you with the necessary forms.

No one may bring a legal action against us unless...there has been full compliance with all of the terms of this coverage part.

The court concluded, "Because the

language of the insurance policy is clear...submission of written proof of loss within 60 days after request from [the insurer] is a condition precedent to recovery." It rejected the charity's argument that the insurer must have been "prejudiced" by the delay to deny coverage, noting that "when a time limit in a policy for providing notice of loss is authorized by statute and an insured fails to comply, recovery is barred regardless of whether the insurer was prejudiced."

## RELEVANCE TO CHURCH LEADERS

The tragic lesson of this case is clear—church leaders should be familiar with all of the provisions of their church's liability and property insurance policies, and ensure that all "conditions" are satisfied. Special attention should be paid to those provisions calling for notice following a loss or potential claim. It is imperative that all conditions be met in order to avoid denial of coverage. *Leamington Co. v. Nonprofits Insurance Association, 1999 WL 561951 (Minn. App. 1999).*

**Key point.** After reviewing your policies, discuss any questions regarding the notice provisions and other conditions with your insurance agent. **e**

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# I Will Build My Church

B Y S T A N L E Y M . H O R T O N

**W**hen Jesus said, “I will build my church,” He was not talking about buildings made of wood, metal, bricks, or stone. He was talking about a body of people who would belong to Him. The word *church* in the New Testament (Greek, *ekklēsia*) always means people, never a physical building, denomination, or organization.

*Ekklēsia* is derived from *ek*, “out from,” and *kaleō*, “call.” Among the ancient Greeks, it originally meant the assembly of citizens in a town who met together to discuss and vote on political or community matters. Among the Greek-speaking Jews of Alexandria before the time of Christ, *ekklēsia* translated the Hebrew word *qāhāl*, “congregation, convocation, assembly”; that is, of the people of Israel (1 Kings 8:14; Psalm 22:22). By New Testament times, *ekklēsia* was used of any assembly of citizens, even of a riotous assembly that rushed into the arena at Ephesus (Acts 19:32,41, where the King James Version translates it “assembly”). When applied to

and of the household [family] of God.”\*

Ephesians 2:20–22 further states, “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.” Here we see that the word *build* is used of building people, not a material building.

In the Old Testament, much is said about building the tabernacle and the temple as well as palaces and houses. Yet the word *build* is often used of building up people (Ruth 4:11; Psalm 28:5; Jeremiah 1:10; 24:6; 31:4; 42:10).

Paul’s writings frequently mention edifying or building up the church. Several things contribute to this work of building:

Paul, in his farewell to the Ephesian elders, said, “Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you

that the body of Christ may be built up” (Ephesians 4:11,12, NIV). All God’s people have a part in building up the Church, here referred to as the body of Christ.

Exercising spiritual gifts can build up the church, but we have a responsibility to excel in those gifts (1 Corinthians 14:12,26).

Preaching the gospel builds, but those who preach must be careful how they build. All must be built on Jesus Christ as the foundation (1 Corinthians 3:10,11).

As the *ekklēsia*, we are “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:20). Full attention must be given to the words of the New Testament writers, and Jesus must be given the central place in our lives and ministries. We are “built up” in Him (Colossians 2:7).

We need to consider the purpose of building, as Peter wrote, “You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5, NIV) (compare Romans 12:1–8). The Bible uses a variety of metaphors to illustrate these aspects. Paul tells the Gentile believers that “in him [Christ] you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit” (Ephesians 2:22, NIV). Here he is speaking of the universal Church that includes all believers of all ages.

To be builders, we must build ourselves up in our “most holy faith” and “pray in the Holy Spirit” (Jude 20, NIV). Then we must “encourage one

**The word church in the New Testament (Greek, *ekklēsia*) always means people, never a physical building, denomination, or organization.**

believers, the word always means an assembly of citizens of the kingdom of God. As Ephesians 2:19 says, “Now therefore [because through Christ both Jews and Gentiles “have access by one Spirit unto the Father,” verse 18] ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints,

an inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (Acts 20:32, NIV). The gospel builds us [“saints,” “believers who are dedicated to the worship and service of the Lord”] up.

Apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral-teaching ministries “prepare God’s people for works of service, so

another and build each other up” (1 Thessalonians 5:11, NIV). This includes pleasing “his neighbor for his good, to build him up” (Romans 15:2, NIV). It means making “every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification [upbuilding]” (Romans 14:19, NIV).

Though God uses people, we must remember that all our building depends on God. “For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything” (Hebrews 3:4, NIV). But just as God created through Jesus, He builds through Him, so Jesus could say, “I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18, NIV).

In the context of Jesus’ promise to build, He wanted them to know who He is and what He would use to build His church. He asked, “Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:13–18).

The reference to Peter (Greek, *Petros*, “a small stone or piece of rock” and “upon this rock” (Greek, *petra*, “a rock cliff,” “a great solid rock”) is a word play (though Jesus may have used different words to make this distinction since He spoke in Aramaic). Jesus builds His church on the solid truth of Peter’s confession. Jesus is the foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11), the chief corner stone (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6,7). Peter includes himself as a “lively stone,” built up as a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5). Everyone who makes the same confession becomes a *petros* (compare Romans 10:9,10).

The Church Jesus builds will never be overcome or destroyed. This is an encouragement to us in these days when the secular media and many evil forces and false religions are moving against the Church. The gates of death in the Old Testament represent

is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4). We have a part in Jesus’ victorious building of the Church as we overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21), defeat Satan, and also are “rooted and

**When applied to believers, the word church always means an assembly of citizens of the kingdom of God.**

whatever leads to death (Psalm 9:13; 107:18; Isaiah 38:10). The gates of hell include Satan, his demons, and all the false teachings and false teachers that lead people to hell and eternal destruction. Jesus gives us peace as we face a world that is full of the gates of hell, for He has overcome the world (John 16:33), and He will overcome (Revelation 17:14). Through faith in Him we are born again, born from above, born of God, and “whatsoever

built up in him [Christ], strengthened in the faith...and [as a result are] overflowing with thankfulness” (Colossians 2:7, NIV). **e**

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*\*All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.*



**Pastor Doxtator couldn't get a word in sidewise or edgewise.**

# The Full Consummation of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

BY JAMES K. BRIDGES

During the 1916 General Council, our founding fathers adopted the original Statement of Fundamental Truths that listed 17 fundamentals that the brethren “held to be essential to a full Gospel ministry.”<sup>1</sup> Statement six was titled, “The Full Consummation of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost.” It began, “The full consummation of the baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost and fire is indicated by the initial sign of speaking in tongues, as the Spirit of God gives utterance.”<sup>2</sup> It was not until 1927 that the brethren changed the title to, “The Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost,” which was intended to clarify the Fellowship’s position that speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence of Spirit baptism.<sup>3</sup>

## DELAYED EVIDENCE SO-CALLED

But now, 73 years after that decision, a new teaching referred to as “delayed evidence” has been espoused by some of our scholars who have been greatly influenced by those in the charismatic movement who have propagated this fallacy. Those who hold to delayed evidence

our founding fathers actually believed and taught delayed evidence, the truth is that our forebearers never countenanced it. Those who claim that such teaching can be found in the writings of our early leaders do so because they either misunderstand the intent of their writings or they have anachronistically read their own interpretations back into the writings of our elders. Eighty-six years of weekly testimonies in the *Pentecostal Evangel* of believers receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues—and not one occasion of *delayed evidence*—speaks volumes against such teaching.

## FULL CONSUMMATION

The intent of our founding fathers, in using the term “full consummation” with regard to tongues as the sign of the Baptism, was to convey the idea of full realization and final completion. In other words, the experience of being baptized in the Spirit, evidenced by speaking in tongues, gave indication of its complete fruition and full possession. Nothing belonging to the experience was left out or

Spirit is a definite and personal visitation of the Holy Spirit in which He takes full control of the believer’s spirit, soul, and body, fills the seeker with His glorious presence, and manifests himself through the believer’s faculties. This definite experience is separate from and subsequent to regeneration, *and its full consummation is evidenced by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.*<sup>4</sup> This is a clear and official statement on how the term was understood by the brethren, and it leaves no room for a part of the experience delayed for a later time. Practically speaking, we must ask: “Why would the Lord Jesus, who is the Baptizer, want to give a partial, incomplete gift? Why would He deny any believer the immediate evidence if He has baptized him or her in the Holy Spirit? And, if the Holy Spirit has filled the believer and has taken control of the speech faculties, why would He want to delay speaking?”

The answer to all these questions is, “He would not.”

## INITIAL AND IMMEDIATE

To remove the idea of immediacy from the word “initial” is to give a present-day spin on the meaning, which is contrary to the meaning used by our founding fathers. Speaking in tongues was considered the initial physical evidence, because it was the first beginning physical evidence that authenticated the experience to the believer and to others. It had to be an immediate evidence to qualify as a current, instant-in-time experience that is tantamount to being an initial evidence. In their understanding and usage of the word “initial,” our founding fathers consistently included the idea of “immediacy.”

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teach that the word “initial” does not include the idea of “immediacy” as well. Thus, the evidence of tongues could occur 2 hours, 2 weeks, 2 months, or 2 years after the believer has been baptized in the Holy Spirit. While those who promote this doctrine have suggested that some of

delayed to a future date. In 1929, the acting editor of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, Harold H. Moss, was asked to write the lead article for the February 23 issue of the magazine entitled, “What Is the Basis of the Pentecostal Message?” Brother Moss asserted: “The Baptism with the Holy

## PHYSICAL

Our fathers were specific in using the word “physical” when describing the kind of evidence they meant, for this ensured that there would be a measurable evidence that would keep the experience close to the standard set in the Book of Acts. For the believer to be baptized in the Spirit, according to the pattern of Acts 2:4, it is necessary that the believer manifest an initial (immediate) and physical evidence of the infilling, which is speaking in tongues.

There are those who have accused the Fellowship of adding the word “physical” after the original Statement of Fundamental Truths was established in 1916, implying that it was not in the original document. However, the 1917 General Council Minutes clarifies that misconception when it was noted: “By an oversight last year the word ‘physical’ got left out before the word ‘sign’ in reference to tongues as the initial physical sign of the baptism with the Holy Ghost.”<sup>5</sup> By resolution, it was corrected to read as it had been intended from the beginning, “The full consummation of the baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is indicated by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives the utterance, Acts 2:4.”<sup>6</sup>

So these two key words, “initial” and “physical,” have been a part of the Statement of Fundamental Truths from the beginning and for 84 years have provided a biblical and measurable standard for the Pentecostal experience. Some scholars have dabbled with the idea of an internal evidence of a spiritual nature that supersedes the outward sign. But this will only bring confusion to the believer, since the Scriptures do not warrant such and it would be a subjectively immeasurable experience without a standard by which to judge it. The internal working of the Holy Spirit, however, is evident through the fruit of the Spirit, which takes time for growth and development. This is why it is erroneous to teach that love or other fruit should be considered as an initial physical evidence.

## DONALD GEE

Undeservingly, the noted British Pentecostal leader, Donald Gee, has been accused of holding to the teaching of delayed evidence. He is not alive to defend himself; yet when his writings are evaluated honestly and thoroughly, it becomes apparent that he has been wrongly interpreted. Some scholars have concluded that Donald Gee’s personal testimony supports delayed evidence when he spoke of “having received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit ‘by faith’ ”<sup>7</sup> and then stated that he had no outward manifestation until he spoke in tongues 2 weeks later. But this is jumping to an unwarranted conclusion. If one reads the entirety of Gee’s book, *Pentecost* (published in 1932), he explains why he set off the words “by faith” in quotation marks when he responded to an inquirer seeking the baptism in the Spirit. Gee wrote: “I not only want to ease any fears by showing you how perfectly scriptural, normal, and logical, physical manifestations are when receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit: but I would also fain deliver you from ever settling down to satisfaction with an experience short of the Scripture, by showing you the actual incompleteness, as measured by God’s standards, of experiences received ‘by faith’ without any outward manifestation. The Book that tells of those who received the Spirit ‘by faith,’ also describes the character of the experience they then received.

“You may probably stumble at first over the teaching that the scriptural evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is speaking with other tongues; and that it should always be expected in every case as an initial ‘sign.’ ”<sup>8</sup>

In response to the question, “How shall I know I have received?” Gee stated unequivocally, “*The divinely appointed proof of the coming of the Comforter is something given instantly, on the spot, at the time.* Let us not hesitate to boldly declare that God’s divinely chosen sign of the coming of the Holy Ghost to fill His temple is a supernatural manifestation given at the moment...we are on unshakable ground here, and need fear the attacks of none. What are the New

Testament manifestations given with this experience? ...The final choice of the Holy Spirit both then and now seems to rest on speaking in a new tongue.”<sup>9</sup>

To Donald Gee, receiving the Holy Spirit by faith was not the final consummation. And he said so in his testimony: “I clearly realized, however, that the experience I had believed God’s Word for involved a scriptural manifestation of the Spirit as in the Book of Acts, and so I fully expected this and had no thought of anything else.”<sup>10</sup> It was clear to Gee and to our founding fathers that the starting place for receiving the Spirit baptism was to express faith in the promise of God’s Word; but that the Baptism, when fully consummated, would be evidenced by speaking in other tongues.

Earlier, in the December 12, 1925, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, Brother Gee wrote a remarkable article titled, “Speaking in Tongues, The Initial Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.” It is an excellent analysis of the doctrine, concluding that the “proper initial evidence of the baptism in the Spirit is speaking with other tongues...an OUTWARD MANIFESTATION given at the moment of the believer’s Baptism in the Spirit.”<sup>11</sup> Should anyone question his own experience, he added, “Those who, in accordance with the Scripture, received the initial evidence of speaking with tongues when they were baptized in the Spirit, *and the writer is happy to include himself among them*, have nothing whereof they may boast in themselves. All the glory is due...to the...Lord.”<sup>12</sup>

Finally, in his book, *Toward Pentecostal Unity*, Gee taught that, while the physical manifestation of tongues that accompanies Spirit baptism is not the essence of the experience, yet it is a mistake to regard tongues as being immaterial. He stated: “[Tongues] are an integral part of the Pentecostal experience, and *provide the only immediate evidence to the onlooker that the Comforter has come in all His glory and power.*”<sup>13</sup> It is unfortunate that anyone would attempt to identify Donald Gee with such a strange teaching as delayed evidence. He would be amused at such

thinking, were it not for the seriousness of the error and how misleading it is for those who are genuinely seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

### **J. ROSWELL FLOWER**

Having had a similar experience to Donald Gee, in that he did not receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit on the first occasion in which he waited on the Lord, Brother Flower wrote his full testimony in an article published in the *Pentecostal Evangel* in 1933, expressing the hope that it would help others having difficulty receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.<sup>14</sup> In his testimony he, too, spoke of receiving the baptism in the Spirit by “faith” while not having spoken in tongues, which has led some to assume that Elder Flower believed in delayed evidence. This is most unfortunate, for it is obvious that those who have reached such a conclusion have greatly misunderstood his writings and teachings.

In 1952, his full testimony was again published in the *Pentecostal Evangel* with an addendum that he added to clarify any misunderstanding that may have developed from the 1933 article. He expressed the conviction that “the Holy Spirit in His fullness should be received by faith” as the first step which allows the believer to “enter into the vital spirit of tarrying” for the Baptism. To help believers to receive Spirit baptism, he outlined the steps: “The first step was that of faith in the promise; the act of receiving by faith. The second step was to tarry, yield, praise, worship—waiting before God in confidence that His promise would be fulfilled,”<sup>15</sup> meaning that the believer would give evidence of the infilling by speaking in tongues when baptized in the Spirit.

Far from claiming an experience without tongues, he was attempting to describe the step of faith necessary that led him to the full consummation of the Baptism. His repetition throughout the article of the phrase, “still I had not spoken in tongues,” was his signal to the reader that even though he was confessing the experience, he knew he had not yet received the full consummation.

To misconstrue Flower’s testimony to

mean that he was attesting to an experience of receiving the baptism in the Holy Ghost, yet not speaking in tongues for months or years later, is to ignore his clear teaching on initial physical evidence often documented in his writings. A popular gospel tract written in 1954 by Elder Flower is titled, “Is It Necessary To Speak in an Unknown Tongue?” In it he stated: “When an individual believer receives a baptism in the Spirit that is in accord with the New Testament pattern, he will speak in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.”<sup>16</sup> His standard for the experience was the New Testament pattern, which simply does not allow for delayed evidence. The pattern was clear: “They were filled...and began to speak” (Acts 2:4).

In 1920, Elder Flower wrote an article for the *Pentecostal Evangel* titled, “The Evidence of the Baptism.” He began by saying, “The question of the speaking in tongues as the sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is quite vital. If we, as a movement, are wrong in our position [regarding initial physical evidence], we have no right to an existence as a body of people.”<sup>17</sup> He believed that if we let down on the sign of tongues, we would be put in the position of allowing people into the movement on the basis of their testimony without evidence. Delayed evidence teaching would allow for the same thing to occur. Elder Flower was one of those who drafted the position of the Fellowship, and he never wavered from it. If there was no sign of tongues evident, then there was no baptism in the Spirit received.

Again in 1936, the *Pentecostal Evangel* carried his article, “The Outstanding Effect of the Pentecostal Baptism” in which Elder Flower wrote: “There is one feature of the Pentecostal baptism which is outstanding beyond all others. When that one feature is lacking, you can count on it that we have drifted away from the standard of full Pentecostal experience.”<sup>18</sup> He was referring, of course, to the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues. He added: “No one seeking for the baptism in the Holy Ghost is satisfied short of that marvelous experience of yielding one’s powers to the Holy Spirit until the tongue

is loosened and inspired utterance in another tongue bursts forth.”<sup>19</sup> This is why Brother Flower and the founding fathers called it “The Full Consummation.”

J. Roswell Flower was one of our most forceful Pentecostal leaders who understood in depth the significance of Spirit baptism with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues for the individual believer and for the Movement as a whole. In speaking with Joseph R. Flower, the oldest son of Elder Flower, he remarked to me that his father would never have accepted the delayed evidence teaching, and our Movement would never have allowed him to serve as one of our honored leaders if he had held to such teaching. Joseph R. Flower, for many years our general secretary, also expressed his belief that delayed evidence teaching is contrary to the New Testament Pentecostal experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues.

### **DANIEL WARREN KERR**

Another of our early leaders, who has been mentioned as embracing delayed evidence, is the godly and scholarly Daniel Warren Kerr, instrumental in establishing three Assemblies of God schools—Bethany, Vanguard, and Central Bible College. Elder Kerr was one of the key framers of the Statement of Fundamental Truths and was a Rock of Gibraltar during the doctrinal storms involving the Trinity-Oneness issue and the Bosworth challenge over initial physical evidence. William Menzies, in his work *Anointed To Serve*, described Kerr’s defense against the Bosworth error: “The issue was resolved by the wisdom and eloquence of D.W. Kerr, perhaps more than any other. Kerr not only marshaled all the truths presented by his brethren, but also drove home again and again that it is the Word of God, not the experiences of famous men, that is the touchstone for the Pentecostal belief concerning the immediate, outward evidence of the Baptism.”<sup>20</sup>

Elder Kerr is also unable to defend himself from those who have misunderstood his writings and are attempting to read their interpretations back into his



statements. However, he has been most clear in a number of his writings, sufficient for us to know that he would not take a favorable position toward delayed evidence teaching. In 1914, he delivered a powerful convention message titled, "The Selfsame Thing," in which he stated, "This baptism of the Holy Spirit is for every believer, and it is for every one according to Acts 2:4—the pattern shown in the mount."<sup>21</sup> He further added: "There are different manifestations of the Spirit, after the Baptism, but always the initial physical manifestation of the infilling with God's Spirit is the speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance."<sup>22</sup> All of our founding fathers accepted the Book of Acts as the standard by which Spirit baptism should be measured. Since the subject of delayed evidence is nowhere mentioned in Acts or in the New Testament, it is unthinkable that any of our early leaders would have had anything to do with it. They made every doctrine and every experience measure up to the Book.

*The Phenomena of Pentecost*, published in 1931, included an article written by D.W. Kerr titled, "The Bible Evidence of the Baptism With the Holy Ghost." He stated firmly: "We hold that the Bible evidence of the baptism with the Holy Ghost...is speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. We have found that whenever we, as a people, begin to let down on this particular point, the fire dies out, the ardor and fervor begin to wane, the glory departs. We have found where this position is held and wherever it is proclaimed, the Lord is working."<sup>23</sup> He closed the article with the following comment: "The Cesarean case is an outstanding witness that the Bible evidence of the scriptural Baptism; the apostolic Baptism; the Baptism which Jesus Christ gives when He has a chance, is speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. We therefore take Acts 2:4 as the sample, or pattern Baptism."<sup>24</sup> This leaves no place for delayed evidence teaching.

The delayed evidence doctrine was not an issue during the ministry of Donald Gee, J. Roswell Flower, Daniel Warren Kerr, or any of our founding fathers. It has arisen today as an accommodating factor

to justify those who wish to claim they have received the Baptism without speaking in tongues. Its receptivity among some Pentecostals is due to the low view that exists in the church regarding Spirit baptism and the growing number of those in Pentecostal churches who have never been baptized in the Spirit. We can lay this present-day condition of the believers at the feet of the ministry. Had full-gospel ministers been faithful to proclaim the "whole gospel," we would see a strong, healthy Spirit-filled church. It is a spiritually anemic church that looks for loopholes.

You can be sure that the "Pentecostal position," which is constantly referred to in the early writings of our fathers, did not make room for such teaching. When measuring this doctrine alongside our position of initial, immediate physical evidence, it is seen to be the weak, faithless, and unscriptural teaching that it really is. Instead of helping people to enter into the full consummation of the Spirit baptism, it misleads them into thinking they have received the gift of the Spirit and that tongues will just happen sometime down the road. Rather they should press on until they have been inundated with the fullness of the Spirit and tongues begin as the Spirit gives utterance. Delayed evidence has been weighed and found wanting. Let us not give place to it in our Fellowship.

John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world and as the Baptizer who would baptize His people in the Holy Spirit and fire. While He was on earth, our Lord never fulfilled His ministry as Baptizer. Now that He has returned to the Father and received the promise of the Father—the gift of the Spirit—He delights to baptize His people in the Spirit according to the pattern of Acts 2:4. This is our Pentecostal distinctive and heritage. Let us not allow any unscriptural teaching to arise among us that would deny us the full blessing. Let us faithfully preach and teach "the full consummation of the baptism in the Holy Ghost" with the initial immediate physical evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance. e

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# Successfully Fulfilling the Role as God Intended It

BY KRISTY DYKES

**D**uring an ecumenical meeting, someone rushed in shouting, “The building is on fire!” The Methodists gathered in the corner and prayed. The Baptists cried, “Where is the water?” The Lutherans nailed a notice to the door, declaring the fire was evil. The Pentecostals and charismatics praised God for the blessing that fire brings. The Calvinists quietly said, “God has predestined the fire.” The Presbyterians appointed a chairperson to appoint a committee to look into the matter. And the church secretary grabbed a fire extinguisher and put out the fire. (Source unknown.)

Hooray for the church secretary. She\* has much in common with the Bible characters, Baruch, Tertius, Tychicus, and Epaphroditus—scholars who held positions of trust and significance as record keepers and assistants to great men of God. Without their work, one author said, we would not have the

- an administrative assistant—coordinating calendars, schedules, and appointments.

- an office librarian—setting up procedures to circulate training materials/technical resources.

- a supervisor—managing volunteers (requires skills in delegation, affirmation, conflict management, workflow coordination, and personnel training and development).

- an office machines operator (computers, calculators, copy machines, phone systems, dictating equipment, collators, folding machines, and postage meters).

- a link between church members and the minister—frequently engaging in front-line, person-to-person ministry when a hurting member needs to talk. She becomes the listener, encourager, and affirmer, using discretion in passing along critical information to the proper caregiver.

and the church. To successfully fulfill the role as God intended it, the church secretary must strive for excellence in key areas.

## **BUILD A SUCCESSFUL TEAM RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PASTOR/STAFF**

A pastor told his secretary, “You and I are partners in ministry. The work you do frees me to witness, counsel, teach, and plan so our church and its members can grow. When I lead someone to Christ, minister to those who are hurting, or train effective leaders, you, too, have a part in that victory. It is the result of our combined efforts.”

