

## Understanding Church Growth Understanding Church Growth

Why Plan Strategy? Is church growth theory incompatible with belief in the sovereignty of God? Does adherence to church growth principles leave out dependency upon the work of the Holy Spirit? C. Peter Wagner answers no to both questions. He further believes that no task could be more crucial than fulfilling the Great Commission in our generation, and how to approach and plan for the execution of this task is the questions of the day. *Strategies for Church Growth* addresses this key issue in a biblically pragmatic way. It brings together for the first time many principles of evangelism and missions which have proved, through recent research and experience, to be effective in implementing the Great Commission. It also unifies, in concise form, the latest research of the Church Growth Movement, the Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization, the U.S. Center for World Mission and numerous other key contributors to the recent explosion of evangelistic technology. Among the topics explored are: - the major components of strategy - choosing the appropriate strategy - advantages of having a strategy - the theology of church growth - the harvest principle and soil testing - why you should aim for church growth - characteristics of good goals - the meaning of mission and evangelism - how to target your outreach

Since 1988, hundreds of thousands of evangelical Christians have migrated to the

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United States of America from former Soviet Union countries, establishing many Russian-speaking immigrant congregations across the country. This study analyzes how these immigrant churches function in their new cultural, social, and religious context. Dr Vyacheslav Tsvirinko, a Russian who lived in the USA for over twenty-five years, examines the holism, authenticity and contextuality of the mission work done by churches in the Pacific Coast Slavic Baptist Association (PCSBA) in America. He defines authentic mission in light of three major Christian groups – the World Council of Churches, the Lausanne Movement, and Anabaptists – and uncovers startling insights on how PCSBA churches engage in mission, both back in their homeland and in the USA. The findings and conclusions of this work are invaluable to diasporic Christian communities who wish to address their authenticity in the way they do mission, both internationally and in their local context, creating a path to more fruitful gospel and kingdom work.

Trends among the world's 20 largest churches; The local church as a church planting base; Church growth and the Holy Spirit; Using computers to support church growth; Who's who in church growth.

It's one thing to market cars and deodorant and hamburgers. It's another thing, says Doug Webster, to market Jesus and the gospel. Standing up to a spate of books and seminars that urge churches to model their mission on Madison Avenue methods, Webster sounds an urgently needed wake-up alarm. Selling Jesus is a hard-hitting

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book that shows how Jesus is more than a product to be hawked, how seekers are more than a matter of meeting "felt needs." But *Selling Jesus* doesn't merely challenge. It moves beyond penetrating criticism to the next step, suggesting faithful and powerful alternatives to marketing the church. *Selling Jesus* is a necessary book for those who are beginning to wonder if evangelism and missions really aren't synonymous with product promotion.

The Church Growth Movement has divided devout Christians. Even though Rainer is an advocate, his aim here is to present an objective view of the movement--its history, the theology associated with it, and the principles which seem to separate churches that grow from those that don't.

Written by church consultant Will Mancini expert on a new kind of visioning process to help churches develop a stunningly unique model of ministry that leads to redemptive movement. He guides churches away from an internal focus to emphasize participation in their community and surrounding culture. In this important book, Mancini offers an approach for rethinking what it means to lead with clarity as a visionary. Mancini explains that each church has a culture that reflects its particular values, thoughts, attitudes, and actions and shows how church leaders can unlock their church's individual DNA and unleash their congregation's one-of-a-kind potential.

Struggling with church health and growth? Struggling with growing in your personal leadership abilities and impact? This book provides a greater understanding of

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leadership, church growth, and church effectiveness. It engages the audience to learn transformational leadership and how the pastor can be more effective in how they lead. Learn from recent research the impact a senior pastor makes on churches effectiveness and why transformational leadership style will impact the health and growth of a church.

Discusses how to plant new churches in North America and around the world by examining important sociological, anthropological, and historical perspectives. Focuses on church-planting methods, selecting target areas, using effective resources, and measuring growth. Also includes data on the sending church and the Christian mission and other related material. "An unprecedented mix of pentecostal theology and mission practice, virtually a manifesto for pentecostal missions. . . . The fullest and finest missiological treatise originating within classical Pentecostalism available."--Russell P. Spittler

What does God think of us when we fail? Does he think You're a loser. There's no hope for you. What a wimp! You're good for nothing! Or does he think something very different? If you've ever lost a job or a relationship, let your friends down, seen your finances collapse, found your ministry crumbling or failed to meet your own ethical standards, you might wonder if recovery is possible. Perhaps you've wondered if you can ever repair the damage done to others, to yourself and to your relationship with God. Steve Roy has good news for you. He had to face his own failures, but his failures also drove him deep into what God thinks about us and success, especially in Christian ministry. He searched deeply in Scripture and listened carefully to the stories of others. He found that God's view of success is very different from

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ours. And that a biblically grounded view of success and failure challenges our preconceived notions but leads to hopeful renewal that goes beyond what we often ask or think.

