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## A Study In Church Growth

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# A STUDY IN CHURCH GROWTH

Ps. 51:12-13

- I. It has always been the spirit of God's followers to be concerned about their fellowman.
  - A. From the Pharisees (Matt. 23:15) compassing land & sea, to Jesus into all the world & back to David's interest in the Sinner - that spirit abides.
  - B. Look briefly at David's thoughts.
- Ps. 51:12-13 "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation"
  1. Joy when one knows he's God's.
  2. David knew the world & enjoyed it: throne, servants, glory, son, wife, renoun - yet lack peace of conscience & divine favor.
  3. Joy came c free obedience.
  4. God alone grants salvation. This is the ultimate joy.
  5. More conscious of sin I am the more intense my religion.
  6. I constantly want upholding [REDACTED]
  7. My restoration to favor of God imposes obligation & I must pay dividends.
    - (a) I must teach others.
    - (b) Confident they can be reached.
    - (c) Worst sinner when restored can teach.
- II. The Church Today Feels Constraint to Reach Others Are We?
  - A. Let me tell you of some records.
    1. West End
      - 928 members
      - 547 families
      - 292 men

488 women

148 students

84 '74 responses: 25 baptisms; 52 P.M., 7 Rest

80 members new in '74; 10 died, 76 moved.

571 in S.S. \$4,700 given per Sunday.

2. Macon Rd., Memphis

45 Baptized, 44 restored, 30 P.M.

3. Eastland - Nashville.

15 Baptized, 14 Restored, 12 P.M., \$677.00.

4. Pine Bluff, Ark.

32 Bapt., 25 Restored, 36 P.M., 265 folks.

5. Lincoln Park, Detroit.

18 Bapt. - 225 members.

6. College St., Lebanon.

36 Baptized, (only once since 1940 above this)

407 in S.S., 213 Sun. nite.

7. Brook Meade - 115 Baptisms.

8. Cross Roads, Gainesville, Fla.

1627 Responses )

237 Baptisms )

529

70 P.M. )

Members

1320 Restored )

B. Flavil Yeagley, Jr. Report.

1. Converts come from:

(a) 75% memberships (movers).

(b) 20% Baptisms of own kids.

(c) 5% adults.

2. Ones hard to reach are:

(a) If all a person's friends & family are of same religious affiliation - also quick to quit.



Yet in homogeneous group leader easier to convert than follower.

(b) Ones where no change occurs as change opens doors:

(1) Marriage.

(2) Children.

(3) Children grow up and leave.

(4) Change jobs or retire.

(5) Greatest change HS to 30 years.

(c) Where no dissatisfaction - converse moves him.

3. Methods or Congregational Characteristics that are successful.

(a) More methods, more converts, i.e. sermon, cottage, camp, correspondence, etc.

(b) More heterogenous more converts & less dropouts  
Same race & education use by status quo preserved. Congregations need to match community.

(c) Size a factor - larger church, less the growth.  
Reverse if congregation offers many jobs.

4. Preacher's role.

(a) Not important - "wrong" can retard; "right" lets it grow.

(b) Neither age nor education seemed to greatly matter.

5. Cause for Dropouts.

(a) No congregational attachment - converted thru cottage. Must have a meaningful relation - worship, S.S., etc.

(b) Style of preaching.

- (1) What's wrong - low return.
  - (2) All to Chr. - low return.
  - (3) 25% to members; 25% evangelical, 50% motivational to all is best.
  - (c) Desperate need for Buddy system. Capt. Bob Conn of Ann Arbor police said they keep coffee hot, pick up many at 3:00 A.M. - just want someone to talk to.
5. What are winning ways?
- (a) Christian Church "Directory of Ministry 5514 churches, added 3000 last yr. - 1/2 member per church, out of 3 billion they got 1 out of every million!
  - (b) Survey of Yeagley among 2000 congregations, 1009 responded - 240 congregations for additional study, 48 congregations in depth. Interviewed converts, ones could not & dropouts. Interviewed 500 preachers & teachers - here's what found!
1. Personal, not impersonal ways win.
- (a) Direct mail, correspondence, Books, tracts - low.
  - (b) Radio & TV a bit higher.
  - (c) Guy with film projector an "equipment operator"
2. If you are my friend - green light!
- (a) Typical personal worker - young, uneducated, poor.
  - (b) Resent hi pressure methods.
  - (c) Friend, discussing thing of mutual interest is best approach.



(d) H. L. Hunt clip.

3. Wrong way.

(a) Manipulated monologue.

(b) Information Transmission method - I know it all.

(c) Canned stuff & buttons pushed.

4. Best - You - Personally There.

West End 1-26-75

Linda Sharp - Ident.

Susan Smith - Ident.

Mr. + Mrs. Jimmy Williams - Ident.

Mrs. Carrie Bess - Ident.

West Side Church, Searey, Ark. Men's Breakfast 1-28-75  
Elders, Deacons, Preachers Luncheon, So. Nat'l. Church,  
Springfield, Mo. 3-17-75

Bearborn, Mich. Church 4-14-75

CHARLES COIL, President, International Bible College, Florence, Alabama, has provided some startling statistics: "The latest figures on world population show that 3,900,000,000 souls are now moving swiftly and inexorably toward the judgment of God. It is your responsibility and mine to make known the gospel to these people before they die. At the rate of one preacher for every 25,000 souls we now need 156,000 preachers. We can find fewer than 8,000. Moreover, all our liberal arts colleges are graduating fewer than 700 Bible majors per year. About 800 preachers die or quit preaching each year."

Hillsboro Herald  
January 5, 1975

*Detroit 3,000,000*  
*Nashville 30,000*  
*300,000 / 30,000 = 10*  
*150,000 / 50,000 = 3*