Two key ingredients guarantee a successful pastor/secretary team: mutual respect—each respecting the position of the other and the secretary acknowledging that the pastor is the leader of the team; and open communication—the two of you talking about projects, priorities, and problems, each knowing what the other is working on.

A church secretary must realize the pastor is human and has faults, moods, and annoying habits just as any person does. Someone said, “No man is a saint to his secretary.” But the smart secretary will focus on her pastor’s abilities and make allowances for his failings. She will recognize his gifts, talents, and characteristics that God is using to accomplish His plan.

Likewise, the smart pastor will acknowledge that his secretary can become one of his biggest assets in ministry. He will encourage her to use her gifts and abilities and will challenge her with opportunities for growth.

**The church secretary must be a mature Christian; have a servant's heart; and be loyal to God, the pastor, and the church.**

books of Jeremiah, Romans, Ephesians, and Philippians.

Today’s church secretary is:

- a computer specialist.
- a public relations agent—dispensing information with ease and courtesy.
- an inventory analyst and purchasing agent.
- a writer, editor, and publisher of newsletters, fliers, and brochures.
- a file administrator.

Whether you’re an office coordinator in a large church, a personal secretary of a senior pastor, or the only secretary in your church, your role is *not* to run the church; your role is to assist the pastor and lay leaders, not direct them.

It is vital the church secretary be equipped with more than professional office skills and expertise. She must be a mature Christian; have a servant’s heart; and be loyal to God, the pastor,

## ENHANCE YOUR CLERICAL SKILLS AND EXPERTISE

The church secretary should always be in a learning mode. The wise pastor will see that the church occasionally pays for her to attend courses/seminars and purchases tools such as books/manuals and newsletters (see sidebar).

## DEVELOP PROPER BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Proper business etiquette includes:

- Greet all visitors to the office in a friendly manner. Sam Walton, founder of Wal-Mart, told his greeters, “You are the face of this organization. How you greet people will determine how they perceive Wal-Mart.” Likewise, how you treat people will determine how they feel about your church.

- Omit gossip from office routine.
- Keep your desk and work area free of clutter, food, or anything else that detracts from a professional environment.

- Always be on time.
- Use positive language such as, “How may I help you?” and, “Let me see if I can find out for you.”

- Be cooperative and cheerful and pull with the team.

- Display proper phone courtesy. Callers form their opinions of a company within the first 20 seconds of a phone conversation. They want kindness, helpfulness, empathy, limited hold time, correct answers, and respect. Smiling while talking improves your pronunciation and quality of voice, increases the chances of friendly conversations, and reduces the chances of your voice transmitting anger. To practice smiling, stand a small mirror on your desk and force

yourself to smile before picking up the phone.

## KEEP A PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE

Wear professional attire. Many businesses require women employees to dress up, with an occasional casual-dress day. Whatever the policy your

## CONDUCT YOURSELF WITH CHRISTLIKE DEMEANOR

The apostle Paul exhorts women in Titus 2:5 “to be discreet, chaste.” According to *Webster’s*, discreet means to be “careful about what one does.” Chaste means “decent.” Because pastors and their secretaries work closely together, there are dangers that must be

**To successfully fulfill the role as God intended it, the church secretary must strive for excellence in key areas.**

pastor requires (and he should be the one to set it), make sure your clothing is tasteful, clean, in good repair, and modest (no short skirts, no low necklines, no tight apparel). Remember, you are a professional.

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**“I’m delighted you’ll be the assistant pastor, and don’t worry about paper work—my secretary can handle that.”**

recognized and warded off. Three ways you can do this are:

1. *Watch your body language.* Be careful how you sit and bend over and what might not be covered. One day I was dispensing punch and cookies at VBS.

As I bent over the table, I characteristically put my hand across my chest as a shield, even though I wasn't wearing low-necked clothing. A man in the church standing nearby said, "I wish every woman in America would do that. Evidently they don't realize what they're showing." He paused. "Or maybe they do."

2. *Be careful how you look at your pastor and how you act while you are around him.* Eyes are referred to over 540 times in the Bible, and Solomon said a woman can "take" a man by the way she looks at him (Proverbs 6:25). Always look at your pastor with a steady, level gaze, one lacking any sensuality. Be business-like, above-board, and pure and decent in your thoughts.

3. *Run rather than risk an affair if you sense an attraction between you and your pastor (2 Timothy 2:22, TLB).* Remember the story of Joseph. When faced with temptation, he took the noble route and fled. Find other employment.

John Wesley, the great preacher, provided this wise admonition. The church secretary would do well to heed it:

Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can. **e**

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*\*Note: For ease of readability, the writer used*

**The smart pastor will acknowledge that his secretary can become one of his biggest assets in ministry.**

*the feminine gender when referring to church secretaries and the male gender for pastors.*

**NEWSLETTER TOOLS**

*Church Secretary's Communiqué*  
P.O. Box 2031  
Matthews, NC 28106  
704-841-8066

*The Newsletter Newsletter*  
P.O. Box 2625  
North Canton, OH 44720

*Profile: The Church Office Professional's Information Source*  
13004 South Pratt Road  
Lee's Summit, MO 64063-9415

**REFERENCE BOOKS**

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\_\_\_\_\_. *Would You Put That in Writing? How To Write Your Way to Success in Business*. New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1983.

Fisher, Robert W. *How To Publish a Near Perfect Church Newsletter*. Communications Resources, Inc., 1992.

Friedman, Nancy J. *Telephone Skills from A to Z: the Telephone "Doctor" Phone Book*. Menlo Park, Calif.: Crisp Publications, 1995.

Lord, Clayton. *The Church Newsletter Handbook*. (Valley Forge, Pa., Judson Press, 1997.

Parker, Roger C. *The Makeover Book: 101 Design Solutions for Desktop Publishing*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Ventana Press, 1989.

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**OTHER HELPS**

- 1) Attend workshops/seminars for church secretaries.
- 2) Interact with other church secretaries to see what they are doing with new technology.
- 3) Call or write churches across the country and ask to be put on their bulletin mailing lists to get ideas.

—Kristy Dykes

**TEN KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL PASTOR/SECRETARY TEAM**

1. Know your pastor's work preferences. Does he prefer uninterrupted prayer/study sessions at certain times of the day? Does he want you to edit or polish his letters? Does he want you to schedule his appointments? What does he want you to call him?
2. Find out if there are certain calls he will be interrupted for, such as from his wife or children.
3. Make his correspondence a priority. Answering business correspondence is good public relations. Proofread letters and envelopes carefully before sending them out. Process incoming mail according to his preference.
4. Meet daily to coordinate calendars and remind him of upcoming meetings/events.
5. Anticipate his needs. For example, if a certain committee will be meeting, place the file on his desk along with any additional information that may be helpful. Always ask yourself, "If I were attending this meeting or working on this project, what information would I want?"
6. Be protective of his time by handling all calls and mail that he will allow. At least 80 percent of the requests that come to the church office can be handled by the secretary, so learn to distinguish between needs only he can handle and needs you can take care of.
7. Help him set up his personal filing system.
8. Complete routine tasks on time and follow through to completion.
9. Accept assignments you know will be stressful, as a challenge and an opportunity to contribute to the church's ministry.
10. Get the details on assignments early and don't bother him with minor problems. Solve them, and then inform him when the task is completed.

—Kristy Dykes



# Paving a Road for Others To Follow

BY PRISCILLA A. MONDT

Several years ago I was called to the hospital in response to an emergency. I ran out the door and sped to the hospital where I parked in clergy parking. While I was running toward the front door of the hospital, a woman stopped me and rebuked me for parking in clergy parking. She told me clergy needed those spaces.

As I reached the front door of the hospital, I saw my reflection: long hair blowing in the breeze, blue jeans,

The few women who are in ministry may not be in ministries that we typically classify as “called ministries.” The place where God calls is sometimes uncomfortable for both genders. This may further our questioning of the validity of God’s call. No one could have told me that my first assignment in the military would be as the first female chaplain in the 82nd Airborne Division, jumping out of airplanes, and going to war.

female. The woman’s responsibility is to answer the call; God’s responsibility is to open the doors for the call.

## DEFINING A WOMAN’S ROLE

During seminary, I suggested that a female role model might be appropriate. A key leader challenged the idea. I responded, “If I’m pregnant, do I still preach? I’ve never seen a pregnant woman preach. Is it acceptable? Since we believe in full immersion baptism and women traditionally wear dresses or skirts on the platform, do I wear a dress in the baptismal? Should it have weights, since it will float up? If I choose to wear slacks in the baptismal to be more modest, will people accept it?” This leader could not answer my questions and conceded that a female role model might be appropriate.

Few female ministers have mentors, but we need them. Very few women have experienced the roles where God has led us. Evangelical circles tend to define a woman’s role by secular standards: mother and wife. God’s standard is whether we are His child and are

**As God leads women in the Assemblies of God into higher leadership positions, a road will be paved for others to follow.**

T-shirt, and tennis shoes. I thought, *Girl, you do not look the part.* The lady was well intentioned, but nevertheless mistaken.

As an Assemblies of God minister and a chaplain in the United States Army, I suppose, by others’ standards, I often do not look the part of either clergy or soldier. So what does a female minister look like? I found the answer: a female minister looks like whomever God chooses to call.

## IS THERE A PLACE FOR WOMEN?

A woman who accepts the call of God on her life may face some major obstacles. With so few evangelical women in ministry, some question the validity of women in ministry. A chaplain advised me: “Never try to validate your calling before mankind. God will do that for you, and no one will be able to argue with the results.”

I often feel alone among the many men. In Desert Storm, I wondered if any other female minister has been in my shoes. I could not think of a single female who could share my experience as a soldier in war. Nor could I think of a female minister who had experienced the awesome thought that every

parishioner in her congregation could potentially die and face eternal life. Men talk of war; women don’t.

If God can open doors of ministry to a woman in a male-dominated arena like the military, He has a place of ministry for each person, male and

fulfilling His calling. Ministry is as high a calling as being a wife and mother. Assuming God does not make mistakes, we should not ask women to choose between callings. Each person is uniquely gifted and should develop one’s own gifts.

**Few female ministers have mentors, but we need them. Women ministers stick out among our peers because there are so few of us.**

## WHERE IS A CLERGYWOMAN'S PLACE IN MINISTRY?

I attended a conference where 300 clergymen outnumbered 10 clergywomen. Five of the women sat together. At the first break someone asked us, "Why are the women sitting together?"

One chaplain turned, looked at the crowd, and asked, "Why are the men sitting together?" This was a clever and diplomatic way of pointing out the absurd, while not being defensive about a natural bond between people who have commonalities. The military assumes that one automatically fits into a group by virtue of one's position. This concept does not translate to the world of clergy. Women ministers stick out among our peers because there are so few of us.

Women do see life differently. Sometimes we are given compliments that we take as insults. Asking about

in some instances, you can be a consultant for male ministers. Besides, your unique perspective as a women can be an advantage in certain situations.

examples of women conducting the business of the church body. Women cannot abdicate their responsibility, leaving the burden of conducting church business to male ministers. We

**[A woman's] responsibility is to answer the call; God's responsibility is to open the doors for the call.**

The role of women in church leadership is a difficult subject. The fact we hold credentials marks us as leaders in the church. We must seek and accept leadership roles. Clergywomen are responsible before God and the church body who embraces them to participate at the level equal to the credential granted.

All ministers are expected to attend and participate in district and national

must carry our load. Our district council and the General Council granted credentials to us so we might have the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of church leadership. As uncomfortable as it is to transact business without female role models, we cannot shrink from leadership roles.

When we begin to fulfill our responsibility in the church, displaying interest in the life of the organization, clergywomen will be entrusted with more responsibility and more visible leadership roles. As God leads women in the Assemblies of God into higher leadership positions, a road will be paved for others to follow. **e**

**Clergywomen are responsible before God and the church body who embraces them to participate at the level equal to the credential granted.**

intent of the comment that offended us may deflect hard feelings.

Collegiality requires that we associate closely with men. Never do anything that you would not want your spouse to see or hear. Our society considers discussions about sexuality a form of making a pass at a person of the opposite sex. In my experience, the greatest violators of this cultural taboo are male clergy. We must immediately confront this behavior regardless whether the questioner is parishioner or clergyman.

Our ministry is not limited to ministering to females. Churches are not divided by gender. Ministers counsel everyone in their parishes regardless of gender. Men may want to refer a woman to you simply because they are uncomfortable with an issue (such as rape). While this may be appropriate

councils. Clergywomen are no exception. Some women are uncomfortable in this role simply because we lack

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# Serving as Senders

BY GENE M. RONCONE

**D**ear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth” (3 John 5–8).\*

The evangelistic team arrives at your church after a week of weary travel, but not one person is willing to host them. Sound unbelievable? Not only is it believable, but it actually happened in the Early Church and is recorded in the Bible. Much of the evangelistic and teaching ministry of the Early Church depended on traveling missionaries and evangelists. And these traveling preachers depended on the hospitality of local churches. Most of the time things went well. However, some local church leaders became embarrassingly deficient in

suppressed the letter and opposed the request before his congregation. When word got back to John that another local leader named Gaius boldly took these traveling preachers in and showed them hospitality, he wrote Third John as a note of appreciation. It is here that three principles emerge concerning our biblical obligation to show hospitality toward guest missionaries and evangelists.

## HOSPITALITY REFLECTS THE DEPTH OF OUR KINGDOM THINKING

In his praise for Gaius, John implied that one’s willingness to show hospitality to missionaries and evangelists is a direct reflection of spiritual faithfulness. At first glance, this implication may seem judgmental, unwarranted, and quite exaggerated. However, John never confronted a theological doctrine or belief held by Diotrephes. We are told only that Diotrephes “loves to be first” (verse 9). The conflict was not between two types of beliefs, but two levels of thinking and two different

bills for John’s grand vision? He may have even felt that John’s expectations were presumptuous and infringed on the autonomy of the local church.

But John shows us that our attention to the needs of missionaries and evangelists reveals the parameters of our Kingdom thinking. John said in verse 5 that Gaius’ actions were a product of faithfulness. Gaius’ hospitality was not so much an act of faith as much as a reflection of faithfulness to a cause beyond his local work. It was this kind of Kingdom thinking that enabled Gaius to reach out to people who were otherwise unknown to him, except that they were among the community of believers.

During my high school years, I lived in the beautiful hills of Los Gatos, California. Located in the midst of the Santa Cruz Mountains, the area was threatened by a serious forest fire. Firefighters, trucks, helicopters, and equipment came from all over the state to subdue the devastating flames. Many homes were endangered, evacuated, and burned. The community felt a deep sense of gratitude for these out-of-town firefighters who risked their lives to save our community. People brought thousands of pounds of food, drinks, and goodies to the fire camp. At every occasion we reached out to the firefighters. Though they were strangers to us, we were deeply loyal to what they were doing. We reached beyond our own need and found a sense of brotherhood in our common cause. This is the kind of Kingdom thinking that Gaius possessed, and why John said, “We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for

**John shows us that our attention to the needs of missionaries and evangelists reveals the parameters of our Kingdom thinking.**

their attention to the needs of these traveling preachers.

Diotrephes was one of these leaders. Aware that a group of traveling missionaries would be passing through, John sent Diotrephes a letter requesting him to assist the group on their journey. Unfortunately, Diotrephes

perspectives concerning the kingdom of God. Perhaps Diotrephes saw these guests as a distraction to the work of reaching his own community. It may be that he resented being obligated to larger organizational needs. After all, he did not commission these missionaries. Why should he have to pay the



the truth.” When we show hospitality to ministry guests, we become partners in their work.

### **HOSPITALITY RECOGNIZES THE DEMANDS OF TRAVEL**

Caring for the needs of your guest missionary or evangelist does not end at the conclusion of the service. When John said, “You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God,” he revealed that our obligation to meet the needs of our guests must begin before they arrive, continue during their ministry, and anticipate future needs.

Before your guests arrive, contact them to communicate your expectations. They need to know how much time you have allotted for their ministry, the number of times you would like them to speak, the type of setting, lodging accommodations, appropriate dress, and your plans for them after the service. Send them a map to the church. Make arrangements for them to stay in a hotel that serves breakfast and has a coffeepot. Traveling to a different location every week can make relaxing difficult for missionaries or evangelists if each week they are a guest in a different person’s home. Have your wife check the room beforehand to make sure it is clean and presentable.

Assign someone to serve as guest host with the responsibility of meeting your speakers at the door and helping them find the pastor, bathrooms, children’s classes, or other needs associated with their visit. Ask your host to sit with your guest or their family during the church service to make them feel comfortable and to

monitor their welfare. Take time to familiarize yourself with the biographical information they may have sent you beforehand. A good introduction will help them build rapport with your people. If for some reason you will not be there that day, let them know.

arrival and pray with them prior to the service. When considering their love offering, be generous. Remember, they are not only supporting their family with your love offering, but financing travel as well. If you are having them on a Sunday morning, your offering

**Caring for the needs of your guest missionary or evangelist does not end at the conclusion of the service.**

When they arrive, be sure to show them the same Christian love for which John commended Gaius. It is awkward for a guest to arrive, only to be left alone in an empty room to wait for the service to begin. Make sure they have someone with them. Personally greet them upon their

arrival and pray with them prior to the service. When considering their love offering, be generous. Remember, they are not only supporting their family with your love offering, but financing travel as well. If you are having them on a Sunday morning, your offering may very well be the only source of income they will have that week. Ask yourself if you could support your family and travel for a week on the amount you are planning to give them. It is also important to spend one-on-one time with your guest. A traveling ministry brings with it a

yearning for personal fellowship with others in ministry.

Sending them on their way is more than concluding the service and saying farewell. John instructed Gaius to take responsibility for missionaries and evangelists in their departure. Sending them involved providing for their journey. Supplying them with food, money to pay for expenses, washing of clothing, and assisting with traveling accommodations were the things John was thinking about. In our own day, this biblical principle calls us to the same kind of sensitivity. Before you say farewell to your ministry guests, ask if they need anything to help them get to their next destination. Recruit families who will pray for the evangelist or missionary daily and introduce them to the guests before they leave. If they have several hours of layover before their next service or destination, offer to extend the hotel room for another day should they need a place to rest. After the service, be sure to send them off with a meal, a full tank of gas, and prayer. Such hospitality is refreshing for the person who spends a great deal of time traveling. As a matter of fact,

John tells Gaius that his loving hospitality could not escape the attention of his guests. The missionaries could not help but tell others about it.

gospel should receive their living from the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:14). Missionaries and evangelists are entitled to expect support from the church of Christ they so

**Before you say farewell to your ministry guests, ask if they need anything to help them get to their next destination.**

### **HOSPITALITY REVEALS THE DIGNITY OF GOD'S FAMILY**

Missionaries and evangelists are wholly dependent on God's people for their support. That is what faith is all about. When John said, "It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans," he was revealing how unreasonable it is to expect ministries to be financed by anyone other than the church. The people we are trying to evangelize cannot support evangelism.

Traveling missionaries and evangelists are to be recognized as servants of God and supported as such. Paul advocated this when he said, "The Lord has commanded that those who preach the

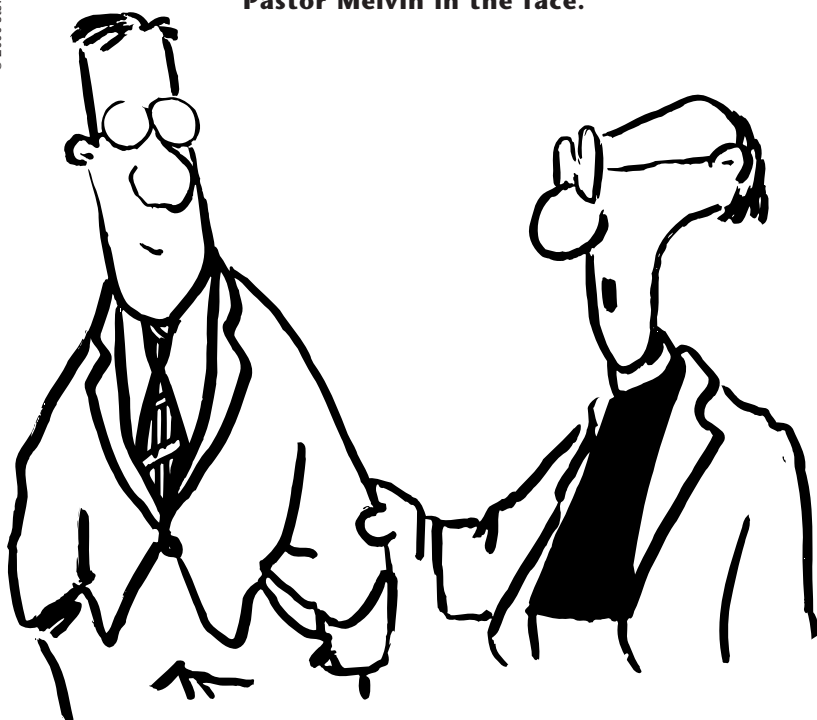
boldly serve. It is disgraceful for the church to flaunt its financial needs before an unbelieving world. This is why it is important that our evangelists and missionaries not be made to wait to receive a check from their love offering. Have it ready for them when they leave. Pastors can usually arrange to have a check cut in one day when it is an emergency. Treat their offerings as though they were an emergency. If you do not provide them a check, they may not have sufficient funds to get to their next destination. If for some reason you cannot give them their check, tell them when they can expect it.

During the Gulf War, we enjoyed the benefits of ringside seats and play-by-play commentary by the press. During one of those daily briefings, a reporter demanded to know the rationale for such a massive mobilization of American troops. The operations spokesman responded with a powerful statement. He informed the press that an undertaking so grand and ambitious requires a "line of communication." According to the general, a line of communication demands that for every one person on the battlefield, there be nine others backing him up. We should not be surprised. John was teaching the principles of a line of communication thousands of years before the Gulf War. If we hope to empower and release God's missionaries and evangelists, we must possess the spirit of Gaius and serve as senders. **e**

*Gene M. Roncone is senior pastor of New Hope Church, Elk Grove, California.*

*\*Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.*

### **The moment right before reality slapped Pastor Melvin in the face.**



**"And who locks up around here?"**

# Successful Church Planting

BY CHARLES E. HACKETT

I have been told that McDonald's cooks french fries exactly the same the world over. They have no objection to you cooking french fries your way, but you cannot attach the name McDonald's to

The word *sovereign* has been used repeatedly to mask rebellion and an independent spirit, and it has cost the Fellowship in many ways. It is time we link arms, put aside our personal

America with a new burden and vision to plant successful churches. We, of the Assemblies of God, must be a part of this. But the methods of the past must change while the mission remains the same. If a preacher is looking for a comfortable pastoral position with his salary guaranteed by the district, all those positions are filled. But if a preacher has a passion for the lost and a burning desire to plant a healthy church, the opportunities are unlimited. We want to help you fulfill God's calling upon your life and give you training that will ensure success. The place to begin is your local district office. **e**

**Our Church Planting Department is offering a proven and tested method of planting healthy, successful churches.**

them. By establishing standards of excellence, they have built the most successful hamburger chain in the world.

The pattern McDonald's uses will work in planting churches. We can no longer afford for everyone to do what is right in his or her own eyes when it comes to planting a church. Our rate of failure is unacceptable, but it can be corrected. In fact, it must be corrected.

Our Church Planting Department is offering a proven and tested method of planting healthy, successful churches. I have shared with Paul Drost, director of church planting, that we are going to maintain high standards in the Church Planting Department because it is better to plant 10 healthy churches than 100 anemic, unsuccessful ones.

When mention is made about requirements, and those requirements come from the Assemblies of God Headquarters, I am aware of the typical response: "We're sovereign."

I have been a long-term pastor, and I have never been hindered (either from the district or national level) if what I wanted to do was truly in the best interest of the kingdom of God.

preferences, and do what it takes to reach this nation for God. We are losing the battle; and if we keep doing in the future what we have done in the past, the results will be the same.

God is stirring the church across

*Charles E. Hackett is executive director of the Division of Home Missions, Springfield, Missouri.*

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# Where Have All the Choirs Gone?

BY TOM MCDONALD

I awoke early that February morning and peered out of the 21st-story window of my downtown Chicago hotel room in anticipation of a great day. I live in southern California, so I wondered what it would feel like to walk outside in brisk, winter air again.

I soon descended in the elevator, trekked across the lobby, and excitedly opened the rounded glass doors to meet the chill head on. I was attending the National Convention of American Choral Directors—and the headquarters hotel was six blocks away. Fortunately, I walked passed a department store and bought their last stocking cap. It was cold, icy cold.

