

Family Ministry Project – Strategic Development Plan

1. INTRODUCTION:

- a. Author and preacher Dr. John Piper, PhD in his book Desiring God quoted Ralph Winter regarding the unfinished business of the great commission. Winter makes the statement, “Evangelism can never be finished, but missions can be finished. The reason is this: Missions has the unique task of crossing language and culture barriers to penetrate a people group and establish a church movement; but evangelism is the ongoing task of sharing the gospel among people within the same culture.”¹
- b. In agreement with this conclusion, this paper is directed toward the effort to transform our culture by building a stronger foundation of society’s primary building block the nuclear family. We also recognize that evangelism needs to be refocused in our own home communities, as well as abroad where the Gospel has yet to be heard. Billy Graham in is quoted as saying; “To a large extent, the American church has become merged with the world. It has adopted so many of the world’s ideal and standards that it has lost its ability to [stand as a counter-cultural Godly institution] to stem the tide of crime, deception and immorality that is sweeping the nation. For millions of church members there is no deep commitment to the cause of Christ, no regularity of attendance at public worship, no sacrificial giving, no personal [faith] discipline.”²
- c. Billy Graham goes on to say: “The aim of many churches today seems to be to get names on a list, and the deeper meaning of Christ’s call for discipleship is neglected. Therefore, the world has moved into the church. This is apparent success, but in reality there is tragic failure. Quaker theologian Elton Trueblood once said, ‘Out main mission field today, so far as America is concerned, is within the church membership itself.’”
- d. Exacerbating the problem, many churches have adopted a ministry model where only staff members are trusted to lead and direct ministry activity. Thus they fail to train and develop their lay leadership as ministers of the Gospel. All believers are called to be God’s ambassadors in advancing the Kingdom both at home and abroad. God calls us to not only to take new ground in outreach to other cultures, but also to stand our ground within our own culture... in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), Jesus charges His disciples to 1) Go – which is evangelism; and 2) teach which is discipleship. These two necessarily go together in completing the Great Commandment in 1) Loving God; and 2) loving others (Matthew 22:36-40).
- e. A close look at the church in America today and several issues appear to be clear: 1) Growth – the local church has not grown appreciably, in fact the church population in general seems to be shrinking rather than growing. 2) Cultural Relativism – it is very difficult to distinguish between many [if not most] of the “church going professing Christians” and the non-believing secular population with whom they live. 3) Family and relational disintegration – the divorce rate in the church now equals the divorce rate of the secular society around it, and children are turning away from the church as their families fall apart. 4) The church has adopted a style of leadership that more closely reflects the CEO Corporate mentality, than it does the Servant Leadership

modeled by Jesus. 5) The result is an anemic faith community that is increasingly marginalized and irrelevant.

- f. Jesus challenged His followers to be “salt and light” to their world [Matt 5:13-16]. Salt has the quality to preserve while light has the quality to illuminate [dispel darkness and confusion]. When Christians act as salt and light, we have a positive impact on our culture and people are attracted to the Kingdom. If the Christian community loses its saltiness and its power to illuminate, we will not see much growth, and we will not see much difference between the church community and the secular community at large. If our children observe our inability to be different from our surrounding society through Christ, if they do not see consistency in what we claim to be and what we do in our families and in public, they will either marginalize or reject our faith as being unnecessary or irrelevant. The purpose of this paper is to consider some of the factors affecting the church and society today and to formulate an action plan to engage nominal or cultural Christians and encourage discipling within the church.

2. CHURCH GROWTH:

- a. Church growth has been a topic of discussion and worry for evangelicals for many years. When Christian researcher George Barna and church strategist George Hunter were interviewed on the effectiveness of evangelism in America, Barna reported, “One in three U.S. adults is unchurched, which translates to 65-70 million people. (People were classified as unchurched if they had not attended a Christian church service during the past six months other than a special event...)” Hunter went on to state, “In America there are 120-130 million functionally secular people, many of whom are nominal members of our churches.”³ These statistics suggest there is a huge number of nominal Christians coupled with an unbelieving public that comprises a significant segment in our society.
- b. Another source states flatly, “The unchurched [non-believing] population in the United States is so extensive that, if it were a nation, it would be the fifth most populated nation on the planet after China, the former Soviet Union, India, and Brazil. Thus our unchurched population is the largest mission field in the English-speaking world and the fifth largest globally.”⁴ The shame we share here is that we consider missionary activity overseas to be noble and reflect a Godly passion, while missions in our community is not considered particularly noble or valuable.
- c. In another article Barna was quoted, “About one-third [33%] of American teenagers claim they are ‘born again’ believers. About 60% of those who claim to be born again believe the bible is totally accurate in all its teachings... and 56% of them feel that their religious faith is very important in their life.” And yet, 50% of this group believed that Jesus committed sins... about 60% agree that good works will earn them a place in heaven... and only 6% of all teens believe in moral absolutes.⁵ Moral relativism and situational ethics have become so prevalent that most don’t even know it is a problem.
- d. In this same article, Josh McDowell is quoted, “There is a greater disconnect now than ever in the history of the church in America between what a Christian says they are and what they actually believe. Christianity is based on truth; Jesus said ‘I am the Truth,’ but you have an overwhelming

