

# **THE NEW TESTAMENT APOSTOLIC CHURCH STRUCTURE FOR REVIVAL AND HARVEST**

## **SMALL GROUP/HOUSE TO HOUSE MINISTRY**

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS TEACHING IS NOT TO TRY AND “CONVINCE” ANY CHURCH TO CHANGE.**

**IT IS FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRYING TO PREPARE THE CHURCH TO BE ABLE TO CHANGE WHEN IT BECOMES A NECESSITY — AND IT WILL!**

**THIS IS A REVELATION OF GOD’S PRINCIPLES.  
IT IS NOT A GUIDE TO APPLICATION.**

## **THE HISTORY OF THIS REVELATION**

CRISIS ALWAYS PRODUCES CHANGE! ALWAYS! WHETHER WE WANT TO CHANGE OR NOT!

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF CRISES:

THAT WHICH IS CAUSED BY GOOD (i.e., more growth than we can possibly handle.

THAT WHICH IS CAUSED BY NEGATIVE CIRCUMSTANCES FROM BOTH WITHIN AND WITHOUT OF THE CHURCH.

## **Apostolic INCREASE IS A CRISIS!**

The History of Antioch, especially the 1980 and 1981 Harvest.

AN APOSTOLIC HARVEST WILL ALWAYS PRODUCE A CRISIS FOR THE TRADITIONAL CHURCH STRUCTURE. ALWAYS. IF YOUR GROWTH HAS NEVER PUT YOUR CHURCH IN CRISIS, THEN YOU HAVE NOT YET HAD A HARVEST OF BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS.

WHY AREN'T WE HAVING THE RESULTS THAT WE HAVE BEEN PROMISED?

ANSWER: If 50 brand new people showed up this Sunday and ALL of them were baptized and received the Holy Ghost, WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH THEM.

What's the plan for taking care of them?

Who are your trained and equipped leaders and teachers ready to take care of them?

What is your vision of ministry that can accommodate these people when they become disciples and want to be involved in your church's ministry to the world?

## **Current Day Crises for the Church**

Acts 28:20-22

20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judaea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee.

22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest:

FOR AS CONCERNING THIS SECT, WE KNOW THAT EVERY WHERE IT IS SPOKEN AGAINST.

**Persecution is always a catalyst for revival and harvest!**

# INTRODUCTION - THE APOSTOLIC KEYS

## WHY WOULD GOD BLESS WHAT HE DID NOT ORDER?

## HIS BLUEPRINT FOR HIS CHURCH

### IF WE ARE HIS TEMPLE, THE BUILDING OF HIS HABITATION, THEN WHAT IS THE “BLUEPRINT” FOR THAT BUILDING.

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 **[THE BLUEPRINT]** Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

### WHAT THE CHURCH IS SUPPOSED TO “LOOK LIKE.”

Acts 2:37-47

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

42 **[THE BUILDING]** And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

46 **And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,**

47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

## **A. The early Church Continued “steadfastly” in the apostles’ doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer.**

CONTINUE STEADFASTLY (STRONG’S) = NT:4342 proskartereo; to be earnest towards, i.e. (to a thing) to persevere, be constantly diligent, or (in a place) to attend assiduously all the exercises, or (to a person) to adhere closely to (as a servitor):

CONTINUE STEADFASTLY (VINE’S) = NT:4342 proskartereo, lit., "to be strong towards" (pros, "towards," used intensively, and kartereo, "to be strong"), "to endure in, or persevere in, to be continually steadfast with a person or thing"...

## **B. These four aspects of the early Church are the keys to Apostolic revival.**

1. They continued steadfastly in being taught by the Apostles and in faithfully following what the Apostles taught.

2. The Greek Word translated “fellowship” is the same Greek Word that is translated “communion.” Therefore, the Early Church carefully continued to fellowship with one another “spiritually.” They not only participated in the “Lord’s Supper,” but they joined together regularly for spiritual fellowship. This word also connotes that they “looked out for one another” spiritually.

3. Breaking of bread “from house to house” (Verse 46). This means that they spent time together “naturally” also. Sharing food and resources was a common event in the New Testament Church.

