

## **Church Growth**

### **Introduction**

As we look at church growth we must realise there are unique principles that will enable us to have a successful church. No matter if your church has one or a thousand members or more the basic principle is always the same. God first in everything you do!

You do the basics right and the rest will follow. God is no respecter of persons, if He does it for someone else, He will also do it for you.

Also remember if you want to achieve what another person has already done you must also be prepared to walk the walk and do what he or she did.

Many people look at successful ministries and expect God to do the exact same thing for them without going through the walk. We need to understand that people do not achieve extra ordinary things for God without paying the cost / the price. There is a price to pay to be successful in Christ.

People look at me and they want what I have got but they do not want to go the distance. They do not want to give faithfully. They do not want to read their bible. They do not want to spend the time with God. But they want the outward manifestation of God blessing which is evident in someone's life.

I am not saying you cannot have it, as I said God is no respecter of persons, but you must be prepared to do the background work and meet with God and build a special relationship with God. Any success will take time and effort to achieve! Rome was not build in a day, it will take effort on your part to get closer to God and it all starts with getting closer to God through your personal relationship. I cannot express it more that I already have. Your relationship with God is the basis for everything in your life, your ministry, your church. God is ALWAYS first in everything!

Relationship is everything! I cannot express it enough. Your personal walk with God, how you communicate with Him and your obedience to His commands will give the break through!

We need to develop the attitude, if God says it; I will do it, no matter what are the costs, physically, personally or financially.

## What is Church Growth

So Church growth in essence has everything to do with your personal relationship with God and doing what He tells you to do. Whenever you ask about how to grow your church, you are actually asking the wrong questions, you should rather ask some of these questions:

- How do I grow myself spiritually to accept what God wants to do through my life?
- How do I put God first in my life so that I am submissive in every area of my life and all I do?
- What must I change in my life to become Christ like in all I do?
- Which areas in my life must I confess and bring under God control so that I can the victory over the sin in my life!
- What is God's plan for me, if you do not know what it is then find out; maybe God has another plan for you. You must always know what God's plan is for you.

God will work through your ministry when He can trust you and you are submissive to His plan for your life.

### The Principles

So let's talk about some of these principles! Many are self explanatory and they should not be something new! Unless you understand them you will maybe miss some important facts about the Church of Christ.

I want to stress that it is never our works that save us or make us worthy of Salvation; it is always all because of Jesus Christ! I am saved not by works but through believing that Jesus Christ died for my sins and the God raised Him from the dead!

Once I am working for Him, what I do, my attitudes, my motivation, my everything must be focused to bring Him, all the honour, glory and praise. It is in Him that we live and move and have our being.

When I apply His principles in my life, I will be a success because God made these plans long before I was born and He knew me and only wants me to succeed, see Jeremiah 29L11,

### The Principles of provision

The next principle of church growth is WHAT ARE YOU BUILDIGN YOUR Ministry on?

Before I continue with this point, I want to mention one very important fact! Whenever God is active in a ministry, whenever you want to know if you are in God will and doing what He want you to do, then look if there is provision! There will always be provision wherever God is at work.

I have seen many ministries that are not from God and which are a good idea but not a God idea. These ministries suffered greatly with finances and provision! I am not saying if you have financial problems in your ministry that you heard wrong! Sometimes the people in your church need to take ownership and start giving according to God word or sometime you might be wasting what God is providing for you already.

What I am saying is that when God is into something it is always successful because God cannot make a mess. The problems we usually get is that pastors become proud and arrogant and think they have arrived and it is all because of them that they have a successful ministry, be careful because God hates the proud.

Any ministry not based on the rock which is Christ will fail, so build everything on Christ and turn all success and accolades back towards Christ, give Him all the praise and glory He deserves and you will see your ministry explode!

### **The Principles of Money**

The next principle of church growth is WHERE IS YOUR HEART – What is your treasure! **Mathew 6:21** says “Where your treasure is there your heart will be also”

You cannot have a successful ministry based on money. Money is a tool; do not make it lord of your life. God never compared Himself to anything else but money, why because just like God money can be worship.

The bible says that in **1 Timothy 6:10** that the “Love of Money is the root of all evil”. Money has the power to overpower you and make you its slave.

Money must NEVER be the motivating factor of your ministry! It is not a matter of how much money can I make? Not a matter of more people equals more finances!

No, you put God first in everything you do and finances will flow. You become a faithful steward of the finances at your disposal and you will see God trust you with more finances.

### **Explain about how we came this time**

Money must never be your master! Submit everything you have to God, you prove your love for God by doing what He asks you. There is a say in church circles, “Show me your bank account and I will tell you if you are serious about God!”