majority of even Christian kids saying there is no absolute truth.” The secular orientation and confusion within our church culture is obvious. Likewise, the large population of non-believers in our cultural midst is also apparent.

- e. An editorial in the periodical Christian Century revealed some additional information about the church in the United States, “Only 15% of American congregations have grown by even one person in the last five years.”⁶ This article observed that evangelism simply was not occurring in the majority of U.S. churches, and concluded with, “Christians who can’t or won’t share their faith with others may be in a crisis of faith of their own. The question is whether they believe in the efficacy of the gospel – the gospel which justifies [humanity] so we don’t need to earn our status before God or vie for position with others [good works]; the gospel which gives shape and purpose to life, making us other-directed rather than self-centered; the gospel of peace which reconciles broken relationships and builds community; the gospel of social justice which advocates for the poor and the marginalized. This is good news. So how can we keep from sharing it?”
- f. Jesus and the apostles clearly taught that a believer’s life was to bear witness of their faith to others. What we know about God and our relationship with Him is expected to permeate our daily lives, and that ‘how we live our life’ says so much more than the ‘mere words we speak’. Jesus clearly taught that Christians are to be “Salt and Light” (Matt 5:13-16) – that is Christians in our daily living are expected to live “Godly lives” through which our actions demonstrate the “seasoning and illuminating presence of God.” Our actions are intended to call attention to our difference from secular society, thereby confronting our non-believing neighbors with the reality of God and leading them into considering the possibility of a relationship with God (Acts 2:42-47). When Christians aren’t salty or if their light isn’t shining, people are not being confronted by the reality of God, and they don’t respond; or worse they see our hypocrisy and want nothing of it. **PAY ATTENTION** – This is especially true of children who grow up in a marginally Christian home and observe the disparity between what their parents say around believers, and what they do around non-believers. Children caught up in the faith problems of their parents usually have faith problems of their own.
- g. Eddie Gibbs talks about what is the traditional role of church in society, “Churches in such contexts are called to bear witness to the gospel of the Kingdom of God within the social structures, while resisting being subverted by them. In order to retain their privileged place in society, church leaders can easily lose their distinctive witness and prophetic stance. They mirror society’s values instead of acting as salt, light and yeast – the salt to flavor and sanitize, the light to expose and guide, and the yeast to unobtrusively permeate. One common feature of salt, light and yeast is that they are capable of exerting influence far beyond their size.”⁷
- h. Eddie Gibbs casts an even more compromised view of the modern American cultural Christian church member in quoting Rodney Clapp, “Some congregations have turned themselves into private clubs to which people are invited to have their needs met. Rather than bringing about social change, they help individuals adjust to the status quo. Other congregations have identified

the church with the manifest destiny of the nation, so that Christianity becomes subsumed under the umbrella of a vague, deistic civil religion manipulated for political ends.”⁸

- i. **What a horrible assessment of many within the church. Certainly pastors and church leadership having been called to a higher accountability to Christ for their work in the body must contend with this prevalent social perspective, and clearly challenge, teach and demonstrate servant leadership to their flock to demonstrate true intimacy and authentic discipleship with Christ.**