4. Prayers. This context implies that they did more than just pray their own personal, private devotional prayers, but that they continued to pray TOGETHER.”

Matt 18:19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

**C. Many of today’s Apostolics have stopped with doctrine and prayer while essentially ignored the middle two of these New Testament Church practices.**

**D. We need to use all four keys if we are to truly have a Book of Acts Revival and Harvest.**

# **I. THE REVELATION OF APOSTOLIC STRUCTURE.**

## **A. We must go on unto Perfection (Completion, SPIRITUAL MATURITY)**

**FOR THE CHURCH CORPORATE TO GROW, EACH INDIVIDUAL MEMBER MUST GROW.**

A “CHURCH” CROWD THAT GROWS BEYOND THE STABILITY OF THE SPIRITUAL MATURITY OF ITS MEMBERSHIP IS AN UNSTABLE ENTITY AND WILL EVENTUALLY CRUMBLE. IF MINISTRY HAS TO APPEAL TO THE FLESH OF ITS MEMBERS IN ORDER TO “HOLD THE CROWD,” THEN IT IS ACKNOWLEDGING THE CARNALITY AND SPIRITUAL IMMATUREITY OF ITS GROUP.

**“SAINTS” DO NOT MATURE SPIRITUALLY BY “ACCIDENT.” THEY MUST BE “BROUGHT” TO MATURITY THROUGH TEACHING AND TRAINING.**

## **PAUL’S CRITERIA FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY**

Hebrews 5:12-6:3

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

**6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,**

**2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.**

**3 And this will we do, if God permit.**

Hebrews 5:11 - 6:3 (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*)

11 Concerning this we have much to say which is hard to explain, since you have become dull in your [spiritual] hearing and sluggish [evenslothful in achieving spiritual insight].

12 For even though by this time you ought to be teaching others, you actually need someone to teach you over again the very first principles of God's Word. You have come to need milk, not solid food.

13 For everyone who continues to feed on milk is obviously inexperienced and unskilled in the doctrine of righteousness (of conformity to the divine will in purpose, thought, and action), for he is a mere infant [not able to talk yet]!

14 But solid food is for full-grown men, for those whose senses and mental faculties are trained by practice to discriminate and distinguish between what is morally good and noble and what is evil and contrary either to divine or human law.

6:1 THEREFORE LET us go on and get past the elementary stage in the teachings and doctrine of Christ (the Messiah), advancing steadily toward the completeness and perfection that belong to spiritual maturity. Let us not again be laying the foundation of repentance and abandonment of dead works (dead formalism) and of the faith [by which you turned] to God,

2 With teachings about purifying, the laying on of hands, the resurrection from the dead, and eternal judgment and punishment. [These are all matters of which you should have been fully aware long, long ago.]

3 If indeed God permits, we will [now] proceed [to advanced teaching].

1. We must progress beyond our doctrine, which is our foundation.
2. *Perfection* (Greek *teleiotes* ) has several meanings:
  - a. **The finished product of a process.**
  - b. **The end of a goal being in view.**
  - c. **Completeness, maturity, fruitfulness.**
3. Growth takes place over time; we should not overlook the growth stages.
4. A fruitful church is one that has achieved perfection (completion, maturity).

## **B. The Foundation of the Church has been laid already.**

1 Corinthians 3:9-11

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, **ye are God's building.**

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:19-22

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of **the household of God;**

20 And **are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;**

21 **In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:**

22 **In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.**

1. The Apostolic Church has been laying the foundation of correct doctrine for almost 100 years now.
2. The larger the intended building, the more solid the foundation must be.
3. We have a solid foundation: Jesus Christ the Solid Rock.
4. The Lord wants us to build an Apostolic superstructure on our well-laid foundation.
5. The Biblical reference to the Apostles' "fellowship" pertains to church structure.

## **C. A Revelation of God's plan for church structure is essential — ONLY REVELATION CAN DEFEAT THE SPIRIT OF RELIGIOUS TRADITION.**

### **THE REVELATION OF GOD'S PURPOSE AND GOAL:**

Isaiah 54:1-5

- 1 Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: **for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.**
- 2 **Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;**
- 3 **For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.**
- 4 Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.
- 5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

Isa 54:2 (*New Century Version*)

2 Make your tent bigger; stretch it out and make it wider. Do not hold back. Make the ropes longer and its stakes stronger,

Isa 54:2 (*The Message Bible*)

2 "Clear lots of ground for your tents! Make your tents large. Spread out! Think big! Use plenty of rope, drive the tent pegs deep.