When I arrived in the lobby of the convention hotel, the sight of thousands of choral conductors milling around overwhelmed me. Approximately 5,000 registrants filled the hotel. Every session was crowded with eager observers and passionate moderators. I quickly forgot the chill

abhors a vacuum. If the church does not value the performance of a sanctuary choir, secular institutions will fill the need for artistic choral expression in our American communities. College choirs are thriving across the landscape. Community choirs are multiplying and the symphony chorus is healthy. But the message of these choirs is most often aesthetic, not redemptive. How utterly ironic that choirs are so popular in secular culture but out of fashion with some sectors of church leadership.

One such sector affirms the constructs of seeker sensitivity. Seeker sensitivity is currently in vogue with church-growth consultants and founding pastors of well-known megachurches. Essentially, the seeker modality calls for a de-emphasis of tradition, manifested in the use of:

- rhythm sections instead of organs.
- folk music instead of hymn tunes.
- worship teams instead of robed choirs.

Today, there is an alarming trend among pastors of my generation who are being voted into historic congregations. It seems that when a young man or woman succeeds a lengthy-tenured pastor, there is a temptation to radically position the image of the church into the realm of seeker sensitivity, or into the river of revival, with the swiftness of a surgeon's knife. Just as surgery is traumatic to a body, a swift paradigm shift may be traumatic to a church. For example, seniors often remark that they miss their traditions and feel displaced when a new pastor aggressively makes changes in the worship style. Another adverse consequence of downsizing the worship program is the risk of estranging the younger generation. After all, a worship team needs only a few talented singers, whereas the choir is inclusive.

Changing the sound of worship or the look of the worship space is a matter of taste. Dismantling a sanctuary choir in favor of a worship team is a short-sighted, strategic miscalculation. Who will sing for civic ceremonies without a Pentecostal choir in town? Who will infuse the Christmas tradition of our communities with the gospel without a charismatic choir's presence? And who will call America to repentance on the Fourth of July if the Pentecostal church is not in the middle of the cultural celebration of that day?

## EXPANDING THE STYLISTIC BORDERS

Many of my colleagues have extraordinary vision for their choirs in terms of outreach ministry. Consider the following evidence:

- Carol Cymbala conducts The Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir in an

outside by the tangible warmth inside. Choral music is alive and well in secular culture.

## THE DISMANTLING OF SANCTUARY CHOIRS

Unfortunately, the converse is not as evident in the church. And in an age of increased awareness of the effects of art on culture, I am concerned. Nature

The dilemma with this concept is simple: a choir can function as a worship team, but a worship team cannot function as a choir. A choir has much more versatility and historic identity. People will attend a choral event in a church without hesitation—especially at holiday seasons. It seems peculiar to drop a choral program in an effort to attract a new constituency while alienating another.

**Spiritual leaders must value the power that music exerts on culture and the importance of the church's role in the artistic expression of a community.**

event outside the church each time the choir debuts a new CD. The most recent occurred in Madison Square Garden to a sold-out crowd of 16,000. Many hundreds responded to the altar call.

- David Ritter, Phoenix First Assembly, conducts the sanctuary choir in 14 Christmas presentations to a total audience of 90,000. Last season, 2,000 persons raised their hand for salvation each night—and were all followed up within 24 hours.
- Tom Matrone, Central Assembly of God, Springfield, Missouri, conducts the historic sanctuary choir in two classical recitals each year. The sanctuary is nearly filled with members of the church and community.
- Kent Ferrin, Calvary Temple, Concord, California, conducts the sanctuary choir annually in three presentations of *The Singing Flag* from July 2–4. Last year, 20,000 people attended and there was a tangible response from visitors all year long.

In an effort to define the taste of boomers, prognosticators have fed us a gross generalization. Simply stated, they assume that boomers do not hear choirs on the radio so they must not prefer to hear choirs in church. This is not so.

In 25 years of conducting choirs on two coasts, I have never had a person tell me he or she does not like to hear choirs sing in church. They have repeatedly told me that they enjoy hearing a choir sing with musical precision and spiritual fervor. Humanity will respond enthusiastically to excellence and anointing. The responsibility, however, is on the conductor to prepare thoroughly.

In the profession of choral conducting, there is an indicting axiom that states, “There is no such thing as a good or bad choir—only a good or bad conductor.” As ministers of music, we cannot afford to sit on our laurels and conduct ministry as we have in the past. We need fresh models and anointed compositions; we need continued in-service training and refresher courses; we need to become lifelong learners; and we need to expand our stylistic borders and

delve into new grooves and novel genres. We need the support of senior pastors. Spiritual leaders must value the power that music exerts on culture and the importance of the church’s role in the artistic expression of a community.

### THE ROLE OF THE CHOIR

If we settle for “program lite,” we leave too much of the entertainment dialogue to Hollywood. A city’s art is a continuum in which there are viable options for the classical, jazz, rock, country, and gospel music. A choir of 100 can roar with energy, captivating the listener’s attention in public venues much more effectively than a worship team of 10. This is where the Pentecostal church needs to be built up. This is not a season to cut corners but to expand our music departments with an intentional choral emphasis. Every city in America needs a Spirit-filled choir. A choir can become a mighty tool of evangelism and countermand the darkness that threatens to steal our children.

Second Chronicles 20 contains a powerful account of a choir’s role in spiritual warfare. Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, was facing a crisis. A legion of enemy soldiers was quickly approaching to destroy God’s people. After prayer, the king summoned the choir. God’s provision for victory was profound—

sing. Send out the choir and see the salvation of the Lord. The enemy was so confused they began to kill each other. The use of a choir in this account is significant. Their anointed, unified blend assaulted the works of the adversary. The people of God were triumphant.

During my second year as minister of music at the Church on the Way, we were invited to sing for the Mayor’s Prayer Breakfast. Our choir gathered in a large, downtown ballroom and sang for businesspersons, politicians, and clergy. Following our selection, Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan stood and addressed the gathering. His comment was poignant. “Ladies and gentlemen,” he said, “if I could have the choir from Pastor Hayford’s church sing for me each morning, I’d never fear my responsibilities again.” He was deeply moved by a song and wanted to feel that dimension of peace each day. The mayor felt peace because a multitude of singers had assaulted the enemy in the spirit world.

Evangelist Kathryn Kuhlman knew the power of a gospel song in the hands of a Spirit-energized choir. She used a mass choir in virtually all of her healing meetings. In our attempts to be on the cutting edge, let’s not abort what the Lord may wish to anoint. **E**

*Tom McDonald, Ph.D., is minister of music at the Church on the Way, Van Nuys, California.*

♪ IT IS JOY UNSPEAKABLE AND FULL OF GLOR-EE,  
FULL OF GLOR-EE, (SIGH) FULL OF GLOR-EE... ♪



**The choir could barely contain their enthusiasm for the new director and his upbeat selections.**

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# Assessing the Positive Attributes of Preachers' Kids

BY RUTH HETZENDORFER

**R**esearch on ministers' children (hereafter known as PKs) shows that little has been written on the lives of those who live in glass houses. According to some studies regarding PKs, these individuals experience the advantage of exposure to many aspects of life other children have not had, and have the ability to adapt and adjust to life. What are the keys that ministers need to raise responsible and loving children while meeting the demands of ministry?

Due to the many stressors in ministry, more research on attributes and/or stressors of PKs could be an asset to those going into ministry. Based on research completed in 1994 at an Assemblies of God Bible college, the following summarizes the research on PKs: The reoccurring theme in the literature presented PKs either as seeming to be bitter and rebellious, or very well adjusted and successful. The difference results from how parents lived the Christian life at home. As Phillips (1992) stated in his article on PKs: "Bitterness comes to pastors' kids when

at church, then ripping his family apart because they don't measure up to certain expectations, breeds bitter feelings and eventually poisons the child."<sup>1</sup>

In the research of PKs, the overriding results were very positive. The differences between PKs who were bitter and those who viewed life in a positive way depended on the consistency of how life was lived at home. Other factors influencing the PKs home included parents' high expectations given with unconditional acceptance and love. Parents gave high levels of responsibility coupled with praise and support. Hugging, touching, and laughter were a part of daily home life.

## THE FOLLOWING ARE FINDINGS OF PKs IN COMPARISON WITH THE GENERAL POPULATION:

**1. People gatherers.** The dominant trend of being people gatherers was 46 percent, compared to 17 percent of the general population. "People gatherers" are defined as those who are partially sanguine, enjoying and engaging in

home, helping them achieve their goals and aspirations. They prefer variety and action and are tolerant of interruptions, such as answering a telephone. They are impatient with long, slow, and tedious work. People gatherers have a natural defense by seldom giving others the opportunity to reject them. They find it easy to seek out people and socialize. This works so well, they are seldom concerned with rejection.

**2. Good self-concept.** The second dominant trait found in the study of PKs showed 55 percent have a good self-concept in comparison to 7 percent of the general population. This trait was described as those having confidence in their abilities to make decisions and handle most situations as they arise. This sense of confidence enabled them to attempt complex tasks and work steadily toward goals. Generally, they proceed in a realistic manner. They enjoy recognition and the feeling of accomplishment, but seldom overstep the limits of reality in their efforts to obtain recognition. They are most comfortable when others stay off their back and allow them to demonstrate their abilities without interference.

**3. Optimistic.** In the emotional involvement dimension, 55 percent of PKs were found to be optimistic in comparison to 16 percent of the general population. "Optimism" was described as being warm, affectionate, and a characteristic of one who feels comfortable with both giving and receiving attention and affection. They readily become emotionally involved with people. Since they seek a large amount of affection, they are frequently disillusioned and frustrated when their expressions of affection are not returned.

**The differences between PKs who were bitter and those who viewed life in a positive way depended on the consistency of how life was lived at home.**

they see bitterness in their parents. At home they hear petty sniping at congregational members, denigration of board members, and complaints about the job—then in public they see a false graciousness. Hypocrisy is murder to our kids. Watching a parent preach love, repentance, forgiveness, and holiness

continual conversation with others. They draw people toward them by their warm, emotional nature. They appear to have a need to belong and to be accepted by others. They enjoy having people around and actively seek out the company of others. Their social skills are a valuable asset at work and at

**4. Creativity.** In the level of organization, 54 percent of PKs were high in creativity in comparison to the general population—only 42 percent being moderate in creativity. Creativity was

described by being compulsively driven to bring closure to situations. Once these people made a decision, they tended to be satisfied and were reluctant to change their mind. When these

when PKs are given great responsibility and high expectations, they tend to have a good self-concept and the ability to cope with skill and confidence.

Paul stresses the importance of living in our homes what we preach in the church: “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?)” (1 Timothy 3:4,5, NIV). **e**

**When PKs are given great responsibility and high expectations, they tend to have a good self-concept and the ability to cope with skill and confidence.**

described as being able to patiently gather information and reach conclusions in a careful step-by-step manner. PKs were able to use information in highly creative and innovative ways. They also enjoyed learning new skills and had a broad range of interests. They tended to be enthusiastic about their ideas and are capable of instilling enthusiasm in others.

**5. Mission-oriented.** This trait was found in 27 percent of PKs in comparison to 7 percent of the general population. This trait is evident by those allowing their work or life’s goal to be the criteria that they followed in life. Recognition, achievement, and the fear of failure were their motivators for life. Getting the job done at any cost was often the criteria for success. Ambition and assertiveness are qualities of the mission-oriented person. Confidence and adequacy are qualities that enable the PK to take on large amounts of responsibility.

**6. Decisive.** In the level of decision making, 55 percent of PKs dealt easily and quickly with decision making in comparison to 10 percent of the general population. This characteristic is

individuals were actively working on a project, they did not like to shift attention to something else, even if it was a pressing activity that called for immediate action. PKs were able to recognize potential problems, and at times, avoid difficulties. They generally have good insight and can feel their way through tough times.<sup>2</sup>

These findings do not lump all PKs together, but instead demonstrate that

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E N D N O T E S

1. Michael Phillips, “Fatal Reaction: Antidotes to PK Poisoning,” *Leadership*, (Fall 1992): 26–37.
2. L. Ryan and S. Ryan, *RMT (Ryan Multi-dimensional Test) Manual*, 1990.



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# Stewardship as a Ministry in the Local Church

## Understanding Motivational Reasons for Giving

B Y R A N D A L L K . B A R T O N

Far too often, stewardship has been relegated to an elective Sunday school class, a special monthly offering, or an annual church emphasis. Churches would benefit tremendously by considering stewardship as a departmental ministry, appropriately staffed and budgeted to serve the local church.

Some have said that Jesus taught more about money than the Great Commission, more about money than family relationships, more about money than the Second Coming—more about money than any other subject matter. Why? Because Jesus knew that where your money is, there your heart will be also (Luke 12:32–34).

Martin Luther said there are three conversions—first the mind, then the

heart, and finally the pocketbook. A ministry of stewardship focuses on the last conversion that is so desperately needed in lives today.

**Churches would benefit tremendously by considering stewardship as a departmental ministry, appropriately staffed and budgeted to serve the local church.**

heart, and finally the pocketbook. A ministry of stewardship focuses on the last conversion that is so desperately needed in lives today.

In the last two decades, more personal, corporate, and ministry revivals have been ruined—not by lack of prayer, lack of results, or lack of commitment—but by poor stewardship.

On the other hand, many churches and organizations are discovering that these are exciting days for stewardship ministries. The resources that God has placed in the hands of His people to meet ministry needs are more than we could ever ask or think.

What does this challenge and opportunity mean for those in pastoral leadership?

### DEFINITIONS OF STEWARDSHIP

There are many definitions and uses of the term *stewardship* that it has almost become a cliché or a term that means nothing to anyone. Two definitions that capture the heart of biblical stewardship are:

1. “People who have yielded control of their finances to Christ habitually honor Him in their financial decisions and steward resources that He has provided.” This definition describes a fully devoted steward.

2. Another definition states, “Biblical stewardship recognizes that God’s

resources should be deployed through God’s people to accomplish God’s mission.”

At the Assemblies of God Financial Services Group, we have a simple motto that encompasses stewardship for us: “Directing God-given resources to God-given goals.”

### UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATIONAL REASONS FOR GIVING

Twenty years of stewardship work have convinced me that one of the primary reasons pastors and church leaders either fail to emphasize stewardship, or emphasize it inappropriately is: They do

not understand the different motivational reasons for giving.

The people in the pew are motivated differently. What captures the heart, attention, and commitment of one person is different from another. Understanding the different motivational reasons that affect people’s giving will help you create a broad-based stewardship education program that appeals to your entire congregation, not just to a particular group in your congregation.

The five main motivational reasons why people give are:

1. **Commitment.** “I give because God’s Word says to give.” Historically, this has been the predominant reason for giving by evangelical Christians. Unfortunately, over the last several decades, parents have not taught their children the discipline of giving, tithing, or budgeting. Consequently, an entire generation in churches today does not understand the basic principle of committed giving.

2. **Compassion.** Today, the most frequent reason for giving (more than commitment) is compassion. Some refer to it as “emotional giving.” I prefer to call it “heart giving.” People give for a particular need or cause because they have a Christlike compassion. To limit compassionate giving within your congregation will deprive a majority of your congregation from giving according to their primary motivation—their heart.

3. **Community.** Many people give because of a sense of community. They give to a particular project because of its success or the involvement of their friends. They invest in good soil for a good harvest. Stewardship should not be portrayed as an opportunity to pay



bills but translated into ministry and mission. People like to see a return on investment. Providing your congregation with information regarding the results of investing in your ministry will substantially increase the giving of community givers.

**4. Challenge.** Because of past abuses in challenged giving, some have shied away from this approach. The thermometer on the wall pushing toward the goal, boys and girls giving their coins for missions, weighing the boys' versus the girls' offerings, and carrying the highest number of pledges for Speed-the-Light are all forms of challenge giving.

With the resources available today, many people are simply underchallenged in their giving. Every day they are challenged to spend their money elsewhere—a new car, a new big-screen TV, or other things. We need to challenge the members of our congregations to invest their money in Kingdom purposes.

An annual missions convention has proven successful in many congregations, challenging people to give to missions. A capital campaign on an organized, congregation-wide basis is an excellent way to challenge people to give for building, expansion, debt reduction, or other capital needs.

Challenge giving must go beyond the pulpit. Some pastors are afraid to personally ask people to give. Many individuals have resources they will not share unless challenged in an individual capacity; this requires tact and understanding. Many nonprofit organizations in our communities challenge those in our congregation to support their

worthwhile causes, and our members and supporters open their wallets and pocketbooks. Unfortunately, many of these resources could have just as easily been directed toward eternal purposes. This does not mean there is anything wrong with supporting organizations such as the United Way or the local food bank; we should support our community. But we must be just as active in challenging individuals in our congregation to share their accumulated resources for Kingdom purposes.

**5. Critical.** The final motivational reason people give is based on critical reasoning and analysis. I refer to these as “CPA givers.” They give because they believe you are handling their contributed money like they would. This requires responsible budgets, full accountability, and full disclosure. If they see money spent lavishly, the pocketbook closes. If all the details of the income and expenses are not shared, they reduce their giving. They

believe that part of stewardship includes accountability. They are right.

## CONCLUSION

In reality, there is no homogeneous way to teach stewardship. Unfortunately, for some pastors and leaders, the stewardship potential resident in the local congregation is never realized because of a lack of understanding of the different motivational reasons for giving.

What we teach should always be based on the Word of God, but the hearers of the Word in our churches are in divergent positions in their stewardship walk. We must have multiple strategies, with the goal of helping people to yield control of their finances to Christ, habitually honor Him in their financial decisions, and steward the resources He has provided. **e**

*Randall K. Barton is CEO of the Assemblies of God Financial Services Group, Springfield, Missouri.*

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**“We’re way over budget. Do we hire an accountant, a risk manager, a grief consultant, or a fund-raiser?”**

# Winning the Battle Over Sexual Desires

B Y B E R L H . B E S T

I was clearing off my desk at the end of summer school when I looked up to see a friend standing in my office doorway. Since he was from out of town and did not have an appointment to see me, I assumed he was passing through Springfield and stopped to say hello. After exchanging greetings and information about families and ministries, he dropped his head, lowered his voice, and said with a great deal of anguish, "Doc, I need your professional help. I am not here for a friendly visit. I have lost everything. I became sexually involved with a woman in my church, and I have been removed from my position of ministry. My credentials will be taken and my family is hurting so badly. Can you help me?"

Putting a family and a ministry back together is a rewarding experience, but it is also a difficult one. The emotional pain in a family

ministers are not immune to sexual temptation. The number of ministers who have become involved in extramarital affairs is so alarming major religious leaders are addressing this issue.

During his March 11, 12, 1999, broadcasts of *Focus on the Family*, Dr. James Dobson stated that in a poll conducted by *Christianity Today*, 23 percent of the ministers responding indicated they had been involved in inappropriate sexual relationships with individuals attending their churches. Dr. Dobson's guest on the broadcast to address the subject of sexual infidelity was Jerry Jenkins, the writer in residence at Moody Bible Institute and author of the book, *Loving Your Marriage Enough To Protect It*.

To protect a person's marriage, Jenkins advocates building safety hedges around one's life. One of these hedges is appearance. He

what was being said or observed.

Although most ministers do not follow through with an affair, many struggle with impure thoughts. Jenkins reminds us, "We are not told in the Scriptures to stand and fight over lust; we are told to flee it."

From a clinical viewpoint, there is wisdom in this statement. God created humans to function on a cognitive (thinking) level as well as an affective (feeling) level. Most of the time, we function on the cognitive level, so the decisions we make are good and rational. However, when one shifts to an affective level, reason may cease to exist. Proverbs 6:32 states, "But a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself."\* When temptation first enters the mind, a person should take the time to make a list of the possible harmful effects this temptation holds, to family members and to friends, to help forego the temptation. However, people tend to enjoy, for the moment, the emotional rush, high, or feelings associated with the temptation. The thought of being loved unconditionally by a member of the opposite sex is a pleasant experience. Sexual fantasies and experiences place an individual in the affective (feeling) domain. Since one does not think rationally when passion is present, one should run from the situation.

How can one deal with sexual temptation effectively? Because of the complexity of the situation, a

**The emotional pain in a family caused by unchecked sexual desire (either in thought or action) cannot be measured.**

caused by unchecked sexual desire (either in thought or action) cannot be measured. The healing process for a family or church victimized by sexual impurity is slow and painful.

With the acceptance of extramarital sex by our society, and the amount of sexual stimuli that is prevalent, sexual infidelity has become a way of life. Unfortunately,

stated, "If you take care of how things look, you take care of how things are." To avoid the wrong impression and temptation, he suggests that one give close attention to how one looks at, speaks to, touches, and compliments a member of the opposite sex. Never act in such a manner that one would be embarrassed if a spouse, friend, or fellow Christian overheard

**Review the outcome of sexual misbehavior on the part of biblical characters to determine how these sins affected them, their families, and friends.**

combination of treatments is suggested. First, develop an understanding of human nature. A rich diet of books written by Christian authors, tapes of sermons, or lectures by informed persons on sexual matters or programs (such as *Focus on the Family*) provide insights into our human nature and how to deal with it. Second, develop a biblical understanding of the outcomes of sexual sins. Conduct an exhaustive study of each passage of Scripture dealing with sexual sin. Review the outcome of sexual misbehavior on the part of biblical characters to determine how these sins affected them, their families, and friends. Third, use disciplined prayer.

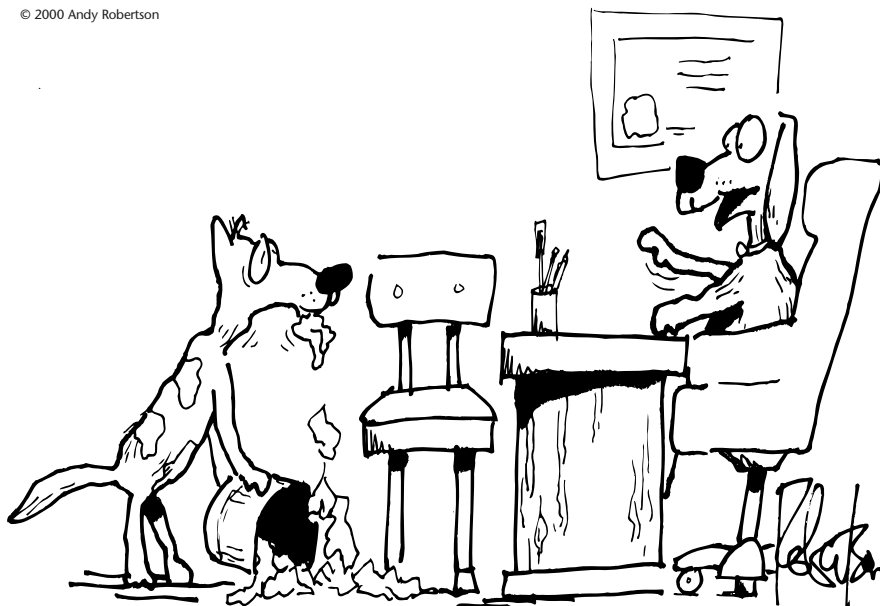
To look at sexual sins from a behavioral point of view through the psychological perspective, a stimulus calls for a response. In the case of lust, to look at an attractive member of the opposite sex (stimulus) may produce an impure desire or lust (response). But Christians are not bound by this model.

Romans 12:2 instructs believers to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind.” We should think before we act. An effective method for dealing with impure thoughts is to replace them with prayer. Through prayer, if the objects of our impure thoughts are not Christians, ask God to save them, give them a godly spouse, save their children, or bless their

home. If they are Christians, we can ask God to bless them in a variety of ways. It is not possible to earnestly pray for the spiritual condition of another person and continue to have impure thoughts. Fourth, be accountable for our behavior. Ministers should have individuals or a group of people who will hold them accountable for every aspect of their lives.