3. THERMOMETER OR THERMOSTADT:

- a. **More than a year ago a Family Pastor of a local church and I began to consider what we could do to implement positive change at our church. We had observed many of the problems listed above in our ministry to the youth of the church. My wife and I have been engaged in children’s ministry for over thirteen years together, and have seen the disconnect firsthand between an authentic Christian identity and a marginal Christian identity. While the above listed problems were certainly evident, they were not the only systemic problems we encountered.**
- b. **Additionally, we discovered that parents were either unable or unwilling to meet the challenges of providing spiritually, relationally, and financially for their families. We realized that most fathers and mothers were not fulfilling their role as the primary spiritual leaders and disciplers of their family. Increasingly, parents were abdicating this leadership role by default to the church, which only interacts with their children once a week for about an hour. Interestingly, it also became obvious that parents were not having any appreciable impact on the people outside the church. Many people came to church services for the teaching and programs we provided them, but few were witnessing to their friends or impacting their neighborhoods. “Authentic Discipleship” was not often in evidence in most of our church attendance. Os Guinness made the following appropriate observation, “There was a time when the church was very powerful – in the time when the early Christians rejoiced at being deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society.”⁹ There are yet some churches that are having a thermostat effect on their communities, but these seem to be more the exception than the norm.**
- c. **I began pondering and praying with some like-minded Christian leaders to identify what we could do that would change this trend and how our church could be revitalized – with members desiring deeper relationships with Christ and evangelism to the unknowing lost initiated and our communities being transformed. We were convinced the answer was in the overlooked portion of the Great Commission – to go and make disciples... that is “authentic lovers and followers of Christ, and doers of God’s will who are active in their church and community.”**
- d. **As we prayed about this we developed an idea for a comprehensive ministry plan designed to help challenge, spiritually support, and disciple parents so they in turn could support and disciple their children. We reasoned that when parents are acting as salt and light, there is a much better chance of their children doing likewise. Spiritual Vitality is caught not taught. The result being both would have a positive impact in the society around them in which they live and interact.**

- e. After considerable preliminary planning, we conducted interviews of nearly a hundred families who were committed to our church, to better understand what they perceived as their most critical needs. Almost every parent expressed concern that they were “overwhelmed” – that they really needed help in how to spiritually lead their family. Many really did not know how to be an effective disciple, let alone a family leader, teacher, and role model. These parents also admitted that they felt isolated from a loving extended family to which they could turn for help and support. They attended church and enjoyed the experience, but there was no real interaction within a Christian community. Hence, the ministry concept we considered seemed that it was right on track with the needs of our church. The following organizational plan is intended to engage, mentor, and shepherd parents and families together through a combination of a broad based Christian-social network and intimate discipling groups. The following plan emerged:

4. AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP FAMILY MINISTRY PLAN:

- a. **Ministry Vision** – “Growing families to impact their world and beyond;” and with the Family Ministry Mission Statement – “To attract, accept, connect and grow parents to become the primary spiritual leaders of their children and disciple them to impact their world and beyond.” The plan is to strengthen, support and promote healthy Biblical relationships in the context of God’s purpose for the family.
 - i. We recognized that families are effectively “under siege” in our society today, evidenced by the fact that there are numerous social/cultural aspects that are eroding the traditional Christian family. Also, there are numerous private and public organizations that are fighting for and against the traditional family. As a result the conventional church family failed to embody servant leadership, and self-less care of their spouse or their kids.
 - ii. We recognized that this battle would not be won or lost in the big arena – meaning the national level. Rather, it would be won or lost at the local church level, and more specifically at the individual family level. As Christians who believe the Bible to be God’s inspired Word to humanity, “We know how the Book ends,” and we know we can expect these battles to continue until Christ returns for us. However, we can choose whether we fight for our families now and we can chose to be salt and light in our homes and communities.
 - iii. Therefore, we propose to train up leaders within the local church to demonstrate and promote committed Godly relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, families and church.
- b. **Ministry Goals:**
 - i. To cast the Family Ministry vision to engage the church and constituent families to an Acts chapter 2 committed church. We need to ignite passion and urgency in the faith community that the status quo is an unacceptable solution.