**NOTE: IT IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH ANY KIND OF SPIRITUAL AND/OR INTELLECTUAL INTEGRITY TO APPLY THESE SCRIPTURES TO "BUILDING A NEW CHURCH BUILDING." THAT IS PERVERTING THESE SCRIPTURES!**

1. The Lord wants to build bigger churches, not by building bigger buildings, but by using a different structure.
2. This structure is generically called "The SMALL GROUP Ministry." It primarily involves saints ministering to each other in home meetings. We believe that this ministry is the key to building a larger, healthy, Apostolic church.

3. Some do not accept this concept because they fear disloyalty and rebellion.
4. Rather than reject this concept without prayerful consideration, let us seek the Lord for a revelation of the Scriptural basis for this ministry. Revelation will cause us to seek God for His instructions on how to lead, train, and oversee this ministry.

**D. Our commitment to this (and any) ministry MUST be based on the Word of God or it will fail.**

1. The pattern for the SMALL GROUP ministry concept is in the Bible.
2. The SMALL GROUP ministry is more than a program for church growth; it is God's plan for revival in the endtime church.
3. I urge you to try and find our church-building focused, church-service focused, church-calendar focused ministry ANYWHERE in Scripture. ANYWHERE!

## **II. “SMALL GROUP” MINISTRY IN SCRIPTURE.**

### **A. The Concept of the SMALL GROUP ministry is found in Scripture.**

1. The concept of one man leading a large group of people using a structured leadership system involving “saints” is first found with Moses and Israel.

Exodus 18:14-23

14 And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, **What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?**

15 And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God:

16 When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

17 And Moses' father in law said unto him, **The thing that thou doest is not good.**

18 **Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.**

19 **Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:**

20 **And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.**

**21 Moreover thou shalt PROVIDE OUT OF ALL THE PEOPLE able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:**

22 **And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.**

## **23 IF THOU SHALT DO THIS THING, AND GOD**

**COMMAND THEE SO**, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

2. The nation of Israel was called a “congregation” by the Lord (Exodus 12 and many other Scriptures)
  - a. Moses first tried to lead by himself.
  - b. God wanted Moses to spend more time with Him, to lead the people to Him, and to handle only the very important matters.
  - c. Moses was instructed to select others from among the people to help him lead.
3. Please note that this revelation of God’s structure for leading a large, growing congregation was actually given to Moses two chapters before God gave him the Law.
4. When God establishes a principle for the first time, He always uses the most extreme example to establish the divine origin of the principle. He did this with the structure for a church.

**NOTE: Exodus 18 is NOT referring to “multiplying” the number of “preachers” in a church. Even though the Lord will certainly do that. These leaders were taken from “among the people.” When the Moses needed more “Elders” to assist him in leading Israel, the Lord chose 70 Elders from “among the Elders.”**

Numbers 11:10-17

10 Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; Moses also was displeased.

11 And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?

12 Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?

13 Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat.

**14 I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.**

15 And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness.

**16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.**

**17 And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.**

## **B. This concept choosing leaders of the people from among the people is clearly found in the New Testament.**

1. The Apostles found themselves over-extended just as Moses did.

Acts 6:1-7

1 And in those days, **when the number of the disciples was multiplied**, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

**3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.**

**4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.**

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

**7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.**

- a. They appointed others to help them lead the people.
- b. They did this so that the Apostolics could devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word.
- c. **THE RESULT?** “The number of the disciples multiplied.”

2. The Lord’s New Testament answer to this situation parallels His answer to Moses in Exodus 18.

Ephesians 4:11-13

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

**12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:**

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Ephesians 4:12 (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*)

12 His intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people), [that they should do] the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body (the church),

Ephesians 4:7 (*Wuest’s Expanded Translation*)

...for the equipping of the saints for ministering work with a view to the building up of the Body of Christ,...