It has been said that ministers can never win a city, state, nation, or the world for Christ until they win the battle over the 4 inches between their ears—the mind. Ministers may become

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**“OK, Spot, exactly what type of addictive behavior are you wrestling with?”**

spiritually ineffective because they cannot control their thought life or behavior. If ministers are to master impure thoughts or deeds, they must master Philippians 4:8,9, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”<sup>e</sup>

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*\*Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.*

# Planting Growing Churches Overseas

INTERVIEW WITH L. JOHN BUENO

*Planting growing churches has been the focus of the Division of Foreign Missions since its beginning. As missionaries enter the 21st century, this focus has not diminished; it has increased. Enrichment Journal visited with L. John Bueno, executive director of the Division of Foreign Missions. John discusses church planting and its importance in foreign missions.*

**PETER WAGNER HAS SAID THAT CHURCH PLANTING IS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL FORM OF CHURCH GROWTH IN AMERICA. HOW ACCURATE IS THIS STATEMENT?**

**BUENO:** It is true, especially overseas. One of the pillars of our missions statement is reaching, which is evangelism. Another pillar is church planting. Our pioneers emphasized the fact the local church was the main building stone in developing the church. The local church is the basis upon which we do everything in missions.

**IN A PAST LETTER TO MISSIONARIES, YOU USED A BASEBALL METAPHOR. EXPLAIN THE METAPHOR AND HOW IT RELATES TO CHURCH PLANTING.**

**BUENO:** I included this baseball metaphor in my May 1999 letter to missionaries. When the total number of runs in a baseball game is given, the runners left on base don't count. No matter how much effort has been made during the game to get runners on base, the only runs that count in the final score are those who reached home plate. It's the same principle spiritually. It doesn't make any difference how many people raised their hands to be saved; if we don't get new converts into a solid church, they have only gotten to first

base. They must get to home plate. This is what we have emphasized through the years, and church planting is the key. In areas of the world where we haven't implemented church-planting strategies, we are not doing as well. In Europe, for example, we didn't emphasize church planting because we couldn't. But now our missionaries are planting churches and having good results.

**WHERE ARE YOUR CHURCH-PLANTING EFFORTS MOST EFFECTIVE?**

**BUENO:** We have strategies for church planting in the areas where we have the liberty to do so. In the Middle East, North Africa, and in Muslim countries, we can't do much church planting because of restrictions.

In Latin America, the national pastors are doing the planting—they can do it better than we can. One example of a successful church plant is in the country of Paraguay. Amelio Abraule was an athlete who won an Olympic medal in swimming—one of the very few Paraguayans to have ever won at the Olympic level. He

We are seeing phenomenal growth in Africa. Ten years ago in Malawi we only had 150 churches; we now have 1,500. Tanzania is a difficult country because the majority is Muslim, but we now have over 1,000 churches. We have had phenomenal growth in other countries in Africa as well. Some of them, like Nigeria, have been growing all along and continue to grow. The kind of growth in the tiny Muslim country of Burkina Faso is amazing. That is a miracle of God. But aside from that, it is the dedication of the people who are committed to planting churches.

The need in Africa is great. Vitamin deficiency and AIDS are big problems. Many organizations have given up on Africa because it would take too much effort to turn it around. But the church never gives up. We see it as a challenge. The Vernon Tisdales are in Africa combating the challenges of AIDS with *Edward the Elephant* and the *Book of Hope*. Christians and church planters don't look at the impossibilities. They go in and God is faithful.

**Our pioneers emphasized the fact the local church was the main building stone in developing the church.**

married an American girl and was saved in the United States. He and his wife went back to Paraguay and took a little church that Victor Hedman had started. The church is now running several thousand. They have tapped the resources of people coming to the church, and it's making a powerful impact.

The church-planting wave has hit, not just in one or two countries, but it's spreading across the continent. There are still some countries that are difficult where we are not having growth. But if you look at whole continents and ask where the biggest growth is, it is Africa.

**WHY ARE NATIONALS MORE EFFECTIVE IN CHURCH PLANTING?**

**BUENO:** I am partial to the national church because that is really our target.

different. In Equatorial Guinea, for example, missionaries are planting churches and strategizing where the next churches need to be.

where the work is more difficult. In our strategy here—there are times when we sit around the table and say, “We can’t do this. It seems too awesome, too big, too complex.” And so we say, “Lord, come into this meeting and let Your Holy Spirit guide us, show us. You know we need to do this.”

**In our strategy here—there are times when we sit around the table and say, “We can’t do this. It seems too awesome, too big, too complex.”**

We have some international churches that are doing a great job, but they are mainly with ex-patriots. For instance, in Hong Kong, we have Filipinos and other groups in a congregation. This is a powerful witness, and those people need to be reached too. But some of these nationalities might have to leave the country if the political climate changes. Missionaries will also have to go. The successful evangelism of a country depends on the national church and the development of leadership in the churches planted in that country. Cuba is a great example. Forty years of Communist rule, and the church has grown from 89 to 2,000 churches on that little island.

**HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT HELP IN YOUR CHURCH-PLANTING STRATEGY?**

**BUENO:** We lay great emphasis on the fact we are Spirit-driven. And so our missions strategy changes from continent to continent, and even within the continent. What is possible in some countries is not in others. We depend on the Spirit to guide and lead us in areas

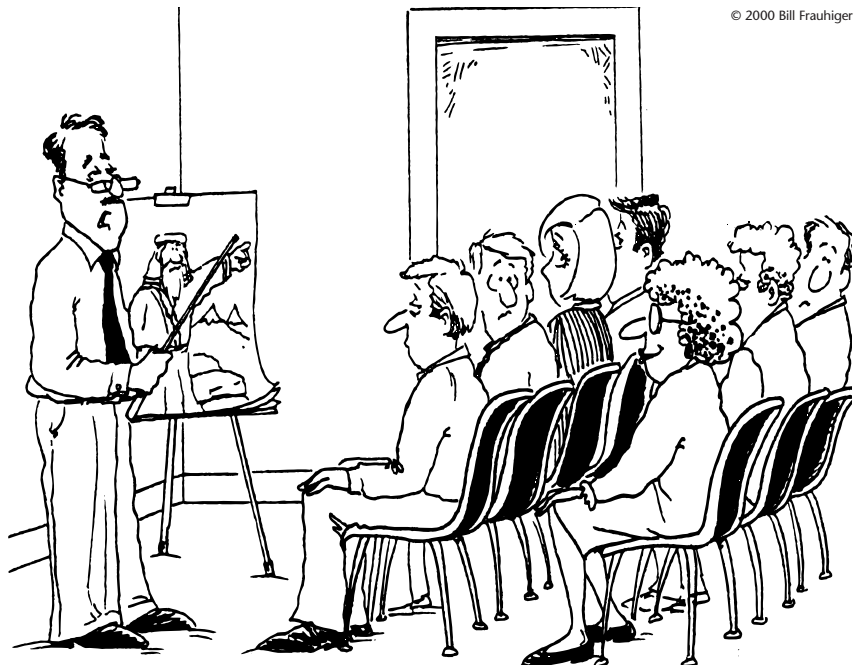
**DO WE NEED MORE CHURCH PLANTERS?**

**BUENO:** Absolutely. In fact, in many areas of the world we are in the church-planting stage. We are looking for men and women to help us.

We have over 30-million members overseas. It has taken us since 1914 to reach this number. If the present growth rate continues in the Assemblies of God, we will double our overseas membership in 5 years, if the Lord tarries. **e**

**HOW DOES EACH FIELD DETERMINE WHERE TO PLANT A CHURCH?**

**BUENO:** It depends on the stage of development of the national church. With a church in Nigeria, Kenya, or Burkina Faso, the national leadership is aggressive; they determine strategies. The missionaries naturally have influence in training in the Bible schools, but it is the national church that sets the strategies. In areas where we are in an entry-level state of development, it is



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**“No, Mary Beth, the Bible doesn’t mention how many calories there are in a serving of manna.”**

# No Thanks!

B Y W A Y N E E . K R A I S S

I was recently studying the Book of Nehemiah and made a startling discovery—there is no mention of a single expression of gratitude or thanks to Nehemiah from the people he had helped.

Nehemiah came to the aid of the people of Jerusalem. They were unprotected because the walls of Jerusalem were in ruin. The people were vulnerable to the thieves and were living in disgrace and shame. After prayerfully considering the plight of his brothers in Jerusalem, Nehemiah took great personal risk by asking to leave his position in the palace at Susa to lead the project to rebuild the walls. But he was successful—the walls were rebuilt in less than 2 months after lying in ruins for over 140 years.

Nehemiah succeeded where others had failed. It was not an easy task—there were opposition and problems associated with the effort. He withstood false accusations and derisive comments. He had to deal with the rubble; the site had to be cleaned up

the sacrifices Nehemiah had made. They just did not express it.

Nehemiah is not the only one in Scripture who was not thanked for his kindness. Most of the lepers who were healed by Christ did not thank Him. Sometimes when people experience great victories, they are so relieved

that they focus on the new opportunities ahead and forget about the sacrifices made by others in achieving the victories. This is true today, even in our institutions of higher education.

The men and women who serve as faculty or staff in our Assemblies of God colleges and universities make substantial personal sacrifices for their students. Many of these professors are never thanked. These teachers and

said thanks. They may even ignore appeals from their alma mater for assistance that could help raise the salaries of the men and women who helped shape their ministry. Alumni who received scholarships may not respond to appeals for funds to help current students who are in need. Even

**The men and women who serve as faculty or staff in our Assemblies of God colleges and universities make substantial personal sacrifices for their students.**

estate plans are sometimes made without any thought of saying thanks to the institutions that shaped the donor's life.

These acts of neglect are not intentional. They are acts of indifference reinforced by the notion that there are others who are in a better position to help. Some think the little they might give would not make a difference anyway.

One of the busiest people I know keeps a stack of thank you cards in his briefcase. He writes short notes to those who have blessed him or others. His associate addresses and mails these cards, but the notes are in his handwriting.

Imagine what a lift it would be if you would take the time to say thanks to some of the men and women who made a difference in your life when you were a student. Let's not be part of the "no thanks" crowd. **e**

*Wayne E. Kraiss is commissioner of Christian Higher Education, Springfield, Missouri.*

**There is no mention of a single expression of gratitude or thanks to Nehemiah from the people he had helped.**

before the rebuilding could begin. Considering the effort that this building project took, it is amazing that no one expressed gratitude for what he had done.

Most of us can identify with Nehemiah. It may not be accurate to say the people were not grateful for

administrators are not in the ministry for the thanks or the monetary compensation. They have a higher calling—to influence the lives of their students for Christ.

Some of the students who have been blessed by the faculty and staff of the schools they attended have never



# S E R M O N S E E D S



## DIRGE AND DOXOLOGY

*Habakkuk 3:17,18*

### INTRODUCTION:

From the heart of a little-known prophet comes one of the most unusual songs of praise that has ever been penned. It is an ode expressing the innermost feelings of the man of God. Within it is a strange combination of dirge and doxology and a merging of pessimism and optimism. There are four facets to this gem.

### MESSAGE

1. **A doleful dirge (verse 17).**
  - a. An ominous prophecy with a mournful forecast of disaster.
  - b. A dreary scene of desolation.
  - c. Written from an agrarian background of that day.
  - d. To us the prophet would say, "My income shall be cut off; my rent is

long overdue; the cupboard is bare of food and I have no prospect of getting more; age is creeping up on me, and the prospects of getting work are dim indeed."

- e. What a doleful contemplation.
2. **A vivid contrast (verse 18).**
  - a. These adjoining verses seem poles apart.
  - b. The little word "yet" is the buffer between them. Could the same person have written both verses?
  - c. Desolation and jubilation are side by side. It begins on a minor note, ends with a paean of praise. Praise sparkles brightly against the backdrop of woes.
  - d. "Although" and "yet" link the opposites together.
3. **A note of victory (verse 18).**
  - a. A true example of triumphant faith.

- b. Calamity stalked, but Habakkuk sang the doxology.
- c. Bankruptcy of provisions but a plethora of joy.
- d. "Yet" is the pivotal point. Trouble is real, but God is more real.
- e. His faith was like that of Job (Job 13:15).
4. **A place of rejoicing (verse 18).**
  - a. Such a place is available to every believer.
  - b. Despite circumstances, rejoice in the Lord (Philippians 4:4).
  - c. Circumstances are overwhelming, but God is in control.
  - d. Although the future looks dismal, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Habakkuk 3:18).

—Don Mallough

## DON'T LET SATAN ROB YOU OF YOUR JOY

*Nehemiah 8:10*

### INTRODUCTION:

God wants Christians to be happy and joyful. Satan is out to rob us of our joy. If we know about Satan's traps, it will help us to stay away from them.

### MESSAGE:

1. **Disobedience (Genesis 3; Titus 1:16).**
  - a. Disobedience took away Adam and Eve's joy.
  - b. Disobedience in our lives can rob us of joy.
  - c. Like Adam and Eve, we don't want to see the person we have disobeyed.
  - d. Once we ask forgiveness, we feel

relieved and our joy returns.

2. **Delay (Acts 24:25).**
  - a. Felix sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus.
  - b. "Felix trembled and answered, 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.' "
  - c. We never read in Scripture of Felix's conversion. If he had acted on the conviction he felt and not delayed, he would have accepted Jesus as his Savior and experienced true joy.
3. **Distress (Psalm 27:1–6).**
  - a. During David's trying times he turned to the One who loved him.
  - b. David offered sacrifices of joy (verse 6).

- c. Things come into our lives over which we have no control: sickness, problems, unfaithful friends, death of a friend or relative. But we do have someone to help us through those hard times.

### CONCLUSION:

The joy of the Lord is our strength. We must do all we can to keep Satan from robbing us of that joy: confess disobedience, stop putting off and dealing with problems, and in times of distress, call upon God.

—Dan Rector  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

## ALMOST RIGHT—COMPLETELY WRONG

*Matthew 19:16–22*

### INTRODUCTION:

The rich young ruler who came to Jesus was 80 percent right, but 100 percent wrong (Mark 10:17–30).

### MESSAGE:

1. **He was right in the concern he expressed (Matthew 19:16; John 6:27).**

2. **He was right in the Person he approached (Matthew 19:16; 2 Timothy 1:9,10; 1 John 1:2; 5:20).**
3. **He was right in the question he asked (Matthew 19:16; Acts 16:30).**
4. **He received the right information (Matthew 19:17–21; John 5:39).**
5. **He was wrong in the decision he made (Matthew 19:22; 16:26).**

### CONCLUSION:

The young ruler was right more often than he was wrong, but his one wrong decision resulted in his being 100 percent lost. Unbelievers must make the right decision now.

—Harlan Wartenbee  
Madison, South Dakota



# S E R M O N S E E D S



## FEARING THE LORD

*Proverbs 8:13*

### INTRODUCTION:

The Bible contains many references to the fear of the Lord. This is not a cringing and timorous fear but one of awe and respect for God and hatred for evil. It brings many blessings to those who possess it.

### MESSAGE:

#### 1. Why fear the Lord?

- a. To avoid sin (Exodus 20:20; Proverbs 14:16; 16:6).
- b. To escape the wrath to come (Luke 12:5).
- c. To serve God acceptably (Hebrews 12:28,29).

#### 2. Who have feared the Lord?

- a. Noah, who built an ark and saved his household (Hebrews 11:7).
- b. Abraham, who was obedient to the command of God (Genesis 22:12).
- c. David, who worshiped with godly fear (Psalm 5:7).
- d. Obadiah, who protected godly people (1 Kings 18:12).
- e. Nehemiah, who governed well (Nehemiah 5:15; 2 Samuel 23:3,4).
- f. The thief on the cross, who called on the Lord (Luke 23:40).

#### 3. Results of fearing the Lord

- a. Life (Proverbs 14:27)—including long life (Proverbs 10:27), health (Proverbs

3:7,8; Malachi 4:2), and deliverance from death (Psalm 33:18,19).

- b. Divine counsel (Psalm 25:14), wisdom (Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 9:10), and knowledge (Proverbs 1:7).
- c. Reality of salvation (Psalms 85:9).
- d. Great mercy from God (Psalm 103:11).
- e. Assurance of an eternal reward (Malachi 3:16,17).

### CONCLUSION:

Persons desiring a successful and prosperous life here and now and a hope for the life to come should explore the full implications of “fearing the Lord.”

—F. Helen Jarvis

## A GREAT THANKSGIVING DAY

*Nehemiah 8:2–12*

### INTRODUCTION:

When the pilgrims of the exile were reestablished in Israel, they had a great day of thanksgiving. The people rejoiced as Ezra brought out the written law of God.

### MESSAGE:

#### 1. A time of remembering (verses 2–8).

- a. Israel remembered God’s goodness in the past (verse 3).

- b. They listened and worshiped (verses 5,6,8).

#### 2. A time for feasting (verse 10).

- a. Enjoy the food God provides.
- b. Be thankful for the food God provides.
- c. Enjoy fellowship with one another.

#### 3. A time for sharing (verse 10).

- a. Share your food with those in need.
- b. Share your spiritual blessings with others.

#### 4. A time for rejoicing (verses 10–12).

- a. Thank God for His living Word.
- b. Thank God for all blessings.
- c. Derive strength from a joyful heart.

### CONCLUSION:

Every day should be a day for thanksgiving for the Christian. Paul urged us to rejoice in the Lord always and to give thanks in every condition. This is the secret of a happy, victorious life.

—Ethel Smith

## THANKSGIVING—JUST A DAY?

*Luke 17:11–19*

### INTRODUCTION:

One sign of the perilous times in which we live is that men are unthankful (2 Timothy 3:1,2). This can be true even of believers.

### MESSAGE:

#### 1. How much may one know without true thankfulness?

- a. How bad his condition is—all the lepers “stood afar off” (verse 12).
- b. How right prayer is—they all asked for mercy (verse 13).
- c. That God can do wonderful things—even heal. They all went (verse 14).

#### 2. How must one show true thankfulness?

- a. Individually—“One...came back” (verse 15).
- b. Promptly—“When he saw that he was healed” (verse 15).
- c. Intensely—“With a loud voice” (verse 15).
- d. Humbly—“Fell down on his face” (verse 16).
- e. Worshipfully—“At his feet” (verse 16). He gave glory to God (verse 18).

#### 3. How much may one know from true thankfulness?

- a. Deity of Jesus (verses 15,16).

- b. Commendation from Jesus (verse 18).
- c. Encouragement from Jesus. “Arise” (verse 19). Jesus sets one on his feet.
- d. Freedom. “Go thy way” (verse 19). He could choose to follow the Lord or not.
- e. Assurance from Jesus (verse 19). “Thy faith hath made thee whole.”

### CONCLUSION:

Thanksgiving for this leper began when he came back to the One who healed him—but do you suppose it was just for a day?

—John F. Walker

# S E R M O N S E E D S

## SINCERE PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

Psalm 51:1–19

### INTRODUCTION:

This Psalm is David's prayer of repentance after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba, then had her husband, Uriah, killed (2 Samuel 11:1–27).

God sent the prophet Nathan to David to expose his sin (2 Samuel 12:1–13). David didn't justify nor excuse his sin; he didn't blame others. Rather he confessed his sin (verse 13).

### MESSAGE:

#### 1. The sincere plea (Psalm 51:1–3).

- Plea (verse 1). David made a plea for mercy and God's kindness, and sought for removal of his sin. If God gave us justice, He would send us to hell (Romans 3:23; 6:23). Instead of justice, He shows mercy.
- Purging (verse 2). David's sincere prayer for cleansing. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin (Psalm 103:3; 1 John 1:7).
- Personal (verse 3). David admitted and confessed his sin. The first step to forgiveness is confession (1 John 1:9). David said, "My sin is ever before me." God forgives sin, but sometimes sin leaves a scar that cannot be erased.

#### 2. The serious problem (Psalm 51:4,5).

- Shame (verse 4). David sinned and did evil in the sight of God. David said God would be fair in His judgment. God requires holiness from His people (Leviticus 19:2; Hebrews 12:14).
- Sin (verse 5, NIV). David proclaimed, "Surely I have been a sinner from birth" (see Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:23). As a result of Adam's sin, all are born sinners (Romans 5:12).

#### 3. The sincere plan (Psalm 51:6–8).

- Sincerity (verse 6). God desires truth in

the inward parts. The Savior is truth (John 14:6); the Spirit is truth (John 16:13). Proverbs 4:23 says, "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."

- Salvation (verse 7). In Psalm 19:12, the Psalmist prayed, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults." He also asked, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" The answer. "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart" (Psalm 24:3,4).
- Suffering (verse 8). David is speaking of the joy of Psalm 16:11. Sin destroys the joy of the Lord.
- Sin (verse 9). God forgives and forgets our sins (Psalm 103:12).

#### 4. The seeking of purity (Psalm 51:10–13).

- Request for a clean heart (verse 10). Jesus said the pure in heart will see God (Matthew 5:8). Holiness begins inwardly, but will be shown outwardly. Renew a right spirit (or attitude) within me.
- Removal (verse 11). Don't reject and cast me away because of my sin. If we sin, we have an advocate or lawyer in Jesus Christ (1 John 2:1). God forgives us because of our Advocate.
- Restoration (verse 12). The Psalmist tells how God lifted him out of a pit and put a new song in his heart (Psalm 40:2,3). God wants our joy to be full (John 15:11). Sin destroyed David's joy and he seeks to have it restored.
- Response (verse 13). After God's forgiveness, David would teach others. The purpose of salvation is to share the gospel with others (Mark 16:15). We cannot evade John 15:16.

#### 5. The sincere prayer (Psalm 51:14,15).

- Deliverance (verse 14). David not only

committed adultery; he had Uriah killed. God will forgive the worst sinner (Hebrews 7:25).

- Delight (verse 15). A desire to praise God. The Psalmist encourages us to praise (Psalm 150:6). Read and practice Psalm 100.

#### 6. The sacrifice presented (Psalm 51:16–19).

- Purity (verse 16). God was not seeking a sacrifice—He was seeking repentance and a willingness to forsake sin. All who call themselves Christians should depart from sin (2 Timothy 2:19).
- Plan (verse 17). The sacrifices God approves are a broken, or yielded spirit and a contrite (broken, repentant) heart (see Psalm 34:18). When we are broken, God can mold and make us into what He wants us to be. When broken, we are more pliable and available for God's use.
- Pleasure (verses 18,19). After true repentance, we make righteous sacrifices to God. Before praying, sin must be removed. If we allow sin in our lives, God will not hear us when we pray (Psalm 66:18; James 5:16).

### CONCLUSION:

David prayed a model prayer for all Christians (Psalm 139:23,24). The personal pronouns of "me" and "my" appear six times in these two verses.

In Psalm 51 the personal pronouns "me," "my," and "I" appear 30 times. Both Psalms are not selfish prayers, but prayers of repentance, seeking God's forgiveness and cleansing.

When God's people meet God's requirement, He will answer (2 Chronicles 7:14).

—Croft Pentz

Waynesboro, Pennsylvania

## WHAT A CHRISTIAN MIND SHOULD BE

#### 1. A Right Mind (Luke 8:35).

"They...came to Jesus, and found the man...in his right mind."

#### 2. A Sound Mind (2 Timothy 1:7)

"God hath not given us the spirit of fear: but...a sound mind."

#### 3. A Pure Mind (2 Peter 3:1).

"I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance."

#### 4. A Spiritual Mind (Roman 8:6).

"To be spiritually minded is life and peace."

#### 5. A Girded Mind (1 Peter 1:13).

"Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober."

#### 6. A Garrisoned Mind (Philippians 4:7).

"The peace of God...shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

#### 7. A Renewed Mind (Romans 12:2).

"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

—Reprinted from Advance.

# S E R M O N S E E D S



## WHAT'S IN YOUR WILL?

*Ecclesiastes 5:1-7*

### INTRODUCTION:

Man's will usually refers to the resolve or determination of a person. God gave man the power of choice...a will by which he could choose the course of action he will take in life. God and Satan both have a will and man must choose one or the other.

Two factors are important in understanding the human will. Man, because of sin, is depraved. Regardless of how strong the will may be, it is no match for Satan. Man must recognize that God is not some despot looking for forced servanthood; He is a good, kind and loving Father who desires a relationship built on love rather than fear.

### MESSAGE:

#### 1. Why do believers willfully disobey God's will?

- a. Lack of personal discipline.
  - (1) Discipline of devotion (Psalm 119:11).
  - (2) Discipline of direction (Philippians 3:13,14).
  - (3) Discipline of duty (Luke 17:10).
- b. Unrealistic expectations.
  - (1) God does not specialize in easy fixes. Those who question the faithfulness of God will soon give up.
  - (2) Difficulties will be encountered.
  - (3) Emotional changes.
    - (a) Elijah called fire down from heaven and then wished to die a few hours later (1 Kings 18,19).
    - (b) Emotional feelings are not static.
  - (4) Remember, we are His servants, not the other way around.
- c. Confronting spiritual battles alone.
  - (1) Understand the spiritual nature of struggles (2 Corinthians 10:3,4; Ephesians 6:11,12).
  - (2) When Christ was in the Garden of Gethsemane, "there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him" (Luke 22:43).