- ii. To develop a strategy to implement the Family Ministry action plan and to integrate it cooperatively with all life stage ministries throughout the church. As church leaders, we need to get focused and engaged and accepting of our calling.
 - iii. To develop a comprehensive and progressive list of options for families to prayerfully choose the level of commitment they are reasonably prepared to commit to and succeed with, with the intention and expectation to lead them into a deeper and more committed relationship with the Triune God, with one another in the family unit, and within the local church extended family. (See Attachment 1 – Options Menu)
 - iv. To identify, develop and commission church lay-leaders to serve as community leaders & family coaches to train and oversee the “Family Shepherding Ministry”. These leaders must be 1Timothy 3 leaders. (See Attachment 2 – Organizational Chart – and Attachment 3 – Job Descriptions)
 - v. To identify and develop small group shepherding families each committed to the work of being a living example of a Christ-centered family. These are Godly men and women committed to Jesus, to each other, and to their children, and willing to teach other couples how to succeed as a Christ-centered family.
 - vi. To have these Christ-centered families develop and then demonstrate healthy patterns of marriage, parental, and social interaction and guidance; and provide a living/learning example for other families to emulate.
 - vii. To provide shepherding support, mentors, training and resources for each leader-family to train and develop ministry families.
 - viii. To use small and medium size groups (as defined herein) as the primary shepherding unit within our local church and a primary community outreach tool through a combination of “Head (truth, knowledge & understanding), Heart (convictions, commitments, character) & Hands & Feet (lifestyle, deeds and social justice).”
 - ix. To cooperate with God in leading our church family in a process of “Personal Spiritual Discovery and Transformational Relationships” to build up His Kingdom on Earth... we need to develop clearly understood and applicable Biblical truths to support family and Christian identity.
 - x. To develop and pass on to the next generation, a sense of Christian family heritage through a variety of community options within the context of the local church with whom we can interact on a “Spiritual, Social and Support” level.
 - xi. To develop an action plan in conjunction with other community churches to train, support and cooperate with an extended Family Ministry throughout our City and County.
 - xii. To establish a working prototype for other communities to emulate for the primary benefit of believing families everywhere.
- c. **We Recognize:**
- i. That the family is God’s original “small group” and that it is the foundational vehicle for passing faith and values from one generation to the next.

- ii. That parents are to be the primary spiritual leaders and teachers of their children, not the local church or public/private school.
 - iii. That parents are involved in busy and demanding daily lives and may require help to provide a nurturing, supervised and supportive environment for each other and their children.
 - iv. That many biological extended families are contending with either dysfunctional or geographically impractical limits that make intimate relationships and regular cooperation in a healthy extended family environment impractical, thereby making the church extended family an important entity for such nurture and support.
 - v. That the local church has the capacity to create an organic Christian Community of interactive leaders and participant families to develop and model healthy patterns of behavior, to identify and prioritize life goals, and to provide a role model to their emerging generations.
 - vi. That this “Shepherding Ministry” seeks to create a “Christ-centered extended family environment” through the intimacy developed within the small and medium groups where Christian families can experience Spiritual growth, personal and family nurturing, acceptance, and healthy social interaction.
- d. **We Recommend** that we begin with Identifying specific groups within the church as they focus on specific ministry approaches:
- i. Small Discipleship Group – Same-sex adults meeting with PATH approved leader/facilitator for personal discipling and accountability (total of 2-5 same-sex adults).
 - ii. Shepherding Group –The male and female adult family members meeting with each small group leader comprises the small group (4-6 families; 8-12 adults).
 - iii. Extended Family Group (medium sized group) – The adult members of each small group and their children comprise a medium group of 8-12 adults and 6-12 children (comprised of 4-6 family units).
 - iv. Large Group – The “congregational worship” services on Saturday and Sunday.
- e. **We Expect:**
- i. That these small and medium groups have the capacity to be more lasting and durable if they are comprised with members who already enjoy a relationship with a pre-existing degree of intimacy, or having been invited through a group member, rather than arbitrarily assigning members to groups.
 - ii. That we can use existing resources (i.e.: launching classes, parenting classes, special church sponsored classes, and other such classes) as a feeder stream into the small and medium group/extended family network; and that the work of tracking, transferring and integrating this network of families will be handled through the Family Ministries Team with the existing church member data base.
 - iii. That traditional weekend worship and Sunday School services while great for corporate worship, are inadequate tools for discipleship. We need to engage believers at a much

more intimate level to be able to identify and respond to their specific problems and needs.

- iv. That the leadership team and shepherding team must evaluate if individuals within the group structure provided are sustainable for the life of the participant or for a specified period of time. This also will be tracked through the existing database.
 - 1. Leadership Team – are staff members and Life Stage Pastor & Directors.
 - 2. Shepherding Team – Lay leadership chosen, trained and commissioned to lead as community leaders, small group coaches and small group leaders.
- v. That we use a holistic approach to training and developing leadership through mentoring and supplemented with training/curriculums to be developed.