- a. The fivefold ministry is given to the church to equip the saints for their ministry.
- b. As the saints minister, the church is “ edified.”

## **C. The Church in the New Testament was a home-based ministry.**

**JUST A FEW EXAMPLES TO BEGIN** (Acts 2:46; 5:42; 8:3):

The Holy Ghost was **FIRST** poured out in a house.

The **FIRST** outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the Gentiles in a house.

When Saul wanted to persecute the Church, he went to houses to find the Church.

Saul (Paul) received the Holy Ghost in a house.

Paul's ministry in Corinth was in Justus' house.

Paul declared to the Elders at Ephesus that he ministered to them from house to house.

Paul's last recorded venue of ministry was in a house in Rome for two years.

**LET'S LOOK AT SOME SPECIFIC SCRIPTURES IN REGARDS TO THIS SUBJECT.**

Acts 7:48 Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,

1 Corinthians 3:16 **Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?**

1. The Greek word translated "church" is *ecclesia*, which means "the assembly of the called out ones."
2. The word *church* **NEVER** refers to a physical building in the Bible; **it always refers to the people who were meeting not the place where they were meeting.**
  - a. Ephesians 1:22 - refers to the Church Universal.

Ephesians 1:22-23

22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

b. I Thessalonians 1:1 - refers to the Church in a city.

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

c. Romans 16:5 - refers to the Church in a private home.

Romans 16:5 Likewise greet the church **that is in their house**. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

3. "House to house" is translated from *kat'oikon*, which can mean "various private homes."

a. Acts 2:46 - The first church met daily in the temple and from house to house.

Acts 2:46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

b. Acts 5:42 - This pattern continued long after the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 5:42 And daily in the temple, **and in every house**, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

c. Acts 12:12 - They prayed in the "house of Mary."

Acts 12:12 And when he had considered the thing, **he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.**

d. Acts 20:8 - Paul taught in the “upper chamber” of a house.

Acts 20:8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

e. Acts 20:20 - Paul taught the church from “house to house.”

Acts 20:20 And **how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,**

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

4. A home is a more personal and private place to meet in than a “church building.”

5. All of the early assemblies specifically mentioned in the Bible were in homes.

a. Romans 16:3-5 and 1 Corinthians 6:19 - Aquila and Priscilla had a church in their home.

Romans 16:3-5

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

5 **Likewise greet the church that is in their house.** Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

1 Cor 16:19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, **with the church that is in their house.**

b. Philemon 1:2 - Philemon had a church in his home.

Philemon 1:2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and **to the church in thy house:**

c. Colossians 4:15 - Nymphas had a church in his home.

Colossians 4:15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and **the church which is in his house.**

6. Acts 28:30-31 - The Book of Acts ends with Paul holding a SMALL GROUP meeting in his home.

Acts 28:30-31

30 And **Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him,**

31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

### **III. THE LIVING STRUCTURE OF THE SMALL GROUP MINISTRY.**

#### **A. There exists a parallel in the Scripture between the principles of Nature and the Supernatural.**

1. Natural things are examples given to us by God to help us understand spiritual things.

John 3:5-12

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

**10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?**

**11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.**

**12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?**

2. The New Testament Church is called the “body of Christ.”

Ephesians 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

Colossians 1:18 And **he is the head of the body, the church**: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

3. Understanding the structure of the natural body should help us understand the structure that Jesus intended for the spiritual “BODY” of Christ.

## **B. The Structure of the Natural Body parallels the Spiritual Body.**

1. Our natural bodies are comprised of living cells.

a. Our bodies increase in size as the cells increase in number.

b. The cells multiply by dividing.

c. The foundation of every cell is the “nucleus.” The nucleus is typologically the “leadership” of the cell.

d. Again, for the body to grow the each cell must divide; this division begins when the nucleus divides in to two distinct nuclei.

e. This division is called *MITOSIS*. It is the fundamental process of life.

2. However, in the traditional church structure, the church as an entity is considered “the cell.”
  - a. Yet, even if this were true Biblically, we do not allow “mitosis” to take place.
3. Nevertheless, the local church body CANNOT be a “single cell.” It meets none of the criteria for applying that description to it.
  - a. The local church is NOT a single-cell “ameba.”
  - b. The Bible uses the terminology of the Church being a “body.” Since the word *body* is referring to is the *Body of Christ* and the Lord’s body was made up of a countless number of “cells” naturally, then the spiritual body of the Church must fit that same parallel.
4. So, what is the spiritual parallel of the natural cell? They have to be the individual portions of the church meeting as “small groups” which mostly meet in homes.