- (3) Need a confidant to hear your heart.
  - (4) Need the encouragement of colleagues.
  - (5) Need the support/strength of the body of Christ.
- d. Failure to appropriate God's promises.
- (1) Whole life is a walk of faith (Romans 4:12).
  - (2) Biblical illustrations verify this.
    - (a) Abraham was willing to offer Isaac for sacrifice (Genesis 22:8).
    - (b) David facing Goliath (1 Samuel 17).
    - (c) Three Hebrew children refusing to bow before the king's image (Daniel 3).
  - (3) The promises of God include grace as well as deliverance.
  - (4) The sovereignty of God provides:
    - (a) Omnipotence/power and praying/believing.
    - (b) Omniscience/wisdom and trusting/rejoicing.
  - (5) Avoid extremes.
    - (a) Demanding God to fulfill your desire.
    - (b) Assuming that our conclusions are right/best.
    - (c) Lose heart and blame self or God.

#### 2. How to make a willful commitment for your entire lifetime.

- a. Understand the dimension of a life-long commitment.
  - (1) Timothy warned Paul of difficult days and challenged him to remain true to his calling.
  - (2) Paul's own commitment.
    - (a) "I have fought the good fight." He recognized inherent struggles.
    - (b) "I have finished my course." He remained tenaciously persistent.
    - (c) "I have kept the faith." He maintained spiritual integrity.
  - (3) Not fearful of service nor foolish

loyalty, but the highest fulfillment.

- b. Realize the value of process.
  - (1) Joseph was 17 when his brothers sold him into slavery (Genesis 37); he was 30 when he became prime minister in Egypt. It took 15 years before his dream became reality.
  - (2) Walking with the Lord is a growth process. Yesterday is significant to the realities of today. Today is significant to the contingencies of tomorrow.
  - (3) Spiritual desire to be your best is distinct from selfish ambition to achieve position.
- c. Be prepared to persevere.
  - (1) Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 12:1.
  - (2) The person who usually ends up at the top is the person who always "shows up."
  - (3) In biblical language it is faithfulness (Matthew 25:21; Revelation 2:10).
- d. Maintain focus on the eternal.
  - (1) Life is transitory from earth to eternity.
  - (2) Constantly focus on that which is to come.
    - (a) Be in the presence of Almighty God (Ephesians 1:18).
    - (b) Human suffering created by sin/curse will be removed (Revelation 21:4).
    - (c) Paul explained it "reaching forth," "press toward the mark" (Philippians 3:13,14).

### CONCLUSION:

Christ won the battle of the cross in Gethsemane. He had to endure the shame and suffering of the cross, but His will was submitted to the will of the Father. Let us pray today, "Thy will be done" and make it a willful commitment.

—H. Maurice Lednicki  
Springfield, Missouri

# S E R M O N S E E D S



## THE WAY TO AN ABUNDANT LIFE

*Luke 15:11–32*

### INTRODUCTION:

Everyone wishes for an abundant life—a life of fulfillment and happiness. The unconverted never find it, and often Christians miss God’s best for their lives. It is God’s will that we have abundant life (John 10:10). We can learn some secrets in the story of the Prodigal Son.

### MESSAGE:

1. **The younger son tried it his way (Luke 15:11–16).**
  - a. He said to the father, “Give me” (verse 12).
  - b. The father complied, giving to both sons (verse 12).
  - c. The younger son became a prodigal:
    - (1) He used his father’s provision to please self (verse 13).

- (2) Self-will begins as fun but always leads downward—to the pigpens of life (Proverbs 13:15).
- d. He attached himself to a new master (verse 15).
  - (1) This is a vivid picture of Satan, our enemy and destroyer.
  - (2) His pay is deplorable and shocking.
2. **Did the older son experience the abundant life (Luke 15:25–31)?**
  - a. He stayed with his father—obedient and industrious.
  - b. He had his own inheritance, plus anything he wanted of his father’s (verse 31).
  - c. He was unhappy and unfulfilled.
  - d. He lived as a son, yet did not avail himself of the privileges of sonship.
  - e. Do we avail ourselves of the privileges, promises, and gifts as sons of God?

3. **The prodigal learned the hard way (Luke 15:17–21).**
  - a. He came to himself (verse 17).
  - b. He repented (verse 18).
  - c. His heart attitude was changed from “give me” to “make me” (verse 19).
  - d. He confessed (verse 21).
4. **What did this abundant life bring? (verses 22,23).**
  - a. The best robe (robe of righteousness).
  - b. A ring (to show family ownership).
  - c. Shoes (to broadcast his new way of life).
  - d. An abundance of good food and joy.

### CONCLUSION:

The abundant life comes from repentance, confession, and a yieldedness to be a servant of the Heavenly Father (John 10:10).

—Vera Hutchcroft  
Seattle, Washington

## LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU

*Philippians 2:5–11*

### INTRODUCTION:

Actions are more eloquent than words. Solomon said, “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). If you desire to know what and how someone thinks, note his or her actions.

As believers, we are to think as Jesus (Philippians 2:5). If we desire to discover His thoughts, we must observe His actions.

### MESSAGE:

1. **He took on Him the form of a servant (verse 7).**
  - a. Jesus was in the form of God (John 1:1).
    - (1) He was God.
  - b. He is omnipotent.
    - (1) He is the One to whom the hosts of heaven had done obeisance.
    - (2) Heaven is His throne, earth is His footstool.
  - c. He is omnipresent.
    - (1) He knows no limitations.
    - (2) He said, “God is a Spirit” (John 4:24).

- d. He is omniscient. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are His.
2. **He took on Him the form of a man (verses 7,8).**
  - a. This is what Christmas is all about:
    - (1) God becoming flesh.
    - (2) A virgin having a child conceived by the Holy Ghost.
    - (3) His choice to be reduced to babyhood and to manhood.
    - (4) Emmanuel, God with us.
3. **He took on Him the form of a sinner (verse 8).**
  - a. He elected to be “numbered with the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:12).
  - b. Gethsamane was all about the sinless One being made to be sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).
4. **He took on Him the form of a sacrifice (verse 8).**
  - a. He became our sacrificial lamb (Hebrews 9:26; 1 Peter 1:19).
5. **He took on Him the form of death (verse 8).**

- a. He tasted death for every man (Hebrews 2:9).
- b. He died for all sin, for all men, for all time (Romans 6:10).
6. **He took on Him the form of resurrection (verses 9–11).**
  - a. There is a natural body and a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:14).
  - b. “God also hath highly exalted Him” (Philippians 2:9–11).
  - c. His resurrection guaranteed ours (2 Timothy 2:12,13).

### CONCLUSION:

Philippians 2:5–11 lists His actions and manner of thought. Will we permit that mind to be in us? Will we surrender our wills to Him? Will we become obedient servants? Will we submit totally to Him? Will we love not our lives to the death? Only those who will have His mind will share His reward (2 Timothy 2:12,13).

—Robert L. Brandt  
Billings, Montana

# S E R M O N S E E D S

## ALL HIS BENEFITS

*Psalm 103:1–5*

### MESSAGE:

1. **Remember and give thanks for His forgiveness (Psalm 103:3; 10–14).**
  - a. We can appreciate His forgiveness only to the degree we realize the seriousness of our sin.
  - b. As long as sin is just an insignificant misdemeanor, then forgiveness is hardly more than good manners.
  - c. Do you sometimes think God won't forgive you? Judas couldn't believe God's grace, so he hanged himself (Matthew 27:3–5).
  - d. Remember God's forgiveness and give Him thanks.

2. **Remember and give thanks for His healing (Psalm 103:3).**
  - a. Jesus healed all manner of sickness—physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual (Matthew 4:23).
  - b. Jesus “went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him” (Acts 10:38).
  - c. Remember God's healings and give Him thanks.
3. **Remember and give thanks for His resurrection power (Psalm 103:4).**
  - a. The Modern Language translation of this fourth verse says, “Who redeems your life from the grave.”
  - b. The Psalmist reminds us of God's forgiveness, His healing for our soul's

dread diseases, as well as our physical healing (verse 3).

- c. The Psalmist remembers God's resurrection power. He reminds us that one day God will totally redeem us (verse 4).

### CONCLUSION:

The first five verses of Psalm 103 are David's prescription for a thankful life. In summary he wrote: “Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.”

Remember all His benefits and live in thanksgiving.

—Richard O. Exley  
Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

## THE APOSTLE PAUL—A THANKFUL MAN

*Acts 16:15–28; Colossians 3:17*

### INTRODUCTION:

The ability to express gratitude is a worthy character trait, and the apostle Paul is a New Testament example. Throughout his writings he frequently exhorted his readers to be thankful to God under all circumstances and in every relationship (1 Thessalonians 5:18). He often expressed thankfulness for God's blessings in his life and ministry.

First and foremost, Paul was thankful for God's “inexpressible, inexpressible, free Gift” (2 Corinthians 9:15, Amplified); but he also was deeply grateful for:

### MESSAGE:

1. **God's provision for his physical life (Acts 27:35; 1 Timothy 4:3–5).**
2. **God's blessings in his spiritual life (Romans 7:24,25; 1 Corinthians 14:18; 15:57; Colossians 1:10–14).**
3. **God's putting him into the ministry (1 Timothy 1:12–17).**
4. **God's causing him to triumph in proclaiming the gospel (2 Corinthians 2:14).**
5. **Faithful converts in the Lord (1 Thessalonians 2:13,19,20; 3:9).**

6. **For his churches (Romans 1:6–8; 1 Corinthians 1:2–7; Ephesians 1:15,16; Philippians 1:1–3; Colossians 1:2–8; 1 Thessalonians 1:1–3; 2 Thessalonians 1:1–3; 2:13).**
7. **Personal friends in Christ (2 Timothy 1:3–5; Philemon 4–6).**

### CONCLUSION:

We can follow Paul's example by expressing our thankfulness to the Lord (Colossians 2:7) and by giving thanks rather than engaging in degrading talk (Ephesians 5:3,4).

—F. Helen Jarvis

## FIVE W'S OF THANKSGIVING

*Psalm 150*

### MESSAGE

1. **Who should praise God?**
  - a. Individuals (verse 1).
  - b. Every living thing (verse 6).
2. **When should God be praised?**
  - a. All the time; without ceasing (Psalm 34:1).
  - b. People wait for special times and dates; we should praise God all day, every day.
3. **What are the ways we should praise God?**

- a. David listed nine ways (verses 3–5). These are all efforts man puts forth.
- b. Our efforts—singing, lifting hands, raising voices of praise, giving, doing—all are forms of praise to God.
4. **Where should we praise God?**
  - a. In the sanctuary (verse 1).
  - b. In the firmament of His power (verse 1).
  - c. Everywhere—these statements are all-inclusive.
5. **Why should we praise God?**
  - a. Because of His mighty acts (verse 2).

- b. For His excellent greatness (verse 2).

### CONCLUSION:

David had a lifelong habit of praise. He summed it up in this Psalm but elaborated on each point in other Psalms. He knew the secret and power of praise.

We have everything to gain by being thankful all year long.

—Larry Thomas  
Springfield, Missouri



## FINDING (AND KEEPING) HAPPY VOLUNTEERS

Does the prospect of recruiting volunteers make you shudder? Sometimes it seems easier to handle the task yourself rather than trying to find someone to do it.

Finding and keeping satisfied volunteers does not have to be an impossible task. Here are three simple guidelines to make the recruiting job easier:

**1. Match the workers' abilities to the jobs.** Let them know you sincerely appreciate their abilities and need their help. If Mrs. Smith brings good cookies to church dinners, ask her to help with the cookie ministry to first-time visitors. Do you need someone to take charge of a teaching material resource room? Find someone who has good organizational skills. Are you in need of costumes? Look for someone who can sew and may not get out much.

If you are not sure about a person's interests, conduct a survey. Insert simple forms in the Sunday bulletin, and ask people to check or list the things they like to do. Have them include their names so you can contact them. Organize the survey results on a computer or in a card file. List the names of those who are interested in teaching, and make a note of what age they prefer to teach. Make lists of those who want to help with food, carpentry, driving, and music. Keep your lists updated as new people come, or as you learn of additional interests.

**2. Be honest and keep your promises.** If you tell Jim you only need him to teach the junior high boys class for 6 weeks, keep your word. Mark his last Sunday on your calendar. If you do not have another teacher toward the end of the 6 weeks, talk to Jim. Perhaps by that time Jim may want to stay with the class.

Be honest with Jim when you ask him to teach. Do not assure him that the class is no trouble, only to have him discover there are some unruly children in the class. If you are honest with him ahead of time, he can plan how to approach the class.

**3. Give appropriate orientation or training.** By training your volunteers, you will help them get off to a good start. Do not expect them to go into a new job blind. They need to know what the job involves. In the church preschool department, we invite prospective teachers and substitutes to visit ahead of time. They become acquainted with our routine, the children, teachers, and lesson materials. With this orientation to our department, most volunteers willingly agree to help when needed. A list of printed instructions is helpful for anyone who has not done the job before.

Not every person you approach will be a willing volunteer. Be prepared for rejections, but do not take it personally. Instead, realize that people have many reasons for saying no. Maybe they do not like to volunteer; maybe this is not the right time or the right job for them. Be courteous and do not pressure them. If you handle their rejection with the right attitude, they may answer yes to the next request.

These are the guidelines we want others to follow when they ask us to volunteer. By following them, we are doing what Jesus told us in the Golden Rule: "In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12, NIV). What better rule could we use for recruiting volunteers?

—LeAnn Campbell, Lamar, Missouri

## A MULTICULTURAL CHRISTMAS

From our church office I could see a dark-skinned man in light, baggy summer clothes and a bright yellow turban pushing a shopping cart across our snowy parking lot. Our neighborhood was changing. Would we as a church move to the suburbs or would we reach cross-culturally; and if so, how? It was then that I thought of having a multicultural Christmas event. As Christians, why not celebrate our cultural differences instead of letting them divide us? We could promote acceptance and understanding while at the same time present the gospel. We call it Christmas in Different Lands.

Putting on this event costs very little. It has been most effective to schedule this event on a Saturday and Sunday night near Christmas. We contact key leaders of the different ethnic communities in our church and around the neighborhood and ask them to participate as we celebrate the birth of Christ and honor their country of origin. If they want to participate, we ask them to provide a flag bearer, dressed in the costume of their homeland, and a singing group or soloist in costume to sing one Christmas carol in their native language. We give them a "booth" (a table or two) in the gymnasium to decorate and from which to serve food typical of their country.

We begin in the sanctuary with worship, followed by the entrance of the flags of all the nations represented (over 35). The different ethnic groups (often in colorful costumes) sing carols. We have a message and an opportunity for people to respond to Christ. At one event we had 25 first-time decisions. When the service is over, everyone is invited to the gym to try the exotic foods and make new friends.

The response has been overwhelming. Each group takes



pride in representing their nation. Our church people asked their friends who did not attend our church to help. In fact, over half of those who came were new.

One man from Pakistan became a believer through one of these events. He now invites his friends to church. He said, “Christmas in Different Lands is the most effective multicultural event in the city.”

—David A. Macfarlane, Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada

### COMEDY CLUB

Three times a year we join with another singles ministry and bring in a Christian comedian. For the first hour, singles are served beverages and desserts. Married couples serve as hosts. We place games to be used as mixers at each table and hold drawings for prizes throughout the evening. We have live music playing during this informal part. One week we had a band from a local Christian college. The feature of the event was our guest comedian who performs for one hour.

We print tickets and charge \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. This comedy club event draws 300–500 singles.

—Wayde Wilson, Hazelton, Pennsylvania

### FORGET-ME-NOT SUNDAY

Many people who are homebound or in nursing homes want to come to church but they can't. I serve as visitation pastor. God gave me a poem and the idea for Forget-Me-Not Sunday.

Once a month, we place a small wooden box on the information table. This box contains file cards with a picture and the address of each member of our congregation who is homebound or in a nursing home. We also provide greeting cards addressed to each of these individuals. Church families take these cards, write a note, and mail them. The look in these seniors' eyes as they show me their cards is indescribable.

We designed a bulletin insert for the Sunday the cards are displayed with the following information on it:

#### **Please, Forget-me-not!**

I've gone to Summit all my life,  
But now I can't get there.  
I never knew how much I'd miss you;  
It's more than I can bear.  
My eyes and ears are failing;  
I cannot get around.  
Throughout the day I think of Summit,  
The memories abound.

I taught Sunday school throughout the years.  
For many terms I was a deacon.  
I planned so many church socials,  
And knelt at the altar, weeping.

I miss your fellowship;  
I miss the songs we'd sing.  
I long to pray together;  
I long to hear what's happening.

So could you take a moment;  
Just send me a short card?  
Maybe your child could draw a picture,  
Or you could share Scripture from your heart.

It doesn't matter if I know you;  
It only matters that you care.  
I need to know I'm not forgotten,  
I need to know I'm in your prayers.

My Summit family has been so special,  
I will never forget you all.  
As I sit and talk to my Father,  
I pray, “God bless you all.”

Today is Forget-Me-Not Sunday at Summit. Please pick up a card in the box on the information table to be sent to someone who is homebound or in a nursing home. The cards are addressed and stamped.

- Please write a short note using large print and then mail it.
- Please sign your first and last name.

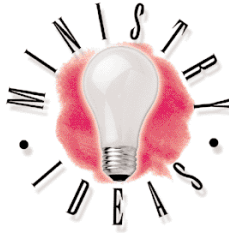
—Chris Quistad, St. Paul, Minnesota

### GETTING TO KNOW THE FAMILY OF GOD

Church members often want to meet other new attendees, but may not make the effort to do so.

Several times a year we host an all-church afterglow and have 12 tables—each representing a month of the year—set up in the fellowship facility. Each table has a centerpiece descriptive of its month (January: winter; April: spring; July: patriotic). Members sit at the table of their birth month. This shows they already have something in common with others.

We sometimes have each group stand and place themselves in chronological order according to their birth date (not years). They cannot talk, but only use hand signals to do this.



This is a great icebreaker and many friendships are formed due to the birthdays they have in common.

—Douglas Rose, Grand Prairie, Texas

### QUEEN FOR A DAY

Queen for a Day was an outreach by our Women's Ministries to the city of Vallejo and surrounding communities. Financial sponsors, intercessors, childcare workers, maintenance men, and soundmen gave their time and energy to show the love of Christ.

"We wanted to give hope to women who had no hope," said Women's Ministries director and associate pastor, Sandy Reza. Pastor Sandy and her leaders chose 40 women from homeless shelters, abuse centers, and food giveaway programs. Single moms, women recently released from prison, and those who had experienced nervous breakdowns were invited. Some were addicts. Church on the Hill picks up 150 to 200 children each week on buses. The mothers of these children were invited as well.

Candidates were matched with hostesses from the church. The hostesses were given \$75 each for a mini-shopping spree with their queens to purchase new outfits for the event. Some hostesses treated their queens to lunch, a permanent, and accessories.

On the day of the event the hostesses brought the queens to church for a "before" picture and continental breakfast. Next, they were escorted to the fellowship hall that had been transformed into a beauty shop with a waiting area and running water fountain, Christian music, flowers, and trees.

Hairdressers and make-up artists donated their time and products.

At noon we served the queens and workers lunch on white linen tablecloths with candles, ivy, and tulle decorations. Our guest speaker shared her testimony of emotional and physical abuse during a 13-year marriage. She offered hope to the women and invited them to the altar for prayer and to ask Christ into their lives. Many responded.

At the conclusion, the queens for a day visited the Fit-for-a-Queen shop in another room of the church. They chose clothing donated by businesses and church members. In addition, they received bags of groceries. Our queens went home with their arms full of groceries and new clothing.

The next morning many came to church and shared their testimonies with the congregation. Shelby expressed how many queens felt: "The love of this church is awesome.

I am so thankful that God brought me here."

—Carol Ann Murillo, Vallejo, California

### WE REAP WHAT WE SOW

We send the civic leaders of our community complimentary tickets to our seasonal church productions. This is a way to express our appreciation for their dedicated service to our community. When they attend, we reserve special seating for them and have the ushers escort them. Newspaper columnists and church-page editors may give more space to our events in their newspapers if they see the quality and outreach of these productions.

We invited the local newspaper editor to one of our productions and presented him a check for a charitable-fund drive he was involved in.

The Bible says we will reap what we sow.

—Douglas Rose, Grand Prairie, Texas

### NINE WAYS TO MAKE A VOLUNTEER'S JOB EASIER

1. Tell prospective volunteers what expenses they can expect, and how they are to be handled.
2. Be sure they can commit to the time that is scheduled for the work. If it involves commitments they cannot meet, it may not be the right job for them.
3. Let them know what help, if any, they can expect.
4. Tell them ahead of time of any preexisting problems.
5. Tell the volunteer if the job is for a specific length of time or for an indefinite time.
6. After volunteers take jobs, check with them from time to time to see how they are getting along.
7. Realize that not everybody wants to serve for the same length of time; some can serve well in the same job for many years, while others prefer short terms.
8. Let them know ahead of time about any extra duties that may be involved.
9. Respect the prospective volunteer's right to say, "No." Do not make a person feel guilty for turning down a job.

—LeAnn Campbell, Lamar, Missouri

### SEND US YOUR IDEAS

Enrichment will pay up to \$50 for each published account of a program idea. Send your ideas, along with a detailed description, to: Ministry Ideas, Enrichment Journal, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802-1894.

E-mail: You may send your ministry ideas to: [enrichment@ag.org](mailto:enrichment@ag.org).







### THREE-DOLLAR BLESSING

A busload of teens pulled into the fast-food restaurant. The door opened and in they poured. A long line formed; everyone was anxious to order—everyone except one boy who took a seat in the back of the restaurant away from everyone else. A couple were eating their lunch and the husband watched as the boy sat alone in a booth, opened his lunch bag, and pulled out his meal—one dry peanut butter sandwich and nothing to drink.

The man got up from his table with \$3 and approached the boy. “Here,” he said, “get yourself a drink and whatever else you want.”

The boy thanked him and went to place his order. After he made it through the line, he no longer sat alone. He had food like the other kids and joined them.

Only God knows what \$3 brought—a little self-esteem; the knowledge that someone cares. When we give a cup of water in His name, great and wonderful things can happen.

—Betty Ross, Akron, Ohio

### BLOOD TRANSFUSION

When they rolled the young girl into the emergency room, it was obvious she might not survive from the loss of blood from her injuries. As the doctors and nurses began to carry out their responsibilities with clock-like precision, one doctor noticed a medical card that brought their crucial work to a temporary halt.

He asked, “Ma’am, your medical card says you do not want a blood transfusion. Is this true?”

She replied, “That’s right. My beliefs will not allow me to receive a transfusion.”

Once again the doctor pleaded, “But what if it is necessary to save your life?”

With a strong voice in what became a strangely silent room she answered, “Even if I am about to die, do not give me a transfusion.”

How many people have fatal injuries in their spirit, soul, and body, but when confronted with the spiritual blood transfusion from Jesus Christ, refuse the very help that can save them? How many believers carry hurts, pains, and injuries that the Great Physician longs to remedy? Do our beliefs and pride stand in the way of all that Jesus would provide if only we would ask?

—Michael Jackson,  
Ormond Beach, Florida

### FAT HEAD

As a child, no one had difficulty picking me out of our family photos. I was the one with the big head. From infancy through adolescence, my head grew disproportionately with the rest of my body.

Classmates would sneak up from behind, hit me on the back of my head, and yell out, “Fat head.” I laughed on the outside, but inside this nickname cut like a knife.

When I was 7 years old, a pastor and his wife came to our home and invited us to attend their little Assemblies of God church. I was hiding in the shadows of the entrance-way to our home; but like a magnet, the wife’s attention was focused on me. She asked, “What’s your name?”

I responded with a sheepish grin. She knelt down, level with my eyes, placed both hands on my head, and said, “My, what a handsome little boy you are.”

Only God knows the impact of that act. Hands of love enclosed my head where hands of ridicule had often struck. Overcome with emotion, I ran away and cried in secret. I had experienced unconditional love and acceptance. In my heart, I immediately wanted to become a preacher.

I was called to preach before I knew the Lord personally. What was perhaps insignificant to others, pulled out deep-seated hurts in my life. Her hands were Jesus’ hands extended. Hands of affirmation placed on my “fat head” altered the course of my life. Never underestimate the power of touch.