What is genuine church growth? Is it, at heart, the numerical growth of regular congregations or are there other dimensions and, if so, what are they? How can we learn from other contexts in order to properly inform our understanding of what we mean by church growth? Mara is one of the most marginalised regions in Tanzania, which in turn is a country in the most marginalised continent on the planet, and yet, Spencer argues, the church in the region has exhibited remarkable growth. Looking beyond the usual dimensions of church growth discourse, Stephen Spencer weaves in his own experience in Tanzania, finding in that wholly different context an approach to church growth which might entirely change the discourse in the global north.

In a time when churches are focusing on finding strategies and techniques to guarantee success, a movement toward the missional church is emerging. Missional churches are communities created by the Spirit with a unique nature and identity. Purpose and strategies of the church are derivative dimensions, the activities that flow naturally from the church that is focused on Spirit-led ministry. The Ministry of the Missional Church leads pastors, ministry leaders, and laypersons through three simple arguments--the church is; the church does what it is; the church organizes what it does--in order to make sense of how missional churches work. And by focusing the work of the church as the work of the Triune God, this unique book will change the way readers think about the church and the world.

Some time ago, Ralph Winter brilliantly identified three eras of modern missions: Era 1: William Carey focused on the coastlands; Era 2: Hudson Taylor focused on the inland; Era 3: Donald

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McGavran and Cameron Townsend focused on unreached peoples. With all the fast and furious changes swirling around us today in twenty-first century missions, have we entered a Fourth Era? If so, who are the people primarily involved? How are they selected? How are they trained? How long do they serve? Has the Third Era ministry focus--reaching the unreached--changed? If so, to what? Are there any successful case studies out there? Have McGavran and Townsend passed the baton to a new leader(s)? If so, to whom? This book seeks to answer these and related questions. Contributors include: Dr. Ben Beckner Dr. Monroe Brewer Dr. Don Finley Mike Griffis Dr. Gary Hipp, MD Jerry Hogshead Kaikou Maisu Judy Manna Kenn Oke Dr. A. Sue Russell Dr. Robert Strauss Peter Swann Bryan Thomas Diane Thomas Dr. Mike Wilson Dr. Sherwood G. Lingenfelter

Explores new ideas for moving a congregation from maintenance to mission mode

Understanding Church Growth and DeclineA Test of the Market Based ApproachThe Book of Church GrowthB&H Publishing Group

Discusses conversion, baptism, morality, and the Holy Spirit and argues that evangelism is an initiation into the kingdom of God

Covering 2,000 years, this two-volume set is the first encyclopedia devoted to Christian writers and books. In addition to an overview of the Christian literature, this encyclopedia includes more than 40 essays on the principal genres of Christian literature and more than 400 bio-bibliographical essays describing the principal writers and their works.

Church Planting from the Ground Up is a visionary guide for the critical task of new

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church multiplication. Share in the wisdom of these field-tested veterans as you gain insight from their stories, practical ideas, and real-world experiences. Book jacket. Concern about church growth and decline is widespread and contentious, yet theological reflection on church growth is scarce. Leading international scholars, including Alister McGrath, Benedicta Ward and C. Kavin Rowe, provide rich resources from scripture, doctrine and tradition, to underpin action to promote church growth and to stimulate further theological reflection on the subject.