5. THEREFORE WE PROPOSE:

- a. That each small and medium group leader be comprised of a Godly husband/wife who are capable of ministering to the men/women under their shepherding care. Groups may consist of:
 - i. Single parent families
 - 1. Widowed
 - 2. Divorced
 - 3. Unmarried
 - ii. Blended families
 - 1. Biological children of different parents
 - 2. Adopted children
 - 3. Foster children
 - iii. Traditional husband-wife families
- b. That each coach/leader are trained to lead/facilitate
 - i. The small group members they are shepherding
 - ii. The husband and/or wife within the medium group (extended family group) they are shepherding
- c. That the Leadership Team will select community leaders who will shepherd 3-4 small and medium group coaches, who will in turn shepherd the small group leaders.
- d. That each small group coach will select/accept the 3-4 leader families that will comprise their shepherding responsibility and who will be the small group leaders under their care.
- e. That each small group leader family will select/accept 4-6 families that will comprise their shepherding responsibility.
- f. That the leadership team will provide resources for the shepherding team (community leaders, shepherding coaches & group leaders) including pastoral care, counseling, advice and curriculum.
- g. That coaches & leaders need specific training, support and spiritual guidance before starting ministry activities, and frequent follow up, prayer support and additional training.

6. MINISTRY PREPARATION:

- a. Ministry team is to train the shepherding team through an introductory leadership retreat and with weekly meetings for 4-6 weeks. Training will include:

- i. Ministry identification of giftedness as:**
 - 1. Shepherds**
 - 2. Teachers**
 - 3. Exhorters**
 - 4. Administrators**
- ii. Ministry direction for shepherding responsibilities:**
- iii. Head – Truth, Knowledge & Understanding**
- iv. Heart – Convictions, Commitments & Character**
- v. Hands – Lifestyle, Deeds, and Social Justice**
- b. Ministry ethics and values:**
 - i. Vision & Spiritual Growth**
 - ii. Wisdom**
 - iii. Integrity & Sincerity**
 - iv. Commitment & Discipline**
 - v. Humility**
 - vi. Courage**
 - vii. Discernment**
- c. Mentoring relationships**
 - i. Adult to adult – same sex**
 - ii. Couple to couple**
 - iii. Operating guidelines to preserve intimacy and avoid abuse**
 - iv. Cross generational interaction**
- d. Shepherding team will be given Lay-Ministry Commissioning by the assembly to anoint them for this important ministry to the body.**
- e. Leadership team will organize the small groups according to their individual needs/commitment level so that meeting activities have:**
 - i. Sustainable Frequency – meeting weekly, twice monthly, monthly or quarterly**
 - ii. Flexibility – determined and committed to by each group**
 - iii. Accountability – is only possible through more intimate relationships**
 - iv. Safety Valves – hierarchy exists as a means of oversight and support**
- f. Training & Regular Meetings:**
 - i. Community Leaders:**
 - 1. To meet with life stage pastors once per month**
 - 2. To meet with small group coaches once per month**
 - 3. To randomly meet with small groups or as requested by coaches**
 - ii. Small Group Coaches:**
 - 1. To meet with small group leaders once per month**
 - 2. To meet with small groups on a rotating basis – probably 1 meeting every other week, or as otherwise requested by small group leader**

- iii. **Small Group Meetings:**
 - 1. To be determined in accordance with small group commitment level.
 - 2. See attached “Small Group Option Menu”
- iv. **Medium Group – Extended Family Meeting/Social Event** should plan on meeting once per quarter or as otherwise decided.
- v. **Accountability Meeting** – where shepherding team members meet with their supervising leader for prayer, confession, personal walk issues, heart & family issues (frequency TBD).
- g. **Action Plan:**
 - i. **Shepherding Team & Small Group Members:**
 - 1. Contact expected community leaders, small & medium group coaches and leaders.
 - 2. All potential candidates ought to prepare a “faith resume” to detail their ministry experience, and include personal references for evaluation and follow up by leadership team.
 - ii. Resolve internal structure to prevent interfering and competing with the existing discipling group meetings.
 - iii. Identify study emphasis of each small group based on “life stages”:
 - 1. Young couples no children
 - 2. Couples small children
 - 3. One parent families
 - 4. Blended families
 - 5. Families – upper-elementary & youth aged children
 - 6. Families – teenage & college aged children
 - 7. Families of mixed aged couples
 - 8. Empty nesters & grandparents
 - iv. **Requirements of Lay Leaders:**
 - 1. Peer approval
 - 2. Staff approval including references
 - 3. Demonstrated servants heart
 - 4. Demonstrated personal growth
 - 5. Demonstrated discipleship experience and teaching ability – 1 Timothy 3:
 - v. **Action deadlines [To be determined and scheduled]:**
 - 1. Training curriculum developed
 - 2. Community Leader selections
 - 3. Small Group Coaches appointed
 - 4. Small Group Leaders appointed
 - 5. Small Group participating families selected
 - 6. Small Group Meetings commence
 - vi. **Training Meetings:**
 - 1. Initial kick off meeting for all leaders