—Roger Loomis, Wadsworth, Ohio

### AN ACT OF HUMILITY CHANGES KNELL FAMILY

Early in their married life, my husband’s parents seemingly had everything to live for. Two children, Carl and little Ruthie, had blessed their home. They were established in a Cincinnati church and looked at life as being very pleasant. A tragedy to Ruthie, however, would shake them to their foundations.

Ruthie began to run a high fever. Her parents called the doctor and after examining Ruthie, he gave his grave findings—spinal meningitis.

The doctor used all the available medical help of the day, but there was no improvement. The Knells had visited a small full-gospel mission in Cincinnati with relatives, and it was during Ruthie’s illness that the pastor and a young evangelist called and offered prayer. Ruthie died on her second birthday in 1912.

Among the many tasks that needed attention before the



funeral was pressing the men's suits. Suits were pressed with a heavy iron and a damp cloth on a board laid across the backs of two chairs.

Ruthie's uncles lived nearby, and Mrs. Knell began pressing their suits also. About that time the mission pastor and the evangelist walked in, asking if they could help the family, even though they had no part in the funeral service.

When the young evangelist saw the activity at the ironing board, he exclaimed, "Now, there's something I can do!" And the evangelist did a beautiful job pressing the suits.

The willingness of the evangelist to become a servant impressed the grieving parents. Ruthie's father couldn't get the act out of his mind. A few days later they went to the mission and listened to the humble young evangelist. Through the evangelist's ministry, the Knells were brought into the full gospel. Although they later moved away from Cincinnati, they remained faithful workers in the Assemblies of God.

And the young evangelist? His ministry blossomed in places like Newark and Philadelphia, and he gained national respect and honor. His name? Ernest S. Williams, the fifth person to serve as general superintendent of the Assemblies of God.

Just one of God's humble servants.

—June Knell. *Adapted from the Assemblies of God Heritage, Summer 1989. Used with permission.*

## LESSONS FROM GEESSE

This fall we will again have the pleasure of watching geese heading south for the winter. It's a beautiful sight to watch their V formation in action. As you observe them, you might also be interested in what science has discovered about why they fly that way.

Scientific study has learned that as each of these big birds flaps its wings, an uplift or updraft is created for the bird immediately following. By flying in a V formation, the whole flock adds at least a 71-percent greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own. This was a long-term study that took place in the fields as well as in a wind-tunnel under controlled conditions.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front. When the lead goose gets tired, he or she rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point.

Perhaps you've also noticed that there's a lot of honking going on to encourage the leader. It's also a signal to keep up to speed.

Finally, when a goose gets sick or is wounded by a gunshot and falls out of the formation, two other geese will also fall out of formation to follow the wounded or sick goose to help and protect the wounded bird. They stay with this hurting one until the sick bird is either able to fly or until it is dead, and then they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up with their original group.

The lessons we learn are:

1. Christians who share a common direction can get where they are going because they can travel on the thrust of one another.
2. If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed the same way we are going.
3. It pays to take turns doing the hard jobs with people at church or with geese flying south.
4. If people knew we would stand by them in church, like geese do, they would push down our church doors to get in.

All we have to do to attract people to church is demonstrate to the world that we have as much sense as a goose.

—Robert Strand, *Moments for Each Other. Used with permission.*

## BE NOT CONFORMED

In Baraboo, Wisconsin, costumes aren't reserved for Halloween. Dr. George Archibald and his associates at the International Crane Federation wear bird suits on a regular basis.

By donning their life-size crane costumes, the scientists seek to isolate the chicks from contact with humans while raising the endangered birds in captivity. Studies have shown that cranes can be successfully released into their natural environment if humans have not imprinted them. In contrast, crane chicks that are exposed to human images, touch, and food never learn to survive on their own.

The apostle Paul cautioned the Early Church about the danger of living in a non-Christian world. He knew that unless we are protected from unguarded participation in a secular culture, it will consistently emboss its imprint on us. That is why he wrote, "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2). Unlike Dr. Archibald's cranes, our ability to



survive as Christians does not require us to live in a refuge. The context of Romans 12 suggests that the protection from a foreign influence is found in the intentional community with other members of the body of Christ.

—Greg Asimakoupoulos, Naperville, Illinois

### JUST ONE LITTLE DROP

It had been raining earlier, and though I had cleared the windshield with my windshield wipers, I suddenly noticed one drop of rain as it dripped down the windshield, marring my view. Just one little drop, and yet it was irritating and distracting.

As Christians, we need to remember that one little flaw in our lives can distract a non-Christian. Are you struggling with a bad temper or unforgiveness? Is gossip your weakness?

People need to see a non-marred image—the image of One who loves them unconditionally and wants to forgive them just like He has forgiven you. Ask God to create that image in you so not even one little action or word will mar your witness.

—Sharon Roberts, Waterford, Connecticut

### SINGING IN A WHEELCHAIR

While walking along a busy street one day, I heard someone singing. His sweet voice was distinguishable even above the noise of the traffic. When I located him, I noticed he had no legs and was pushing himself through the crowd in a wheelchair.

Catching up with him, I said, “I want you to know, friend, that to hear singing from a person in your condition gives everyone else a lift.”

He answered with a grateful smile, “When I stopped concentrating on what I had lost and began concentrating on all I had left, I found much for which I could rejoice and be happy.”

—H.G. Bosch. Reprinted from the Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations. Used with permission.

### THANKFUL FOR ROBBERY

Matthew Henry, the famous scholar, was once accosted by thieves and robbed of his purse. He wrote these words in his diary:

“Let me be thankful first, because I was never robbed before; second, because, although they took my purse, they did not take my life; third, because, although they took my

all, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed.”

—Church of Ireland

Reprinted from the Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations.

Used with permission.

### TOO CLOSE TO THE EDGE

After the family had gone to bed, I stayed up studying the Scriptures. In the quietness came a thud. In a moment, Silas, my 9-year old son, appeared in the doorway rubbing his head. He had fallen out of bed. I asked how that happened and he replied, “I fell asleep too close to where I got in.”

Many Christians who started following the Lord have fallen by the way. An evaluation of their spiritual lives reveals the cause—they fell asleep too close to where they got in.

As believers, we must grow in our relationship with God. God’s Word warns us to be separate from the world. If we don’t separate ourselves from the world and grow in Christ, we also might fall asleep too close to where we got in.

—Guy Parrish, Muskogee, Oklahoma

### HOW IMPORTANT IS ONE VOTE?

- In 1645, one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control of England.
- In 1649, one vote caused Charles I of England to be executed.
- In 1776, one vote gave America the English language instead of the German language.
- In 1845, one vote brought Texas into the Union.
- In 1876, one vote changed France from a monarchy to a republic.
- In 1876, one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the presidency of the United States.
- In 1934, one vote gave Adolf Hitler leadership of the Nazi Party.

—Greg Asimakoupoulos, Naperville, Illinois.

Source: Illinois Citizens’ for Life newsletter.

### SEND US YOUR ILLUSTRATIONS

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E-mail: You may send your ministry ideas to: [enrichment@ag.org](mailto:enrichment@ag.org).





# book reviews

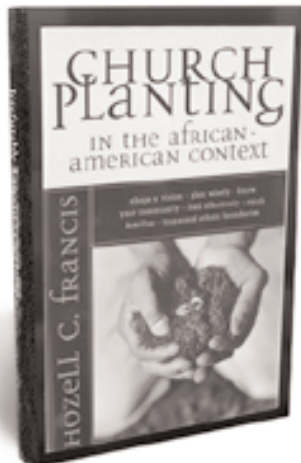
## CHURCH PLANTING IN THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN CONTEXT

Hozell C. Francis (Zondervan, 128 pp., paperback, \$12.99)

Hozell C. Francis has written an excellent piece on *Church Planting in the African-American Context*. The book is easy to understand and concise.

Francis writes with clarity, experience, and fairness. It is obvious he has a Kingdom heart with no axe to grind or hidden agenda. The book's primary strength is in helping the reader to understand African-American issues and their corresponding implications in church planting. His honesty and prophetic voice in dealing with these areas is needed, valuable, and refreshing.

Francis covers a wide range of church planting topics: Anglo-African differences, motives, logistics; the redemptive role of the church in the community; and a strong call for intentionality in planting churches.



Because of its conciseness, the book is best used as a reliable foundation and overview rather than as a complete church-planting manual.

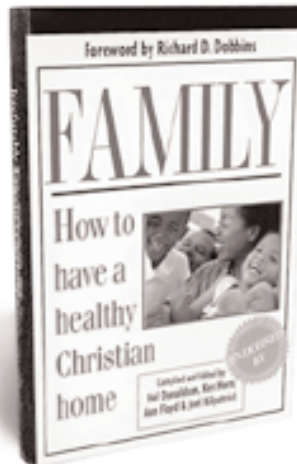
Francis has done an admirable job of speaking to the twin necessities of church planting: integrity of heart and

skillfulness of hand.

—Reviewed by Paul Drost, director of the Church Planting Department, Springfield, Missouri.

## FAMILY: HOW TO HAVE A HEALTHY CHRISTIAN HOME

Compiled and edited by Hal Donaldson, Ken Horn, Ann Floyd & Joel Kilpatrick (Gospel Publishing House, 120 pp., paperback, \$5.99)



Parents and grandparents, both Christian and non-Christian, are looking for help for their families. The staff of the *Pentecostal Evangel* have provided this help with their timely book on the family.

The 23 chapters are divided into four main categories: marriage, family life, parenting, and relationships. The chapters on parenting provide practical advice on a number of topics including teaching your children how to give and pray, and instilling Christian values in your children. This section also includes a chapter on how to keep teenagers in church.

*Family* shows how Christian grandparents can help their grandchildren serve the Lord. There is also a chapter on caring for aging parents.

*Family* is a book every member of your congregation needs to read. It would make an excellent gift for young parents or those wanting to enhance their family life.

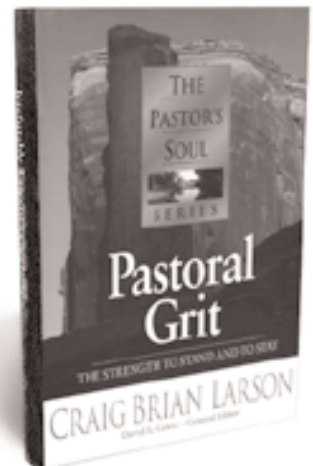
—Reviewed by Richard Schoonover, associate editor, *Enrichment Journal*, Springfield, Missouri.

## PASTORAL GRIT

Craig Brian Larson (Bethany House, 172 pp., hardback, \$15.99)

Do you sometimes wish you had a friend who is struggling too? One who works hard, scrambles with pressures, and is still seeing only modest success? Tired of reading books so loaded with success they seem unreal, or hearing people speak who appear to never have had a down day?

If you are saying yes to the above, then *Pastoral Grit* will be a tonic. Larson has written a simple, direct, and deeply



personal book. He classes himself as “overqualified to write this book. Not because I have more pastoral grit than others, but because I suspect I have felt like giving up more often than most.”

I underlined his thoughts on impact, comparisons on ministry, and his assessment of why ministers drive

themselves. His pointers on how to live out a conviction-based ministry are of real value.

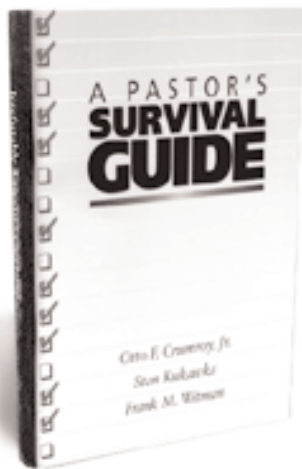
Larson states, “Only when I am authentic can I persevere with spiritual vitality—strong to the finish.”

—Reviewed by David Argue, senior pastor,  
Christ’s Place, Lincoln, Nebraska.

### A PASTOR’S SURVIVAL GUIDE

Otto F. Crumroy, Jr., Stan Kukawka, Frank M. Witman (Morehouse Publishing, 45 pp., paperback, \$9.95)

Church staff learn early in their careers that all responsibilities are not necessarily spiritual duties. They must acquire a degree of expertise in dealing with



business matters to effectively handle the time-consuming tasks involved in church administration.

The efficient use of time has always been a problem for both pastors and their staffs. To save time in church administration, *A Pastor’s Survival Guide* provides the tools pastors need to evaluate their congregations’ strengths and weaknesses. In addition, this manual includes many sample forms for help in such areas as job descriptions, performance reviews, goal setting, financial planning, leadership

strategies, and others.

*A Pastor’s Survival Guide* will be a valuable resource on any church office shelf. This compact booklet is sure to become an invaluable guide to help pastor and staff sharpen their administrative skills—painlessly.

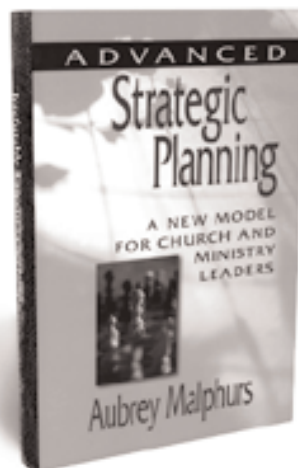
—Reviewed by Charles D. Arsenault,  
senior pastor, Evangel Temple Christian  
Center, Springfield, Missouri.

### ADVANCED STRATEGIC PLANNING

Aubrey Malphurs (Baker, 274 pp., paperback, \$16.99)

This is another in a growing list of forward-thinking books Malphurs has written for Christian leaders. With a straightforward, practical approach, the author guides the reader through the strategic planning process, paying special attention to the reasons for and benefits of a local church pursuing a strategic plan.

The editors and publisher have been sensitive to the reader by inserting frequent summary lists and explanatory charts. An example of this is on pages 62–76, where 15 audits describing how to do a ministry analysis are listed. By the time the reader has processed this



chapter, interest is high and desire is engaged to pursue what Malphurs calls a “strategic thinking and acting model.”

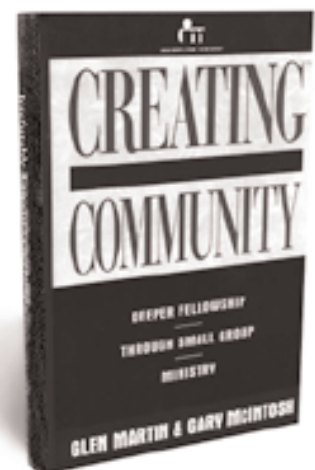
For any leader who has attempted to effect change, two segments of the book are particularly relevant. Chapter two presents the basis for a theology of change. Second, Appendix A provides a Readiness for Change Inventory. These 17 responses will help those leading change to be alert to areas of potential conflict, as well as gain an overall attitude toward proposed change.

Of particular benefit is the help the book affords in bringing clarity to the vision process. This volume is a must read for any church leader developing a vision for his or her church.

—Reviewed by Paul R. Martin, Illinois  
District superintendent,  
Carlinville, Illinois.

### CREATING COMMUNITY

Glen Martin and Gary McIntosh  
(Broadman, 176 pp., paperback, \$11.99)



*Creating Community* is a summary of small-group resources and provides innovative ways to eliminate obstacles in small-group ministry. Glen Martin and Gary McIntosh begin by focusing on the reason and purpose for small



# book reviews

groups. This section will inspire the reader to take a good look at the need for small groups.

The authors also do a masterful job listing the types of groups, the seven fears many people have in starting small groups, and the problems that will be encountered before they start. With that information, Martin and McIntosh give the reader a means to evaluate his or her church's need for small groups by defining churches as dormant, dedicated, developing, or dynamic.

Part II, the most innovative section of the book, gives two possible tracks for starting small groups—a slow and fast track model. This section shows a great deal of wisdom and will help eliminate most of the problems I have observed in our church's 21 years of small-group ministry.

The final section of the book shows the life cycle of individual small groups, how to develop leaders, and how to organize a small-group ministry.

Philosophical, practical, and biblical reasons are blended to make this a book worth having and sharing with friends.

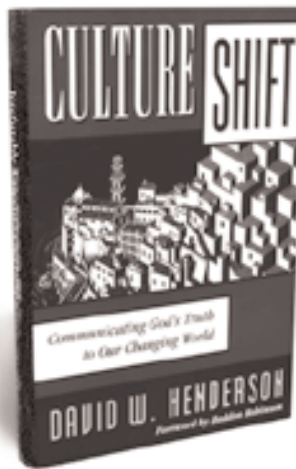
—Reviewed by Robert C. Stone, D.Min.,  
senior pastor, Hillcrest Chapel,  
Bellingham, Washington.

## **CULTURE SHIFT: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH TO OUR CHANGING CULTURE**

David W. Henderson (Baker, 255 pp., paperback, \$18.99)

How do we penetrate our society with the gospel of Jesus Christ? According to David Henderson, this task has become increasingly more difficult because of six major shifts in the foundation of Western thought. In *Culture Shift*, Henderson analyzes how these shifts occurred and how they affect the way we think and live.

These six major shifts have occurred in two areas: who we are and how we think. In today's culture, individuals are consumers in search of something that fits, spectators in search of entertainment, and isolated individuals full of self-concern. Popular thinking springs from secularism (God is not a part of our daily world), existentialism (right and wrong are determined by each individual), and



postmodernism (life has no meaning and there are no absolutes).

Henderson devotes two chapters to each of these shifts. In one chapter he relates the factors that have shaped that cultural mind-set and how our thought processes and behavior are different as a result. In a second chapter, he contrasts the mind-set with biblical truth and shares practical suggestions on how to bridge the gap between the two in preaching, teaching, and sharing our faith.

If you want to become more effective in communicating biblical truth in a relevant way, effectively breaking through our cultural mind-sets, this book is for you.

—Reviewed by Tim McIntyre, pastor,  
Ridgeway Assembly of God,  
Memphis, Tennessee.

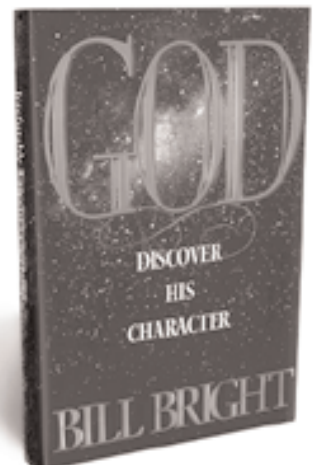
## **GOD, DISCOVER HIS CHARACTER**

Bill Bright (New Life Publications, 336 pp., hardback, \$19.99)

The premise of this book is based on the conviction we can trace all our human problems to our low view of God. Bright proves this premise while providing a powerful antidote through a penetrating revelation of an unchanging God in changing times.

This is a unique book because Bill Bright has spent over 50 years in an intense and intimate pursuit of God. Prior to writing this book, Bright experienced four annual 40-day fasts that God used to reveal himself in a depth the author had never known.

This book is also profoundly simple. The author has made theology understandable to any reader without compromising the purity of biblical content and sound doctrine. It provides the modern reader an abundance of pertinent illustrations and antidotes.



The format of the book is unique. The author presents 12 attributes of God with undeniable scriptural proof and then shows clearly how each attribute impacts our lives.

This book should be in every pastor's library for theological study and



sermonic material. It should be taught as a Bible study in every church and read by every believer for personal enrichment and spiritual growth.

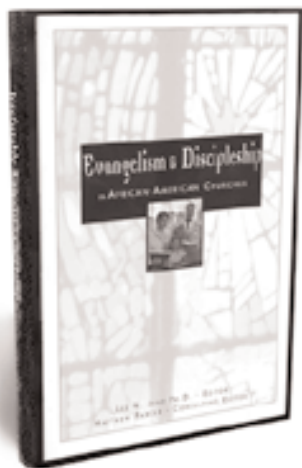
It is rare for me to give an unqualified recommendation for any book, but *God, Discover His Character* is an exception.

—Reviewed by Charles T. Crabtree, assistant general superintendent of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri.

### EVANGELISM & DISCIPLESHIP IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHURCHES

Lee N. June, Ph.D., editor (Zondervan, 183 pp., paperback \$14.99)

*Evangelism & Discipleship in African-American Churches* is a compilation of 12 articles and essays by such authors as the late Tom Skinner, Novrella Carter, and the editor himself, Lee N. June.



A brief biographical sketch on each contributor is at the beginning of each chapter to help the reader understand the expertise and perspective of the presenter.

The first article by V. Simpson Turner, Sr., pastor of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York, for 34 years, is by itself worth the price of the book. It traces the evangelism of the African slaves, from their arrival on the

continent 113 years before George Washington was born through the 1990s. In the beginning, slaves were evangelized by “slave holders who were Christian preachers,” says Turner. This non-accusatory, matter-of-fact, historical presentation of the earliest evangelism in the black community lays down a context for a greater appreciation of the rest of the book.

Pastor Willie Richardson’s essay, “The Church’s Role,” is especially helpful because of its practical approach. Richardson gives steps that will help any pastor turn his or her church into an evangelizing and discipling church.

I recommend this book for African-American pastors and pastors who have a burden to reach the African-American community.

—Reviewed by Edward Peecher, pastor, New Heritage Cathedral, Chicago, Illinois.

### LEADING CHANGE

John Kotter (Harvard Business School Press, 186 pp., hardback, \$24.95)

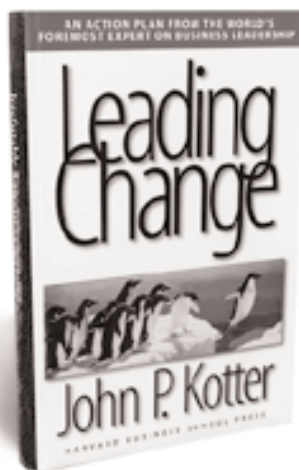
Since being a change agent is a part of every church leader’s job portfolio, *Leading Change* is a tremendous resource. Although this book is written

from a secular perspective for the business world, the reader will find the simple, nontechnical format easy to read and filled with valuable insights.

Kotter lists eight common errors organizations make that result in failure. These failures will resonate with any leader who has attempted to implement change but was unsuccessful. Some of these errors include: allowing too much complacency, not influencing your influencers, and underestimating the power of communication of your vision. The author then proceeds to provide a thorough and useful eight-stage process to successfully lead change and to achieve specific goals.

While no book is a cure-all, *Leading Change* does provide helpful insights concerning what to avoid, as well as what to do, to bring about change. Readers can substitute the word “church” for “organization” and “members” for “employees,” and the applications from this book will spring to life. Although the book may seem pricey for its size, you get what you pay for. It will save you headaches later.

—Reviewed by Kenneth B. Pagano, evangelist, Great Expectations Ministries, Garfield, Kentucky.



### SOULTSUNAMI: SINK OR SWIM IN NEW MILLENNIUM CULTURE

Leonard Sweet (Zondervan, 446 pp., hardback, \$14.97)

### AQUACHURCH: ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP ARTS FOR PILOTING YOUR CHURCH IN TODAY’S FLUID CULTURE

Leonard Sweet (Vital Ministry, 269 pp., hardback, \$19.99)

For better or worse, the 21st century will be a postmodern world. If the church is to survive, warns Leonard Sweet, it must learn to navigate these



# book reviews



new chaotic cultural waters. Sink or swim—there is no other choice.

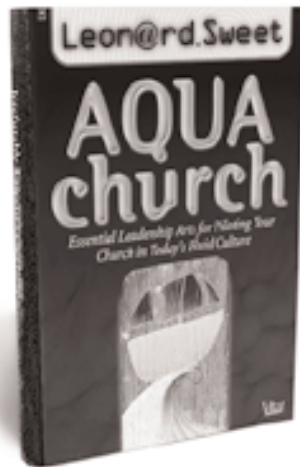
*SoulTsunami* and *AquaChurch* have become popular postmodern-ministry manuals. In both, Sweet sharply criticizes the modern American church, charging that most churches are stuck in the *Leave It to Beaver* world of the 1950s, motivated by maintenance rather than mission. He moves beyond this critique, however, and offers the tools (leadership arts) for navigating the stormy waters.

Sweet captures the characteristics of today's dominant culture. In response, he provides the language, framework, metaphors, for how the church might—indeed must—adapt. As models, he highlights cutting-edge churches that are creatively facing this challenge. For those serious about venturing forth, he has incorporated a question-and-answer assessment tool to help churches process through these issues.