### **C. What is the Scriptural Structure of the Body of Christ?**

1. Again, the cell of nature more closely parallels a small group of saints which meet together to share the functions of spiritual life with one saint acting as the leader — the nucleus.
2. All bodily systems work to support the health and strength of the cells.
3. The blood carries food and oxygen to each cell and carries away waste.

4. *Koinonia* is a Greek word that is translated both “communion” and “fellowship.”
  - a. *Communion* celebrates “shed” blood.
  - b. *Fellowship* is based on “shared” blood.
5. The New Testament Church should parallel the structure of the human body in EVERY respect.

#### **D. Another natural example is the human family paralleling God’s Structure for the Family of God.**

1. The basic building block of every society is the family.
2. **The ideal family has two dimensions of leadership.**
  - a. **The father dimension of leadership provides: leadership, authority, decisions, correction, protection.**
  - b. **The mother dimension of leadership provides: tenderness, emotional support, patient training, nurturing.**
3. **Apostolic Church structure should include both of these dimensions.**
  - a. What we call “The Pulpit Ministry” (Biblically “the oversight ministry”) is the father dimension of leadership.
  - b. **The ministry of the saints is the mother dimension of leadership.**
4. **The traditional structure of Apostolic churches has been that of a single-parent family: a father but no mother.**

5. God has NOT equipped fathers to do the ministry of a mother.

1 Peter 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

- a. The question is: In nature (that which is directly created by God), how does a newborn human (or mammal) receive life-sustaining sustenance?
- b. In all mammals, the female of the species is provided with the ability to produce milk and to deliver it — not the males.

6. The word *Pastor* is only found one time in the King James New Testament. The other 17 times that same Greek Word occurs in the Greek text, it is translated “Shepherd.”

- a. The work and function of a “Shepherd” is very plainly seen and clearly understood in Scripture.

Psalms 23:1-6

1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

- b. **Shepherds DO NOT produce sheep — only sheep beget and conceive sheep! For this reason, it is not possible to build a church from a “pulpit.”**

c. Growth (increase) is not produced by Shepherds but by sheep.

Ephesians 4:12 (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*)

**12 His intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people), [that they should do] the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body (the church),**

Ephesians 4:12 (*Wuest's Expanded Translation*)

**...for the equipping of the saints for ministering work with a view to the building up of the Body of Christ,...**

b. The Shepherd cares for the sheep, but he DOES NOT feed the milk to the lambs. Only the mother (the ewe) feeds the lambs milk!  
THIS IS GOD'S PLAN FOR HIS CHURCH!

7. Without the mother dimension of leadership, there is no one to properly care for new spiritual babies.

a. This is why the traditional church structure does not encourage growth neither does it provide for the care of that growth as a normal and natural function.

b. Also, this is the reason that many spiritual babies "die" before their ever get grounded in the faith.

8. Unfortunately, there have been too many "divorces" between the father and mother dimensions of leadership (church splits).

a. One of the main contributing causes of these divorces is that the father does not trust the mother and will not allow her to fulfill her responsibilities towards the lambs. This is offensive to the "mothers."

b. The key to avoiding a "divorce" between the father and mother dimensions of leadership (church split) is for the father (pastoral ministry) to give itself to the mother (ministering saints) with all of its heart.

c. This is how Jesus keeps us faithful to Him. By loving us and trusting us with the souls that He died for, He proves Himself to us as our husband.

d. Love is a powerful force that binds people and churches together.

Galatians 5:6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; **but faith which worketh by love.**

## **IV. TRUE FELLOWSHIP PRODUCES UNITY.**

### **A. Only by Providing for a Structure That Allows Koinonia to Come into Being, Can True Unity Exist in a Body of Believers.**

1. *Koinonia* is the Greek word which is translated “fellowship” in Acts 2:42.

a. *Koinonia* means “sharing, mutual communication, communion, close association, and joint participation.

b. This “fellowship” goes far deeper than just “after church socializing.”

c. It is not possible to provide this in the context of a church service.

d. No pastor is capable of providing this to a church either by his ministry or his personality.

e. He can only provide an environment in which it can occur.

f. If the church is dependant upon his ministry to meet all of their needs, it will NEVER have or develop *koinonia*.