"Nothing is more important for ministry today than small groups." (George Gallop Jr., a Christian who conducts polls on political and religious matters, quoted in chapter 1 of this book.) Lavin is quick to point out that this book is not merely about numerical growth. It is about nurturing spiritual growth, which in itself is a dynamic that leads to growth in numbers. Use this publication as a workbook. The chapters each end with fascinating questions for consideration and group discussion. Dr. Lavin offers five different kinds of group structures for discipleship development. Each is fully explored, offering the reader or study participant the opportunity to determine which style best fits their group. He also lists five essentials that must be present for any group to function effectively. Lavin has had over 35 years of experience in the ministry, during which time he has refined the methods that are most successful in leading people to commitment and discipleship. This book is filled with fascinating anecdotes and stories that have grown out of his experience with congregations where impressive growth has taken

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place. Dr. Ronald J. Lavin is Senior Pastor of King of Glory Lutheran Church, Fountain Valley, California. He previously served congregations in Indiana, Iowa, and Arizona. In each church where he served as pastor the membership doubled. He graduated cum laude from Carthage College, Northwestern Theological School of Theology, and engaged in graduate studies at the Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago. Lavin has published twelve books and numerous magazine articles. He has been in demand as a speaker and seminar leader at schools and churches throughout the country as well as in several foreign countries.

The publication of William J. Abraham's *The Logic of Evangelism* in 1989 marked a turning point in the field and practice of evangelism. Almost thirty years later the book still provokes discussion as it stimulates both theorists and practitioners to comprehend evangelism as initiation into God's reign. Combining theological insight and historical analysis, Abraham's groundbreaking work remains the primary text to set the stage for how evangelism may be conceived. In these timely essays written by both theologians and church leaders, *The Logic of Evangelism Revisited* takes a critical and yet appreciative look into the ways Abraham's work still speaks to the church in today's world. The authors, coming from a wide array of backgrounds, show how *The Logic of Evangelism* remains a key text into the twenty-first century.

Many in the world and even some in the church have several misconceptions about the church which has led to a decline in the effectiveness and impact of the



church in reaching out to the world and in her ability to effect changes in the world. One of the major challenges is a lack of understanding of the purpose of the church. It is necessary that every believer understand the true purpose of the church. We must not let the world tell us who we are and what our purpose or assignment is. We must find out for ourselves as revealed in the word of God and let this understanding create a consciousness that will drive our goals and activities. This is the focus of this book. We will explore the true purpose of the church, the course of the church, the ministry of the church, and the role of the church in missions.

If the divine liturgy really is as beautiful as we claim, wouldn't more people attend? Wouldn't the church grow? Driven by our desire for growth, we count, we analyze, we make charts, and we strategize, but often with few discernible results. That is probably the result of focusing on secondary aspects of church life. As we know, the very existence of a church is a gift of God's presence and not the result of any particular actions taken by human beings. For that reason, church is primarily about being something rather than doing or achieving something. So the growth of the church is not reflected in ever-increasing numbers, dollars, and activities, but rather in steadily growing conformity to the divine ideal. So in order to evaluate ecclesial growth, we will first have to ask

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what the church is supposed to be. One answer to that question is captured in the four marks of the church given in the creed: Oneness, Holiness, Catholicity, and Apostolicity. These four characteristics serve as a matrix or framework within which we can focus on the primary aspects of ecclesial being and help it grow and become what it was intended to be.

The author of this work, Isaac Ojutalayo, has done his research on the subject of leadership and church growth. The contents of this book are the written evidence. The eleven chapters embrace some of the most important and necessary things that leaders should learn and practise, whether they are ordained ministers or lay workers in the church. The principles he has written about can also be applied in circular organisation. This book reveals Dr Isaac Ojutalayo's academic achievement and experimental development. He has divided each chapter into readable sections that can be easily discussed and studied. The book is suitable for individuals and groups who are called by God to lead His people. Dr Isaac Ojutalayo is passionate that leaders be men and women of excellence, whether the congregation they lead is large or small. He stresses communication, generosity, honesty, and continuing education with the highest level of trust, all essential elements of church growth. He points out repeatedly that the church and the world community are suffering from a crisis of leadership, that bold and

honest leaders are needed in the church and in the marketplace, as well as in the home. In my analysis he has called for transformational leaders to rise up and effect change. It is very clear that he is saying that many leaders work within situations. Transformational leaders change what can be talked about, whereas many other leaders talk about pay-offs. Transformational leaders talk about goals. Many leaders bargain, whereas transformational leaders appeal to a common vision. Dr Isaac Ojutalayo argues that desperately needed Christians and transformational leadership will not emerge until we have a model of a transforming leader. I believe that Jesus Christ was and is the most effective leader the world has ever known. It is with unreserved joy that I recommend this publication to those who are interested in church leadership. Professor Clinton L. Ryan, ThD