You will learn what it means to embrace the “chaordic,” to “edutain,” and to get “glocal.” If you love pithy prose and memorable metaphors, you will love Sweet. If you are ready for mind-bending conceptual gymnastics, get ready for a workout. If you want a book full of illustrations and quotes, look no further. But if you are looking

for easy answers and solutions, a quick-fix comprehensive guide to postmodernism, you will want to keep shopping.

Sweet is anything but a systematic thinker. Both books lack a clear, well-thought-out plan of action. His is instead an MTV-style rapid-fire barrage of information, ideas, and images.



Look for a fair amount of replay in *AquaChurch*; many of the same ideas resurface. And though Sweet promised to profile 12 postmodern churches in that second book, none are examined in depth. Regardless, these books will make you think—then rethink.

—Reviewed by Ed Gitre, Chi Alpha director, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

## THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Thomas E. Trask and Wayde I. Goodall, (Zondervan, pp., paperback, \$12.99)

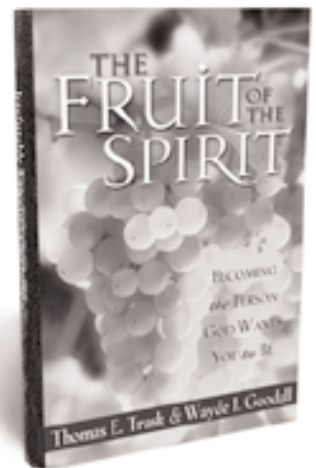
I am thrilled that my dear friends Thomas E. Trask and Wayde I. Goodall have written this outstanding book about the fruit of the Spirit, a greatly needed emphasis in the body of Christ today. I strongly recommend this book both for individual and group study.

There can be nothing more important to us and to the world than the

fruit of the Spirit. Hurting humanity desperately needs that which comes from God: His love, His joy, His peace, and all the other wonderful manifestations of the Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is really the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is His Spirit whom the Father sent. As His Spirit indwells and controls us, His fruit or personality becomes manifest as we yield ourselves to Him.

It is only as we are filled with the Holy Spirit and under His control that spiritual fruit is manifest and God's will expressed. Sharing Christ's message of love and forgiveness is the result of His fruit of love and compassion flowing through us.



With great God-given skill and from many years of walking with the Lord, Trask and Goodall have masterfully given us this marvelous book about the precious fruit of the Spirit. I pray that the inspired contents of the book will richly bless and even change the life of all readers and the world around them.

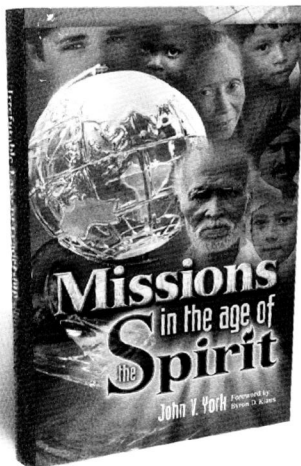
This is must reading for every sincere believer.

—Reviewed by Dr. Bill Bright, Founder and President, Campus Crusade for Christ International, Orlando, Florida.

## MISSIONS IN THE AGE OF THE SPIRIT

John V. York (Gospel Publishing House/Logion Books, pp. 272, paperback, \$11.99)

Do you have a heart for missions? I pray you do. Yet many pastors who would answer a resounding "Yes" have little missions knowledge to guide their zeal. I wish every Assembly of God pastor and all students in our Bible schools would read John York's extremely significant book.



*Missions in the Age of the Spirit* is the well-researched and well-written gift of a master missionary teacher who has lived it out on the field and then carefully written about it. This book includes the content of the author's classes, which makes up much of the pre-field orientation we provide for our own missionaries.

The book begins by tracing *missio Dei*—the mission of God—His declared purpose to bless all nations through the gospel of Jesus Christ. The second section looks at the history of missions, including what has worked and what has not. An incredibly significant third section deals with the missionary's call and spiritual formation. The vital importance of the empowerment of the Holy Spirit is the

unifying theme throughout.

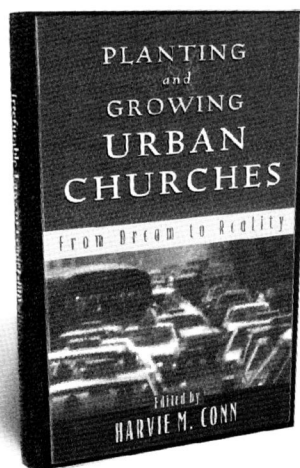
There are many theologies of missions books, many views of the history of missions, and many approaches to missiological theory and practice. This book is biblical, practical, and above all Pentecostal. If you want to understand the Assemblies of God's approach to missions, you must read this book.

—Reviewed by L. John Bueno, executive director, Division of Foreign Missions, Springfield, Missouri.

## PLANTING AND GROWING URBAN CHURCHES

Edited by Harvie M. Conn (Raker Books, 272 pp., paperback, \$19.99)

This book is a resource for urban-church planting. It is a collection of essays on strategic planning, targeting, research, and also provides successful examples of urban-church plants. The editor and authors are well-known and widely respected in



the field of urban missions. The essays are provocative, scholarly, and well-researched.

The authors come to several conclusions and values that must be part of an urban church planting strategy:

1. There must be a renewed emphasis on reaching the city. The city is the center of modern civilization from which radiates finance, politics, culture, education, and influence.

2. The world is becoming increasingly urbanized.

3. Parochialism must give way to cooperation.

4. Inclusiveness. Urban church planting includes all areas from uptown to downtown.

5. Incarnation. Urban ministry is best done out of strong churches with leadership and people who live and work among those they are called to reach.

6. Process rather than event ministries are most effective.

This book would be much stronger if it included an emphasis on the Pentecostals in the city, the role of power giftings in city evangelism, and the necessity of spiritual warfare in taking the kingdoms of darkness.

*Planting and Growing Urban Churches* is not a quick-read, but it is an important contribution to urban-church planting. I recommend it to anyone seriously interested in establishing God's kingdom in the city.

—Reviewed by David Drost, director of the Center for Urban Missions, Springfield, Missouri.

### A SERVICE

Enrichment reviews books we feel our readers would like to know about. These books are not always in accord with our point of view, and the reviews do not constitute a recommendation of the books. As a service to readers the Gospel Publishing House will supply any of these books, but books cannot be returned for credit.







# news & resources

## AGFSG OFFERS EXPANDED FINANCIAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Many people in the Assemblies of God are familiar with Ministers Benefit Association and the Assemblies of God Foundation. A smaller number, however, understand that MBA and the Foundation are just two of the six specialized divisions of the Assemblies of God Financial Services Group. Each of these divisions has been organized to meet specific needs of churches, clergy, and laity within the Assemblies of God. For information, contact the following:

- MBA-personal savings accounts, deferred compensation plans, and other retirement programs: 800-622-7526
- Foundation Planned Giving-a range of giving programs designed to minimize taxation and maximize ministry contributions: 800-253-5544
- Group Legal Services-support necessary to effect required Planned Giving legal documents: 800-253-5544
- Loan Services-church financing: 800-449-5626
- Ministers Insurance-group term life insurance: 800-447-0446
- MasterPlan Stewardship Services-Stewardship education and fund-raising programs for churches and church-related ministries: 800-962-7499

At AGFSG, our goal is to help you direct God-given resources to God-given goals.

## LIFEPOINTS RETIREMENT PLANNER AVAILABLE ONLINE AT MBA WEBSITE

*LifePoints*, an easy-to-use program to assist with retirement planning, is now available on the Ministers Benefit Association website ([www.mba.ag.org](http://www.mba.ag.org)). The planner,

developed by Frank Russell Company, is a reactive tool designed to help you evaluate whether your current level of financial investing will suffice when you reach your desired retirement age.

Based on your responses, *LifePoints* will calculate your retirement income needs, determine if your current level of investing will be sufficient, and advise which of MBA's SELECT Retirement Plan investment strategies will help you achieve your goals.

If your current contribution level will not be enough to retire at your desired age and level of income, you can repeat the process and increase your retirement contribution amounts. Utilizing your new level of retirement funding, *LifePoints* will recalculate and give you a new analysis.

*LifePoints* will bring the future into sharp focus. By starting early, as much as 60-70 percent of your retirement account could come from your earnings and compounding. Visit the site today. Should the Lord tarry, you will be glad you did for the rest of your life.

Ministers Benefit Association is a member of the Assemblies of God Financial Services Group.

## HIGHLANDS AND HILLCREST HARVEST FESTIVALS SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER

Hillcrest Children's Home will host its Harvest Festival Friday and Saturday, Oct. 6, 7. Highlands Child Placement Services and Maternity Home will celebrate its Harvest Festival on Friday, Oct. 13.

The annual events are opportunities for each home to share with their donors and friends God's life-changing power in the lives of the children and young women under their care. The events are also opportunities for churches and church groups to provide

material necessities for these homes.

To order your free Hillcrest and Highlands Harvest Festival needs lists, check #3 on the Reader Service Card.

For more information on how these ministries can help your church, or how you can assist them, call Hillcrest at 1-501-262-1660 and Highlands at 1-816-924-6565.

## AMA SUNDAY IS NOV. 12

During November, churches are asked to take a few moments on Sunday, Nov. 12, to remember with gratitude our pioneer preachers who helped plant Assemblies of God churches.

Some 500 of our retired pioneer pastors, missionaries, and evangelists and their spouses are in financial need and on the AMA rolls. Please remember them with a love offering from your congregation on AMA Day, Nov. 12.

Free AMA bulletin inserts are available by checking #4 on the Reader Service Card. Please indicate quantity.

## DISTANCE EDUCATION MERGER COMPLETE

Global University of the Assemblies of God, the new university resulting from a merger of Berean and ICI Universities, is now one unit. Global University is housed in a five-story, 93,850-square-foot building that formerly provided medical and professional offices. The facilities underwent an extensive renovation prior to the merger. In addition to offices, the renovation added a chapel/lunch room, library, video pods, a technical operations center, and more.

Assemblies of God officials announced the merger in January 1998. ICI and Berean continued service to their students from the Springfield and Irving campuses while working together to prepare for the

physical merger. Staffs of the two universities met frequently to plan the combining of the ministries. This complex work was often done through teleconferencing and videoconferencing.

All distance education and missionary services offered by both schools are continuing within Global University. The university's workforce is made up of ministers, missionaries, and laity. Many of ICI's staff moved their households from the Dallas-Ft. Worth metroplex to Springfield.

Ron Iwasko, D.Min., president of Global University, says, "We have combined Berean University and ICI University to focus on the whole world." Wherever they live on the globe, students can enroll at Global University. Distance education is delivered through print, the Internet, CD-ROM, and videoconferencing. Ministerial or lay worker training on the institute, undergraduate, or graduate levels is available. Evangelistic curricular materials and enrichment studies are also provided. A missionary commitment is at the heart of Global University.

Thomas E. Trask, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God, chairs the Global University Board of Directors. In addition to the president, other administrators include Robert Love, Ph.D., vice-president of academic affairs; Ron Tuttle, executive vice president for global operations; and Dilla Dawson, director of Berean School of the Bible, the division offering the courses required for General Council-approved ministerial credentialing.

Global University will seek regional accreditation. Students, alumni, and friends of the university may tour the campus in Springfield. Call toll-free 1-800-443-1083 for further information.

#### **NEW FIFTH EDITION COLLEGE GUIDE FOR COLLEGE COMMITMENT DAY**

Plan now to highlight the 18 endorsed A/G postsecondary schools on College Commitment Day, Sept. 10. More than 13,000 students enroll in A/G higher education each year. Students in A/G postsecondary schools learn from a Pentecostal perspective with emphasis on integration of faith and learning.

The new fifth edition of the *Assemblies of God College Guide*, a 32-page resource highlighting the 18 endorsed schools, is available free. It includes current information from each school: tuition costs, application deadlines, an overview of the local community, financial aid, and web addresses. A comprehensive majors chart lists the 18 schools and degrees offered. Handy business-reply postcards can be returned directly to the schools to request additional information.

Request copies for your church library and youth group by checking rsc#1 and stating quantity.

#### **NORTHWEST COLLEGE RECEIVES GRANT FOR NURSING SCHOOL**

Northwest College (Kirkland, Wash.) is the recipient of a \$100,000 grant from Mission of Mercy (Colorado Springs, Colo.). This grant will enable Northwest to launch the Mark and Huldah Buntain School of Nursing and provide funding for new faculty, equipment, and programs.

"This program is special," said Don Argue, Ed.D., Northwest College president. "It will serve students pursuing a nursing calling. Every graduate from the Buntain School of Nursing will have the training and experience for a wide range of fields—from the suburban hospital, to the urban street clinic, to the most challenging third-world outreach. We

are thrilled by Mission of Mercy's generous support."

Northwest officials announced the plan to start the Buntain School of Nursing last August. "As soon as we receive the necessary approvals from state government and accrediting agencies, we will begin enrolling nursing students," said Marshall Flowers, Ph.D., senior vice president. "Our desire is for the first students to begin their studies in fall 2000." Northwest's program will award a 4-year bachelor of science degree in nursing.

The college's relationship with Mission of Mercy is a strategic partnership. "Mission of Mercy is helping to meet the physical and spiritual needs of hurting people in poverty-stricken areas of the world. Through emergency and support roles, people receive food, education, medical aid, and hope in Jesus Christ," said Bob Houlihan, president of Mission of Mercy. "Our partnership with Northwest College will extend beyond funding; we have supported this vision from the beginning and eagerly anticipate the next steps." These steps include practical experience for students in Mission of Mercy hospitals and clinics around the world.

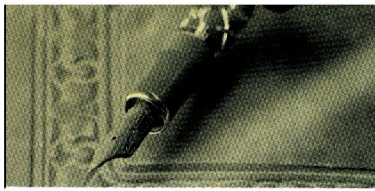
Mission of Mercy was founded in 1954 by the late Mark Buntain, in Calcutta, India. His wife Huldah Buntain still ministers in Calcutta.

Northwest is one of 18 endorsed A/G postsecondary schools.

#### **AIG COLLEGES ANNOUNCE FIRST DAY OF FALL 2000 CLASSES**

The 18 endorsed A/G postsecondary schools announce first day of fall 2000 classes:

American Indian College, Phoenix, Ariz.-Aug. 24  
A/G Theological Seminary, Springfield, Mo.-Aug. 31



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Bethany College, Scotts Valley, Calif.-  
Aug. 31

Black Hills Indian Bible College, Rapid  
City, S.Dak.-Aug. 29

Central Bible College, Springfield,  
Mo.-Sept. 7

Evangel University, Springfield, Mo.-  
Aug. 31

Global University-Berean Campus,  
Springfield, Mo.-Open enrollment

Latin American Bible Institute, La  
Puente, Calif.-Sept. 12

Latin American Bible Institute, San  
Antonio, Tex.-Aug. 23

North Central University, Minneapolis,  
Minn.-Aug. 30

Northwest College, Kirkland, Wash.-  
Aug. 28

Southeastern College, Lakeland, Fla.-  
Aug. 23

Southwestern A/G University,  
Waxahachie, Tex.-Aug. 24

Trinity Bible College, Ellendale,  
N.Dak.-Aug. 24

Valley Forge Christian College,  
Phoenixville, Pa.-Aug. 23

Vanguard University, Costa Mesa,  
Calif.-Aug. 23

Western Bible Institute, Phoenix,  
Ariz.-TBA

Zion Bible Institute, Barrington, R.I.-  
Aug. 21

## NATIONAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS CONFERENCE

Christian School Services of the  
Assemblies of God in conjunction with  
the Association of Christian Teachers  
and Schools (ACTS) invites Assemblies  
of God schools to attend two confer-  
ences. The first National Christian  
School Conference will be held at  
Evangel University in Springfield,  
Mo., Mar. 2,3, 2001. The second con-  
ference will be held in Kansas City,  
Mo., the first week in August. These

conferences are designed to inspire,  
encourage, and educate our  
Assemblies of God teachers and  
administrators. For more information,  
call 417-862-4025, or link to the  
Association of Christian Teachers and  
Schools web site at: [www.ag.org](http://www.ag.org).

## 2000 MISSIONS THEME CATALOG

A full-color Assemblies of God Foreign  
Missions catalog is available to assist  
churches in selecting missions promo-  
tional materials. It contains informa-  
tion on the Missions World *Pentecostal  
Evangel*, Missions World videos, theme  
banners and posters, the 2000 missions  
theme musical, and much more. For  
information on receiving this catalog  
call 417-862-3420.

## MISSIONS MUSICAL

*Tell the Story*, the title of the 2000 mis-  
sions musical, declares the objective of  
Assemblies of God Foreign Missions: To  
tell a lost world about God's love for  
them.

This year's musical features stirring  
medleys-some performed by interna-  
tional choirs-that will challenge hearts  
to reach the lost. Scenes from mission  
fields around the world are featured in  
the accompaniment video. The package  
includes presentation options such as  
using the video alone or with live choir  
presentations.

For more information on this inspir-  
ing musical, call 417-862-3420.

## MISSIONS PRAYER AND NEWS FAXES

Two weekly faxes presently are being  
sent to Assemblies of God churches across  
the nation. *Intercessor* carries urgent  
prayer needs from our mission-aries and  
national churches to be shared with the  
congregation. Praise reports that give  
answers to prayer are often included.

*Weekly World Report* provides weekly  
news relating to international events  
and issues that affect missions outreach,  
as well as brief vignettes of Assemblies of  
God missions endeavors worldwide.

To receive these faxes, call 417-862-  
3420.

## MISSIONS WORLD VIDEOS

We live in a visual generation. That is  
why two-thirds of the Missions World  
*Evangel* is devoted to photography.  
Missions must be seen.

In tandem with the *Evangel*, churches  
can receive monthly Missions World  
Newsbreak videos that coincide with  
one of the feature articles in the *Evangel*.  
These 2- to 3-minute presentations are  
designed to enhance a Sunday service,  
especially on Missions Sunday.

Videos can be received each month  
for only \$48 per year, just \$4 per video,  
including postage. For more informa-  
tion, call 417-862-3420.

## NATIONAL PRISON DAY IS SEPT. 17

U.S. prisons are filled with people who  
have committed every kind of crime  
imaginable. The majority of inmates are  
spiritually lost and without hope. The  
Assemblies of God is dedicated to reach-  
ing lost prisoners by sending Spirit-filled  
chaplains into America's prisons.

When chaplains walk into a prison,  
they enter an environment that is hos-  
tile to the gospel. Despite this, they are  
successfully ministering in one of the  
most fertile mission fields in the world.  
Thousands of prisoners are accepting  
the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

While a chaplain's compassion intro-  
duces inmates to the grace of God, he or  
she is struggling under the immense  
pressure of meeting the needs of the  
men and women. As a result, chaplains  
need encouragement and spiritual



renewal, so they can continue to be salt and light in a dark and lonely place.

Sunday, Sept. 17, is National Prison Day. Please receive a special offering and pray for our chaplains.

For more information about prison ministry, contact the Chaplaincy Department at 417-862-2781, ext. 3281.

#### **DHM MAPS SAVES AIG MINISTRIES MILLIONS**

Since its beginning 13 years ago, the Division of Home Missions Mission America Placement Service (DHM MAPS) has been responsible for saving Assemblies of God ministries over \$158 million in labor costs.

DHM MAPS continues to help Home Missions fulfill the Great Commission by providing opportunities for volunteers to assist home missions works and other approved projects throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Since its inception, DHM MAPS RV membership has grown from 52 volunteers to over 2,300.

Every year volunteers and hundreds of church construction teams pay their own expenses and donate thousands of hours to building or making improvements on church-related facilities. They also work on Assemblies of God colleges, universities, and Teen Challenge centers.

Hundreds of DHM MAPS volunteers will meet at annual conventions Oct. 2-6, 2000, at Lake Williamson Christian Center in Carlinville, Ill., or Oct. 22-26, 2000, at the Emerald Desert RV Resort, Palm Desert, Calif. During these conventions, the RVers join in worship services, attend seminars, exchange tips about life on the road, renew friendships, and make new friends. They also learn about the projects needing help and decide on which ones they will work.

"DHM MAPS is about more than buildings; it is a ministry of helps that God uses to impact America for His kingdom," states Patrick J. Donadio, department director. "I invite retirees and non-retirees alike to become involved."

For information about DHM MAPS or the conventions, write the MAPS RV Volunteer Ministries office at 1445 Boonville Avenue, Springfield MO 65802 or call 417-862-2781, ext. 1385.

#### **HOME MISSIONS CHRISTMAS OFFERING, OCT. 22**

You can read it in their letters, hear it in their voices, and see it in their eyes. What is it? The message, the sound, and the look of heartfelt thankfulness.

Once a year, the Division of Home Missions sends nationally appointed home missionaries a Christmas greeting that includes a check. Home missionaries know that many congregations make sacrifices to give. And every year the DHM office receives letters, phone calls, and personal visits by missionaries expressing their appreciation.

This year, Oct. 22, has been set aside for the Home Missions Christmas Offering. Please remember home missionaries on this special day—not only with a Christmas gift, but also in prayer.

For more information about Home Missions or how you can help reach America through Home Missions Chaplaincy, Chi Alpha Campus Ministries, Teen Challenge International, MAPS, Intercultural Ministries, or Church Planting, call 417-862-2781, ext. 3254, or E-mail us at: [dhm@ag.org](mailto:dhm@ag.org).

#### **CHI ALPHA DAY IS SEPT. 24**

For most college students, being on their own and away from their parents for the first time is thrilling. Life will never be

the same as they make new friends and new decisions. However, college not only offers opportunities; it also offers pitfalls—with consequences that students will live with for the rest of their lives.

Chi Alpha is an exciting ministry that strives to reach students on the secular campus before—and even after—they make mistakes. The ministry offers hope, friendship, and support as students from across the country and around the world adjust to living on their own.

Chi Alpha sees today's youth as too precious to lose on the secular campus. God has strategically placed leaders in close proximity to students who do not know Christ. Over 500,000 international students are on America's campuses. Many of them need to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. That is why Chi Alpha is committed to reaching every single student on America's campuses.

On Sunday, Sept. 24, Chi Alpha Campus Ministries encourages you to receive a special offering. If you would like to know more about Chi Alpha, call 417-862-2781, ext. 1425.

#### **CHI ALPHA PLANS FOR HISTORIC GLOBAL GATHERING OF PENTECOSTAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

More than 2,000 students from secular colleges and universities are expected to attend Chi Alpha's Campus Ministries conference, The World SALT Set in Los Angeles, Calif., and marking the 100th anniversary of the modern Pentecostal movement, this event may launch a student Azusa of missions and evangelism.

"Students are the future leaders of the world," said Curt Harlow, The World SALT director. "If we impact the future teachers, politicians, journalists, and businessmen, we will transform the world for Christ. This conference will



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spread that vision to over 45 nations." Harlow envisions a gathering that will unite college students into a global movement, have strategic impact on this moment in time, and spread God's mandate for world evangelism.

Speakers include: Sergio Scataglini, pastor of Puerta del Cielo in La Plata, Argentina; Asha Deep, veteran missionary and pastor in a closed area in Asia; Christopher Gornold-Smith, missionary in Europe; and Bill Bright, founder and director of Campus Crusade for Christ International. Worship will be led by Darrell Evans, recording artist with Vertical Music, a Hosanna! Integrity label.

The conference will take place Dec. 29, 2000-Jan. 3, 2001, at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. For more details go to: [www.worldsalt.org](http://www.worldsalt.org).

## HONORBOUND CONFERENCES REACH MEN

HonorBound: Men's Ministry continues its 2000 series of national men's conferences. Using the theme "Raise an Army," HonorBound is challenging men across the United States to answer God's call to become part of a holy army of godly men—men who are willing to change their world for Christ.

"We must become prayer warriors," stated Charles Brewster, director of HonorBound. "We must turn from sin and turn toward a life of intercession and influence. This is God's message for the men of His church. Sin is devastating our ability to reach others for Christ. We must overcome sin through prayer. Once our relationship with God is restored, then we must be actively involved in discipleship, ministry, and mentoring others."

The two remaining HonorBound

conferences (Sept. 28-30, 2000, Tacoma, Wash., and Oct. 19-21, Harrisburg, Pa.) have available registration slots. Call toll-free 1-877-2HONORBOUND for conference information.

## HONORBOUND THEME ANNOUNCED

"Take the Nations" is the 2001 theme for HonorBound: Men's Ministries. Based on Revelation 2:26, this emphasis calls men to assume the authority they have been given in Christ and to be active in winning the world for Him.