2. Establish seminars and mini-retreats for all leaders (frequency TBD)
 3. Training needed before starting will depend upon the small group leaders - Presume 4 weeks at a minimum and 6 weeks as a maximum.
 4. Training for community leaders and micro & medium group coaches presumed to be 4 weeks
 5. Church Lay Ministry Anointing
- vii. Implementation:
1. Ministry launch – TBD
 2. 20-30% participation – end of 1st year of operation
 3. 50-60% participation – end of 2nd year of operation
 4. 75-85% participation – end of 3rd year of operation
- viii. Ministry Resources [to be detailed and made available]:
1. Personal growth and family health
 2. Personal relationship transformation
 3. General information sources
 - a. Church WEBSITE
 - b. Church News Letter
 4. Pastoral Care Staff – upon referral from life stage pastor
 5. Personal counseling
 6. Personal & family therapy
 7. Celebrate Recovery
 8. Divorce Recovery
- ix. Success can be measured by our effectiveness in demonstrating the “Twelve Empirical Indicators of a Missional Church:”¹⁰
1. It is a church that proclaims the gospel
 2. It is a community where all members are involved in learning to become disciples of Jesus
 3. The Bible is normative in the life of the church
 4. The church understands itself as different from the world because of its participation in the life, death and resurrection of its Lord
 5. The church seeks to discern God’s specific missional vocation for the entire community and all its members.
 6. Christians behave Christianly toward one another
 7. The church is a community that practices reconciliation
 8. People within the community hold themselves accountable to one another in love
 9. The church practices hospitality
 10. Worship is the central act by which the community celebrates with joy and thanksgiving both God’s presence and God’s promised future
 11. The church is a community that has a vital public witness

12. There is recognition that the church itself is an incomplete expression of the reign of God

7. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:

- a. It is unreasonable to expect traditional worship services and limited pastoral contacts to meet all the needs and perform all the work within the local body of Christ – the local church. All believers are called into discipleship and service as ministers of the Gospel to the Body, not just the paid staff. It is too easy for people to be disenfranchised in the local church, especially in the larger churches in our community where personal intimate contact occurs infrequently. Only smaller, more intimate groups can provide the type of interaction and support to develop intimate relationships with God and one another, and develop Authentic Discipleship – which after all, is the purpose of the Great Commission.
- b. Developing and utilizing lay leadership is a much more efficient and effective way for pastors and church staff to minister to the body, with the challenge for deeper commitment and discipleship emanating from the pulpit and consistently encouraged. As the body is more completely engaged, more people will be confronted with the reality and power of Christ; whose transformed lives will have a greater impact on their spouse, children, friends and community. When believers are salt and light, social transformation is possible.
- c. Eddie Gibbs says this well, “The goal of salvation is not just that we will be forgiven but that we will grow in spiritual stature to become more and more like Jesus, and we should be available to God for Him to continue His purposes in the world, working through us by His Spirit.”¹¹
- d. To this end, one of the most important verses are Acts 2:47b, “And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” When the church is unconsciously and unashamedly being itself in the fullness of Christ, God works wonders.

¹ John Piper, Desiring God, 2003, ISBN 1-59052-119-6, page 230

² Billy Graham, Decision Magazine, March 2011 edition, pages 3-5

³ Tom Clegg & Warren Bird, Lost in America, ISBN 0-7644-2257X, page 25-26

⁴ Kent R. Hunter, Move Your Church to Action, Abingdon Press, 2000, pg 12

⁵ Wall Street Journal – Eastern Edition, “Christian Teens? Not Very”, Dale Buss, 7-9-2004

⁶ Christian Century, “Good News”, Editorial, 11/20/2002, Vol 119, Issue 24

⁷ Eddie Gibbs, Church Next, Inter Varsity Press, 2000, ISBN 0-8308-2261-5, pg 20

⁸ Eddie Gibbs, Church Next, Inter Varsity Press, 2000, ISBN 0-8308-2261-5, pg 50

⁹ Os Guinness, The Journey, Trinity Forum, 2001, pg 129, ISBN 1-57683-160-4

¹⁰ Eddie Gibbs, Church Next, Inter Varsity Press, 2000, ISBN 0-8308-2261-5, pg 52

¹¹ Eddie Gibbs, Church Next, Inter Varsity Press, 2000, ISBN 0-8308-2261-5, pg 48