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Could you spare five minutes per day to get acquainted with some truly fascinating people and events? If so, you'll love *The Christian History Devotional*, where each day you'll learn more about your "spiritual family," people who are as much a part of the rich Christian heritage as the people of the Bible. In these 365 vignettes you'll meet some names that will be familiar: Billy Graham, Martin Luther, C. S. Lewis, John Wesley, Mother Teresa, Francis of Assisi, Augustine, Corrie ten Boom. You'll also meet Christian athletes (Olympic runner Eric Liddell), scientists (George Washington Carver, Johannes Kepler), authors (G. K. Chesterton, John Milton, Anne Bradstreet), statesmen (William Gladstone, William Jennings Bryan), missionaries (Gladys Aylward, William Carey, Francis Xavier), evangelists (Billy Sunday, Dwight L. Moody, "Gypsy"

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Smith), artists (Rembrandt, Michelangelo), social reformers (William Wilberforce, Josephine Butler), soldiers (“Stonewall” Jackson, Oliver Cromwell), and many others, from the first century to the present, a diverse cast of truly amazing people. Turn to August 12, the day in 1973 when political “hatchet man” Chuck Colson gave his life to Christ. March 21, read about devout composer Johann Sebastian Bach, born on that date in 1685. April 1, learn about Communist-spy-turned-Christian Whittaker Chambers, born in 1901. October 15, meet evangelist Sam Jones, for whom the Ryman Auditorium (Grand Ole Opry) was built. October 31, discover what led Martin Luther to launch the Reformation in 1517. Whether you’re a history buff or someone who always thought history was boring, here’s a book to enlarge your spiritual family and teach you valuable lessons about life and faith. Here is history with a heart.

Under the sponsorship of the Missionary Studies Department of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, the author of this study presents an in depth appraisal of the development of the Christian church in the Buganda area of Uganda.

Multicultural churches help us understand God's will for us to become one in this multicultural world and experience a heavenly gathering in advance. This book, based on case studies of four multicultural churches, provides insights and

knowledge regarding minority-dominant multicultural churches in the United States. Many multicultural churches in America are mainly concerned about racial reconciliation between the white and the black. On the other hand, resources concerning minority-dominant multicultural churches are scant. With the special attention on Korean immigrant churches, this book contributes to the body of knowledge regarding minority-dominant multicultural churches. Specifically, this book provides a model transition process, called the Windmill T-process, to facilitate the movement of monocultural/monoethnic churches in taking steps towards acquiring the characteristics of multicultural churches. In addition, this book touches on the issue of evangelism in the multicultural church. Although there is limited insight, the book describes what factors first draw different racial/ethnic people to a church and what factors cause them to stay there. All in all, this book will guide you to a deeper understanding on multicultural churches and its practices for all nations beyond ethnic/racial identities.

David Bosch (1929-1992) was one of the foremost mission theologians of the twentieth century, at once a prolific scholar, committed church leader, and active participant in the global conciliar and evangelical mission movements. Less well known is Bosch's distinctive role in the South African church's struggle against

apartheid. After reviewing Bosch's background and exploring key themes in his understanding of mission and evangelism, Livingston explores Bosch's legacy from the perspective of the missionary nature of the church. The church is God's kingdom community, acting as a witness to and instrument of the coming reign of God. The church is God's alternative community, simultaneously set apart from the world but also for the sake of the world, exemplifying the radical implications of Christ's new community. The church is God's reconciled and reconciling community, serving as a sign and embodiment of God's love in Christ. For those acquainted with Bosch only as the author of his magisterial *Transforming Mission*, Livingston shows how Bosch integrated his theology and practice in a faithful, contextually relevant way within South Africa and the global church.

G. Edwin Bontrager and Nathan D. Showalter show that mission was the driving force of the New Testament church, not an added-on sideline for a few daring souls. This 13-lesson church growth study shows that the 'acts of the Holy Spirit' can transform any congregation. Challenges Christians to learn about church growth by putting into everyday practice key biblical principles.

Is your church healthy and growing or stagnant and dying? If your church is afflicted with remnant theology, spiritual naval gazing, pastoral timidity, hyper-cooperativism, or terminal ethnikitis, changes are it's already dying on the vine.

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On the other hand, if your church is growing it's probably ad healthy church. "Healthy churches, like healthy people," says the author, "exhibit certain vital signs." Wagner has his own list of 7 "signs" that lead can be taken as leading to good health and gives many illustrations of churches that exhibit and/or don't exhibit those signs. - Back cover.

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