"We've spent this year raising an army of holy and committed prayer warriors," said Charles Brewster, director of HonorBound. "We are at a crisis in our cities, in our nation, and across the globe. Taking the nations is the next logical step for this army of God. To take the nations for Christ, each man must do his part."

HonorBound's 2001 "Take the Nations" conference series will kick off Jan. 21-24, 2001, with a national men's conference hosted by Brownsville Assembly of God, Pensacola, Fla. Additional "Take the Nations" conference dates will be released soon. A praise and worship CD entitled *Take the Nations*, containing music written specifically for this theme, is available.

For more information about HonorBound conferences, music, or discipleship materials, call the national HonorBound office toll-free at: 1-877-2HONORBOUND.

## EVANGELIO PENTECOSTAL NOW AVAILABLE VIA SUBSCRIPTION

Earlier this year *Evangelio Pentecostal* became available on a paid subscription basis. Published quarterly, the Spanish-language version of the *Pentecostal Evangel* can be purchased via single and

bundle subscriptions. The U.S. single subscription price is \$2 annually, while the domestic bundle rate is 25 cents per copy with a minimum order of 25.

The fact more than 13 percent of the 2.53 million adherents to the U.S. Assemblies of God are Hispanic and increasing has not been lost on the Fellowship's leaders, noted *Evangelio Pentecostal* editor Efraim Espinoza. "Our executive officers along with the Executive Presbytery recognize our growing Hispanic constituency. They desire to facilitate resources in Spanish that will equip our Hispanic churches for continued effective ministries."

"With the Hispanics contributing a substantial portion of the growth to the evangelical church, it is apparent that the potential impact of *Evangelio Pentecostal* is almost limitless."

To order the publication, call 1-800-641-4310.

## PENTECOSTAL EVANGEL WEBSITE UNDERGOES MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS

During the past several months, the *Pentecostal Evangel* Website at [pe.ag.org](http://pe.ag.org) has undergone extensive upgrades and expansion. In addition, the site is now updated each week.

Aside from the monthly *Missions World Editions*, the cover, lead editorial, and selected feature articles of every *Pentecostal Evangel* are posted on the site just prior to their publication date. New Frontline Reports, News Digest highlights, and inspirational messages from Evangel staff members are also regularly placed online.

Portions of various past issues, along with selected archived articles and features from the Evangel's 87-year history, can now be found on the site. Those looking for biblical answers to

tough questions can find answers under "Life's Q & A." Visitors to the site may also purchase available back issues of the publication, plus volumes from Pentecostal Evangel Books.

"Our site is up-to-date and improving weekly," says *Evangel* managing editor Ken Horn. "We look forward to more beneficial changes—including integration of suggestions from those who use our site."

#### **PENTECOSTAL EVANGEL BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE FOR OUTREACH, MINISTRY**

Several back issues of the *Pentecostal Evangel* covering a wide variety of topics are available for use in Christian education classes, church membership orientation, visitors packets, and community outreaches. Copies can be purchased for as little as 22 cents each when ordered in quantities of 50 or more. The price includes shipping and handling.

Among the remaining editions are issues devoted to: Finances (#69-6928); Cults (#69-6929); Reconciliation (#69-6938); Powerful Sermons (#69-6939); Welcome to the Assemblies of God (#69-6941); Self-esteem (#69-6942); Desperate for God (#69-6952); The Pentecostal Century (#69-7002); Sexual Purity (#69-7007); Health (#69-7011); and Surviving Depression (#69-7012). Copies may be ordered by calling 800-641-4310. A free sample copy can be obtained by contacting the *Pentecostal Evangel* office at 417-862-2781.

#### **RADIANT LIFE OFFERS VIDEO- ENHANCED ADULT DOCTRINE COURSE**

Spearheading Radiant Life's thrust to provide new ways to teach our core beliefs, *Truths for Life: The Doctrine Course for Spirit-filled Adults*, will be available for the fall 2000 Sunday

school quarter. The 13-week course combines video dramas and narration with interactive questions and activities to bring our distinctive doctrines to life. Students will be challenged to see beyond head knowledge to the everyday application of their beliefs.

Video dramas (one-minute session-starters) follow a group of believers as they learn and apply our doctrines. Graphics-enhanced narration sequences provide concise, systematic overviews of our doctrines.

*Verdades de Vida*, the course's Spanish-language version, will also be available. "This will be the first time we have simultaneously released both English and Spanish-language products," announced Michael Clarensau, editor in chief for Radiant Life. "We are thrilled that our Spanish-language churches will not have to wait for this important teaching resource."

For information, contact Gospel Publishing House at 1-800-641-4310.

#### **RADIANT LIFE UNVEILS DOCTRINE COURSE FOR ELEMENTARY CHILDREN'S CHURCH**

Share all you believe with *Young Explorer's* newest title: "Route 66: Lessons on Bible Doctrine." The fun, road-trip-theme environment helps students discover how key doctrines throughout God's Word guide them through the journey of life. Thirteen sessions present the Godhead, the work of Jesus, salvation, water baptism, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, and other essential truths.

For more information, call Gospel Publishing House at 1-800-641-4310.

#### **SPIRITUAL DISCOVERY SERIES NEW RELEASES**

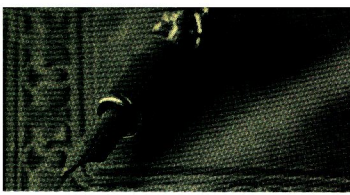
Three new study courses have been

released by Radiant Life.

*Building Healthy Marriages*, by Terry Bryant, challenges husbands and wives to apply biblical truths to the God-ordained relationship of marriage. Bryant offers practical insights on such topics as: what it means to leave and cleave, how two people can truly achieve oneness, how to be a person of commitment, how to have realistic expectations, how to employ proper and effective communication, and what it means to grow spiritually as a couple. This study is an excellent resource for engaged couples or those seeking marriage counseling. Request item #02-0129 (SG), #02-0229 (LG).

*The Writings of John* sheds new light on the culture in which these vital books of the Bible were written. Robert Berg, Ph.D., has a unique approach that will give students a deeper understanding of the Gospel of John, as well as insight into First, Second, and Third John. *The Writings of John* leads readers into the Scriptures to learn how Jesus is like His Father, what the Holy Spirit has been sent to accomplish, how to remain in Christ, when Jesus accomplished His earthly mission, and how to know who are true Christians. Request item #02-0131 (SG), #02-0231 (LG).

*Stepparenting* by Billie Davis, Ed.D., gives help concerning an increasingly common situation in contemporary society. Davis' insights and suggestions help stepparents plan and execute proper relations within their stepfamily. Davis also provides hope for those who feel overwhelmed by encouraging them to walk step-by-step along this challenging path in the strength and power of the Holy Spirit. This study is excellent for single parents as well as those who have remarried and are faced with the challenges of the blended home. Request



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item #02-0130 (SG), #02-0230 (LG).

Spiritual Discovery Series studies can be ordered through GPH, 1-800-641-4310. Study Guides (SG), \$4.95 and Leader's Guides (LG), \$9.95. For a brochure on additional titles in the Spiritual Discovery Series, request brochure #75-2067.

## QUICK, EASY, ENJOYABLE TRAINING

Every week thousands of volunteers obey Jesus' commission to make disciples of all people, "teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20, NIV). These dedicated Christians carve time from their family and work schedules to prepare Bible teaching for Sunday school classes and small groups at every age level—from babies through senior adults. Their goal is to present God's Word in a way that changes lives.

To be effective at any age level, teachers need training—and they deserve training that is quick, easy, and enjoyable.

Radiant Life and Gospel Publishing House have developed *StepOne* to make it easy for church leaders to train teachers for ministry. *StepOne* guides are colorful, easy-to-read mini-magazines, packed with photos and training articles that highlight strategies for communicating God's Word at five age-levels. Training articles include how to respond to age-level traits, build relationships with students, plan memorable and enjoyable Bible lessons, create inviting classrooms, and discipline for positive results. *StepOne, A Guide for Leaders* casts a vision for leading Sunday school in the new millennium and offers practical strategies for recruiting, training, and motivating volunteers.

The magazine style lends special appeal to this training piece. The colorful design of each version of

*StepOne* will pull teachers into the articles, and the sidebars and lists will keep teachers reading from cover to cover. They will appreciate the biblical basis and practical suggestions.

Each copy of *StepOne* is \$1.95, and 10 or more copies of anyone booklet are \$1.25 each. Call 1-800-641-4310 to order an examination copy of all six versions. We believe you will decide to order a copy for every teacher, helper, and prospective teacher in your Sunday school.

*StepOne A Guide for Teachers, Nursery*  
02-0285

*StepOne A Guide for Teachers, Early Childhood* 02-0286

*StepOne A Guide for Teachers, Elementary* 02-0287

*StepOne A Guide for Teachers, Youth*  
02-0288

*StepOne A Guide for Teachers, Adult*  
02-0289

*StepOne A Guide for Leaders* 02-0290

## FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

Keep your eyes open for resources and information regarding this upcoming national Sunday school promotion—"Find What You're Looking For...in Sunday School." It may be the biggest thing to hit your Christian education ministry in years, and it could help put the evangelistic thrust back into your Sunday school. Information is available through the Sunday School Promotion and Training Department at 417-862-2781. Promotional resources and products are available through Gospel Publishing House (order toll free 1-800-641-4310).

## TOUCH THE WORLD FUND

On Sept. 19, Women Touching the World Day, churches may give an offering to the Touch the World Fund, or Women's Ministries group(s) may

sponsor fund-raising events to raise money for the fund. Contributions may be sent with the church's other offerings listed on the World Ministries Giving form.

The women and girls of the Assemblies of God show they care about the hurting people of the world by joining together in the first nationwide project-building the Touch the World Care Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. A major portion of the Touch the World Fund this year will be used to build the care center.

The Touch the World Fund provides furnishings and equipment for home and foreign missions and benevolence institutions owned by the Assemblies of God. Additionally, the fund provides medical kits and vital medical services to Assemblies of God foreign missionaries. Ten percent of the funds received are returned to district Women's Ministries and Missionettes to promote ministry to women and girls.

Missionettes give to the Touch the World Fund through Coins for Kids. The Missionettes offering provides furnishings and equipment for orphanages, camps, and schools. Funds will be collected during the annual Nationwide Missionettes Sleepover, Sept. 22, 23, 2000. Churches may select another date if necessary.

Theme and promotional materials for the Nationwide Missionettes Sleepover/Coins for Kids are sent to churches reporting Missionettes clubs on the Annual Church Ministries Report. *Woman's Touch* and *Club Connection* also carry program and fund-raising suggestions.

Check rsc #5 to receive complimentary copies of the *Touch the World Fund* and *Touch the World Care Center* brochures. Check rsc #6 for information

on the Nationwide Missionettes Sleepover/Coins for Kids.

#### **CHURCHES USE WOMAN'S TOUCH AS MENTO RING AND EVANGELISTIC TOOL**

*Woman's Touch*, an inspirational magazine for women produced by the national Women's Ministries Department, is recognized as a premier Pentecostal magazine for women.

"*Woman's Touch* is without question the finest publication targeted for women that I have reviewed. Thank you for your leadership," states Don H. Argue, Ed.D., president of Northwest College of the Assemblies of God.

Churches can order *Woman's Touch* in bundles and place them next to the *Pentecostal Evangel* in the church's literature rack. *Woman's Touch* is used by pastors to disciple, strengthen, and mentor the women in their congregations, and to help reach women in the community.

Published six times per year, bundles of five or more subscriptions to the same address of the regular edition of *Woman's Touch* can be purchased for \$7.50 each. To order *Woman's Touch*, check reader service card #7; call 1-800-641-4310; or E-mail: [gph@ag.org](mailto:gph@ag.org). You can also subscribe to *Woman's Touch* online on the new *Woman's Touch* web site: [www.ag.org/womanstouch](http://www.ag.org/womanstouch).

#### **PRAYER ZONE PARTNERS**

A Prayer Zone Partner (PZP) is someone who commits to praying for students, schools, teachers, and principals every time he or she drives through a school zone.

Although school zones may represent an inconvenience or interruption to some people, their purpose is to protect the lives of students. Many schools have become war zones. Satan has set up a

front line of offense in our public schools.

All are concerned for today's youth. You may be wondering, *What can I do? I can't go on campus.* You can pray for schools by becoming a Prayer Zone Partner. The next time you see a school zone sign, think of it as a Prayer Zone. Use the time to pray for the school and its students. The prayer possibilities are endless. The impact is powerful.

There are more than 81,000 schools in the U.S. and 56,000 of them are middle, junior high, and high schools. The national Youth Department's goal is to cover all 56,000 schools every day with prayer. We need your help to achieve this goal.

You can adopt one or more schools in your community. Giving us your name lets us know how many people are praying for our nation's schools, and which schools are being prayed for.

#### **SPEED-THE-LIGHT DAY**

Speed-the-Light Day is Sun., Oct. 15, 2000. The new theme for the 2000-01 STL year is No Request.

Order Speed-the-Light bulletin inserts, offering envelopes, theme video, banners, and more by calling 1-800-641-4310.

#### **NATIONAL FINE ARTS FESTIVAL**

The 2001 Fine Arts Festival will take place Aug. 6-10, 2001, in Bartle Hall, at the Kansas City Convention and Entertainment Center, Kansas City, Mo., in conjunction with General Council. For more information, contact the national Youth Department at 417-862-2781, ext. 4035, or E-mail: [faf@ag.org](mailto:faf@ag.org). Order the *Rules Brochure* (item #731-404) by calling GPH at 1-800-641-4310.

#### **NEW BIBLE QUIZ YEAR HAS BEGUN**

A new season of Bible Quiz is here. The

focus for 2000-01 is the Book of Luke. Order the new *Bible Quiz Resource Catalog* by calling 1-800-641-4310 and requesting item #731-906.

#### **SINGLES MINISTRY AGENCY FORMED**

A new Singles Ministries Agency has recently been established under the Division of Christian Education of the Assemblies of God. Dennis Franck, associate pastor of Valley Christian Center, Dublin, California, has been appointed as the coordinator for this new ministry. This new initiative within the Assemblies of God will provide encouragement, networking, and resources for those involved in singles ministries. It will also highlight the importance of ministry to this burgeoning group within the adult population of our country.

Dennis Franck is one of the pioneers of singles ministries in the Assemblies of God and has been involved in singles ministry for over 20 years. He is known for his skills in networking and resource development. His expertise is recognized transdenominationally. He has served in associate positions in South Dakota, Wisconsin, Montana, Nebraska, Idaho, and California. He has written articles on singles ministry for the *C.E. Counselor*, *Pentecostal Evangel*, *Enrichment*, and the *Single Adult Ministry Journal*. In addition, he has written various chapters on singles ministry in books published by Victor Books and Baker.

LeRoy Bartel, national director of the Division of Christian Education and Commissioner on Discipleship, states, "We are fortunate to have a person of the stature of Dennis Franck lead the Assemblies of God Singles Ministries Agency. This is truly an exciting new day of opportunity for singles ministries in our Fellowship." ~





# With Christ

**Rachel L. Adams**  
Kerrville, Texas

**Delila Ann Ahlf**  
Springfield, Missouri

**Earl F. Anderson**  
Kerrville, Texas

**Harold W. Ansel**  
Wills Point, Texas

**William M. Austin**  
Summit City, California

**Reynaldo O. Baiza**  
Carlsbad, New Mexico

**Richard Ball**  
Springfield, Missouri

**Emma M. Barnes**  
Laurel, Mississippi

**Omar Bates**  
Mountain View, Missouri

**James R. Beers**  
Brewton, Alabama

**Dean G. Bergstrom**  
Eden Prairie, Minnesota

**Sisinio Bernal**  
Parsons, Kansas

**Henry E. Boatright**  
Kilgore, Texas

**Nellie H. Boyd**  
Kansas City, Kansas

**Charles L. Breedlove**  
Lebanon, Missouri

**Kenneth O. Brethouwer**  
Provo, Utah

**William R. Byrd**  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

**Marvin K. Capehart**  
Winnsboro, Texas

**Malvie M. Carlisle**  
Lakeland, Florida

**Linwood J. Carr II**  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

**Donna M. Chaikoff**  
Anchorage, Alaska

**Mildred E. Chasteen**  
Keller, Texas

**Frank Cimo**  
Sacramento, California

**Edwin T. Collier**  
Lee's Summit, Missouri

**Ralph C. Crawford, Jr.**  
Jacksonville, Florida

**Frank C. Cunningham**  
Merrillville, Indiana

**Robert C. Cunningham**  
Springfield, Missouri

**Marjorie H. Denton**  
Springfield, Missouri

**Eva J. Devon**  
Scottsdale, Arizona

**Alfonso F. Dimusto**  
Havanna, Illinois

**Joseph E. Dube**  
Mesa, Arizona

**Eugene Dunn**  
Calico Rock, Arkansas

**G. Pauline Dunn**  
Prescott, Arizona

**John C. Finley**  
Judsonia, Arkansas

**Betty J. Foster**  
Pueblo, Colorado

**Melba Freeman**  
El Dorado, Arkansas

**Marian M. Freiheit**  
Eden Prairie, Minnesota

**Jose P. Gomez**  
Littleton, Colorado

**Belia Gonzales**  
Whittier, California

**Leland B. Good**  
La Puente, California

**Ray H. Goodman**  
Plains, Texas

**James M. Grigsby**  
New Castle, Indiana

**J. Clifford Hall**  
Bernville, Pennsylvania

**Luther W. Hankins**  
Russellville, Arkansas

**Marian E. Hargis**  
Virginia Beach, Virginia

**Milo R. Harmon**  
Bowie, Texas

**Vernon L. Haskins**  
Herrin, Illinois

**David L. Hearn**  
Tucker, Georgia

**Raymundo D. Hernandez**  
San Angelo, Texas

**Sybil L. Holloway**  
Pensacola, Florida

**Johnie O. Howard**  
Shawnee Mission, Kansas

**C. Merrill Johnson**  
Hacienda Heights, California

**Theodore L. Johnson**  
Camp Verde, Arizona

**McArthur Jollay**  
Arlington, Virginia

**Alton A. Kirkwood**  
Buckatunna, Mississippi

**Herbert V. Knight**  
Ava, Illinois

**Odell Knight**  
Huntsville, Texas

**Ardelia Ladd**  
Springfield, Missouri

**Ware B. Laffoon**  
Springfield, Missouri

**James C. Larue**  
Tuckerman, Arkansas

**Jerry A. Lewis**  
Plummer, Idaho

**John H. Long**  
Landisville, Pennsylvania

**Elsie Marialke**  
Springfield, Missouri

**James L. Martin**  
Coolidge, Arizona

**Frances Martinez**  
Tampa, Florida

**T.A. McLarty**  
Decatur, Texas

**Gordon J. Messner**  
Holts Summit, Missouri

**Rose C. Meszaros**  
Dearborn, Michigan

**Bruce C. Miles**  
Coeur D'Alene, Idaho

**Malcolm P. Minor**  
Wellington, Alabama

**T.G. Morrow**  
Big Flat, Arkansas

**William E. Oliver**  
Flint, Michigan

**Vaughn S. Parks**  
Euless, Texas

**Ronnie D. Petty**  
Park Hills, Missouri

**John A. Phillips**  
Olivehurst, California

**Berenice Ritchey**  
Missouri City, Texas

**Eddie C. Rodriguez**  
Hammond, Louisiana

**Samuel Rosario**  
Cleveland, Ohio

**Kresse C. Sampson**  
Waterford, California

**A.V. Shehane**  
Clio, Alabama

**James H. Shelley**  
Excel, Alabama

**Wayne E. Sheppard**  
Searcy, Arkansas

**Marjorie J.M. Sherman**  
Oakland, California

**Donald E. Skiles**  
Moorpark, California

**Don Smothers**  
Springdale, Arkansas

**Esther M. Solberg**  
Mulberry, Florida

**Catalina Soto**  
Bronx, New York

**Donato Sotomayor**  
Juncos, Puerto Rico

**Georgann Sparks**  
Whitney, Texas

**Melvin E. Sparks**  
Grain Valley, Missouri

**Clay H. Stephens**  
Emmett, Idaho

**Raymond A. Thompson**  
Fort Smith, Arkansas

**Hubert L. Tomlinson**  
Columbus, Ohio

**Jessie O. Trantham**  
Springdale, Arkansas

**Juan A. Trevino**  
Brownsville, Texas

**Harry V. Vibbert**  
Evansville, Indiana

**Delynda J. Walter**  
Shawnee, Oklahoma

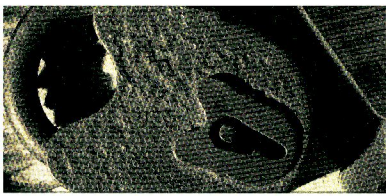
**C. Lewis Welker**  
Jefferson City, Missouri

**Harvey M. White**  
Houston, Texas

**Mayme E. Williams**  
Durant, Florida

**J.R. Wyatt, Jr.**  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

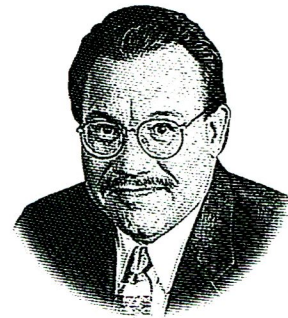




# in closing

BY PAUL E. DROST

## A Church Planting/ Multiplication Movement



In all of God's creation, reproduction and multiplication are normal, desired, and necessary. Birds reproduce birds, animals reproduce animals, and people reproduce people. God's kingdom cannot be an exception. Believers should reproduce believers and churches should reproduce churches. God's kingdom is about going, sending, reproducing, and multiplying. This is nonnegotiable.

If ever there was a need for a church planting/multiplication movement, it is now. The American church is opening only one church for every three and one-half that it closes. The Assemblies of God is operating at only one-sixth of the production capacity it did 15-20 years ago. Christianity is growing on every continent except North America. Only 20 percent of the U.S. population attends church during any given week. No county in the U.S. has a higher percentage of its citizens in church than it did 10 years ago.

The solution is for pastors and churches to commit themselves to church planting and multiplication. Planting churches is the most effective way to reach people. It is the God-given method of rapid growth and effectiveness.

Jesus asked His disciples to feed the hungry multitude. John 6 declares that He did this to test them. Philip said, "Send them away."

Concerning the meager loaves and fish, Peter asked, "What are these among so many?"

The responses of Jesus' disciples will never satisfy the spiritual hunger and loss of humanity. There was a boy,

however, who offered what was in his hand. This is what Jesus used to multiply and meet the need.

The kingdom of God has always been about people willing to give what was in their hands so God could accomplish His purposes. Those who stay close to Jesus hear His heart and respond.

There is a multitude seeking and needing Jesus. We have the Bread of Life, and Jesus is asking each of us to give it to them. This is God's multiplication test.

"Send them away; we don't want to deal with them," is a sinful affront to the One who redeemed us.

"We can't because we don't have," is a poor excuse to Him who has blessed us beyond measure.

"Jesus, take what's in my hand," is the only answer that will do.

This last response is the spirit of Isaiah: "Here am I, send me"; the spirit of David: "Who will defy the armies of the living God?"; the spirit of Paul: "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision"; and the spirit of Pentecost: "Lord, empower us, spend us, and multiply us for Your glory."

The Book of Acts is the story of a Spirit-empowered church reaching Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the world through planting churches that multiplied by planting other churches. And church planting today continues the spirit of the Early Church.

Growing churches are exciting. They are motivated by Jesus' heart to go. Purpose, faith, and joy mark growing churches. They are filled with people

who do not want to wait to be part of what God is going to do next.

When we answer "Yes" to Jesus, He begins to multiply us and this is what happens:

- New churches are planted and establish a fresh presence of God in the new area.
- A "gospel saturation" mentality rather than a "gospel competition" mentality raises the spiritual temperature of an area.
- The people have a sense of, "What can we do next for God?"
- New churches with fresh vitality and diversity reach people who have not been reached by more established churches.
- New churches are good soil, and there is an excellent return for the investment.
- Our foreign missions effort is multiplied. Every dollar in a new church is multiplied several times over in foreign missions giving.
- A healthy church reproduces its spiritual DNA in a new church.
- We have the joy of saying "Yes" to Jesus, and we pass the multiplication test.

Today we are faced with a great opportunity to make an eternal difference in countless lives. Will you say "Yes" to Jesus and offer Him what's in your hand. Let's write this chapter with selflessness and honor. May eternity reveal that we served Him with no reserve, no regrets, and no retreat. **e**

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