The bible says “Where your treasure is, there your heart is!” Where is your treasure pastor? Is God Lord of your finances?

### **The Principles of Lordship**

Another principle is WHO SITS ON THE THRONE OF YOUR LIFE? Putting God first in all you do will make you a better person. As you become more Christ like you will draw people to Him.

Jesus said, "When I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." Is your life a magnet to draw people?

God says He does not want our money, He does not want works, whatever – what He is looking for is a heart set on Him, a person submissive to Him and His commands.

The bible says that Obedience is better then scarifies. He wants you to turn the M in ME around and make it a W like in WE

Money, self esteem or anything else should never be the primary focus or reason for a church to exist. In fact these things should never be the reason for a church to exist! Money, self esteem, position or anything else can never replace God as Head.

God is always Lord of all or He is Lord of nothing. So you need to decide today how does God fit into your church. Is He number ONE or not!

Ask you self the question the following questions:

- Is God Lord of everything in my life?
- Is God Lord of everything in my finances?
- Is God Lord of everything in my church?
- Is God Lord of everything in my family?

If not you need to turn over FULL CONTROL to Him, Today!

## **Now let's look at the Church as a whole**

### **The Focus of the church**

The primary focus of any church, and this must never, ever change is to bring glory and honour to God. God is central to any and every church; if this is not the case then it is not a church but rather a social club!

A church is a gathering of fellow believers to come together for glorifying God through praise and worship

The church exists to worship and bring glory to God, if God is not the centre it WILL FAIL!!! It is a place where people come:

- To meet with God
- To worship and praise God
- To have fellowship with other believers
- To be trained up and be sent out in to the field
- Brought to maturity

All the members must be guided into turning their attention towards God during each and every sermon. God must always be the focus of everything you do!

## The Pastor

The pastor is the middleman between God and the congregation that means he/she is the messenger from God to deliver the sermons / message to the congregation each service. This sermon / message is something that God give you to preach and not something you pull out a hat.

A pastor or church leader must NEVER bring disrupter to the Name of God in anything he or she does! We need to be examples of Christ's love and grace in all we do. Yes we might get angry but we must always be humble and a blessing to the people we serve.

You relationship and the amount of time you spend studying and preparing the word of God will be reflected in your preaching. Much time spent with God will produce insights in to many of the issues your congregation is facing and your sermons will reflect messages that bring people to Christ and that deals with wrong issues in a loving but firm way!

Remember your church can and will never grow past your spiritual level or your level of maturity! So pastor it is time to stand up and start equipping yourself to be a faithful ambassador of God!

Everything you do must mimic and reflect His love, joy, peace, patience, long suffering and self control. When people see you they must think of Jesus.

## Starting point of any Church

All churches start at the same point, you identify a need for people to come together and have fellowship with in a community. This will develop further into an idea or a plan that you might have to start a new church in an area

When a church starts to form, the pastor will find that the time he/she spends on personal study and sermon preparation will start to grow. Be sure to maintain these things in your life:

- Build your relationship with God, put Him first in everything you do and pray and ask Him whether you should do something or not. Your relationship with God is the fuel on which your ministry will run, once you run out of the fuel you will run out of everything else!
- Build on your relationship with your spouse – Your spouse is the most important tool in you ministry use them to help you, to be your sound board and allow them to assist you in your decisions - I have got lots of good advice from my wife and she has helped me calm down when I just wanted to take people apart – her wisdom has help me in numerous ways. I know it is not popular in your culture to allow you wife to speak into your ministry but start today and I assure you, you will see a change in your ministry
- Spend time in prayer and bible reading every day. You should be reading through your bible at least once a year. Each day you should be communicating with God, knowing and hearing His plans for you, your family and your ministry.

- Personal study, this is not your quiet time but a time you set aside to learn, study the Word of God. Here you memorize scripture, you read biblical history, and you study concepts about the bible and bible times.
- Spend time developing yourself in the word of God; this can take the form of watch Christian television, listening to sermons on tape, DVD or CD reading Christian books and magazines.
- Look after your body. Exercise, do some walking, cycling or something to exercise. Relax and spend family time together with you family.

I have spoken about many areas, I guess I caught you all of guard because you maybe did not realise that church growth start with you and your personal life!

There principle as basic but we tend to over look them. We know about them and we might even have studied or applied some of them to our lives! But church growth is a matter of continually doing the right thing, everyday, rain or shine.

Your quiet time, your bible study, your giving, your humility, your submission, everything I spoke about and more must become a daily lifestyle if you want to succeed and see your church grow!

Remember it is not by works that you are saved but by Jesus Christ! You can never take your church past what you have personally experience and understand. You cannot expect your church to be givers if you yourself are not a giver!