

Growth Points

with Gary L. McIntosh, Ph.D.

Volume 24 Issue 8

PO Box 892589, Temecula, CA 92589-2589

August 2012

Commitments to Christ

New people will be reached for Christ and his Church as a church regularly trains its people and encourages evangelistic conversations with the non-churched. In most situations, these churches will see around 12% of their evangelistic contacts make a profession of faith over a five-year period.

Effective evangelism happens when churches intentionally train, encourage, and resource their regular attendees to connect

with their non-churched friends and family members. This takes place in three distinct steps.

First, a regular, ongoing evangelistic training class or small group is conducted that involves at least ten percent of a congregation. The class/group focuses on practical ways to build friendships with those who are outside of Christ, but within the natural networks of those who are already in the church.

Second, each participant lists the names of people they know for which they will commit to pray and build a relationship with during the coming twelve months.

Third, throughout the year, the church offers a minimum of four "seeker events" that focus directly on connecting newcomers to Christ and his Church. As each event is offered, those who have been praying and building relationships with those outside the church, work to bring them to the events.

When such a process occurs

on a regular basis, about 12% of those non-churched friends and relatives will make a commitment to Christ and his Church.

As an example, it might look like the following:

Number of church members trained:	12
Average non-churched friends/family per member:	9
Total number of people on prayer lists:	108
Approximate percentage of people who come to faith:	12%
Number of people who come to faith:	13

"In most situations, churches will see around 12% of their evangelistic contacts make a profession of faith over a five year period."

— Gary L. McIntosh

Check out Dr. McIntosh's new website for additional articles.

New website address:

www.churchgrowthnetwork.com

e-mail . . . cgnet@earthlink.net

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Andrew found his brother Simon Peter.

Ask your people to pray for twelve months.

Empowering Evangelism

Here are a few suggestions to empower effective evangelism in your church.

First, ask yourself, “Do we have an intentional plan to train, encourage, and resource our current attendees to build relationships with their friends and family members?” Churches with an intentional plan always do better than those without a plan.

Second, have your attendees make a list of their friends and family members whom they would love to see as part of the church. One way to do this is to preach a sermon series on a topic like *Making Friends for Jesus*. Build the sermons around biblical passages such as John 1 where Andrew finds his brother Simon Peter and Philip finds Nathaniel. At the conclusion of the series, have people in the congregation make a list of all the friends, associates, and family members they know who live within a 20-mile radius of your church AND are not involved with Christ or another church. Finally, ask your people to commit to pray for those on their lists for the following twelve months.

Third, during the year, offer at least four “seeker events” where your people can confidently bring those who are on their prayer lists. By confidently, I mean that your people will be sure their friends, associates, and family members will not be embarrassed or feel overly pressured. Such events should focus on love and friendship as a continuing step to build a relationship with your church. Encourage your own people to engage their friends in spiritual conversations as the opportunity arises.

Fourth, ask your people to turn in a copy of their prayer list, and from these lists determine the total number of friends and family members identified, and multiply that number by 12%. This will give you an idea of how many potential new believers you may have in the following twelve months with a special love and prayer emphasis on these people.

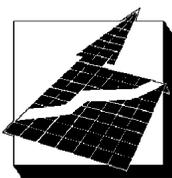
Fifth, if this number of people come to faith and your church in the coming year, what do you need to do now to prepare for them? For example, if you potentially could have twenty-four new believers join your church this year, how will you assimilate them into the family? Do you need a new adult Sunday school class? How about several new small groups?

By beginning a new class, small group, or welcoming process *before* these people come to Christ, you are acting on faith that God will bless the prayers of your attendees, as well as their invitations and conversations, by bringing new people to Christ and your church.



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President of the Church Growth Network
For information about training workshops
seminars, and church consultations
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Growth Points is published twelve times a year. The subscription price is \$16 (Bank or World Money Order) per year. Permission is granted for use in a local church. For other reprint usage, advance permission must be obtained. Formerly published under the title *Church Growth Network*.
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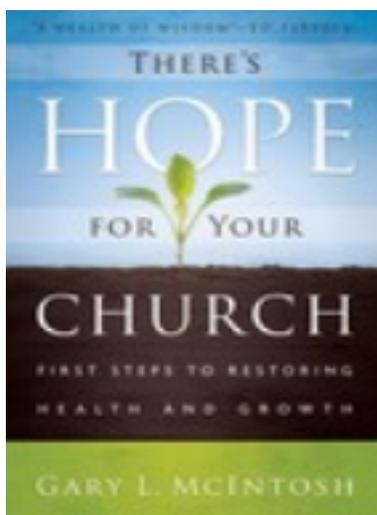
A startling 85% of churches in the US are plateaued or declining, a trend that has been building for the past fifty years. In the face of shrinking attendance and lagging spiritual growth, pastors and church leaders are understandably discouraged and demoralized. But the first step to turning things around is hope.

Church growth expert Gary McIntosh offers this hope by showing church leaders the first things they need to do to make a new start for their church.

God can and does restore churches to new life, even as he restores individuals. The street-smart ideas and step-by-step instructions found in this book are ones that pastors and church leaders can put to use immediately in their churches to bring about solid growth and renewed hope for the future.

"There's Hope for Your Church provides a wealth of wisdom for anyone seeking to turn around a declining or plateaued church. This book gives you hope and will show you the way to revitalize your church."--Ed Stetzer

"Gary McIntosh has written a down to earth practical book for those who look at the task of pastoring a church and don't know where to begin or what to do. *There's Hope for Your Church* is a coaching experience bound in the pages of a book."--Elmer Towns



"I like this book because Gary McIntosh moves beyond mere analytical explanations and gives practical 'how-to's'. This book will take you from concept to completion. You'll not only read this book yourself but will want church leaders to read it as well."--Samuel R. Chand

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