2. SMALL GROUP ministry provides a setting for *koinonia* to develop within a church.

3. *Koinonia* has two dimensions of participation.

- a. Relationship with God — vertical relationship.
- b. Relationship with others — horizontal relationships.
- c. These relationships are intricately related to and mutually dependent upon each other.
- d. The strength and stability of the vertical relationship (spiritual relationship with the Lord) is dependent upon the base or foundation of our lives which is the horizontal relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

1 John 4:20-21

20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: **for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?**

21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

- e. It is IMPOSSIBLE to develop our horizontal relationships in a church service-type environment. A completely different structure and format must be provided to facilitate the growth of *Koinonia*.
- f. “Spiritual” people who never truly develop loving relationships with other saints frequently become “unstable” and eventually become “judgemental” of others because they never learn to have compassion on others. Their relationship with God is all about themselves.

4. Jesus prayed for unity in the church.

John 17:20-21

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21 **That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.**

- a. As our relationships with other believers grow stronger, unity is increased.

b. Through the unity of the church, Jesus is revealed to the world.

John 13:35 **By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.**

5. I John 4:12 - The *agape* love of God is the energizing force that bonds God's people together.

I John 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

a. *Agape* love is love in action.

b. The SMALL GROUP ministry provides an opportunity for the love of God to be put into action.

## **B. God's goal: the Perfection of His saints (Ephesians 4:11,12).**

Ephesians 4:11-12

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

1. The church that has strong relationships among the saints, is united in purpose, and is fully equipped for ministry is a church that has reached "perfection."

a. We are called to go on unto perfection (Hebrews 6:1).

b. God has given the fivefold ministry for the perfecting of the saints.

c. The Lord's desire is for us to attain the "stature of the fulness of Christ."

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

- d. We will then no longer be tossed about by various doctrines: we will be rooted and grounded in truth.

Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

- e. As the relationships between the individual “members” of the body are strengthened and each member fit harmoniously with and to one another, the church is able to be increased in an atmosphere of love.

Ephesians 4:15-16

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

- 2. The literal meaning of *koinonia* is “the share that one has in anything.”
  - a. It was a legal term used in marriage contracts.
  - b. It referred to an agreement to jointly participate in the necessities of life.
  - c. This is the kind of commitment God wants us to have between each other.
- 3. The members (parts) of a body are connected at and by “joints.”
  - a. The “joints” connecting the members of Christ’s body are the relationships between the people of the church.
  - b. If the relationships of the body are strong, the body will be strong.
  - c. The SMALL GROUP ministry strengthens relationships through its ability to provide an atmosphere and structure in which *koinonia* can develop and grow.

## **C. Revival/Harvest is NOT possible without UNITY in the body.**

1. We are called to steadfastly proclaim our Apostolic doctrines — it is our solid foundation; everything we do must be built upon this foundation.
2. To build upon this foundation, we must understand *koinonia* and its necessity.
  - a. We must then structure our church to provide an atmosphere which will encourage the development and growth of *koinonia*.
3. Our unity will then provide the conduit for Revival.

- a. Acts 1:14 tells us that the disciples were in “one accord” before the Holy Ghost was poured out.

Acts 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

- b. They were in “one accord” when the Holy Ghost came.

Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

- c. They were in “one accord” after the Holy Ghost fell.

Acts 2:46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

- d. In Acts 4:24-31, they prayed in “one accord” and the Holy Ghost fell on them again.

Acts 4:24-31

24 And **when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord**, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

29 **And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,**

30 **By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.**

31 **And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.**

e. The Apostles and Elders led the church in “one accord.”

Acts 15:25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

4. The anointing of God upon us flows through Unity.

Psalms 133:1-2

1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

5. Paul exhorted the church to be in unity.

Philippians 2:2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

6. Jesus prayed that we would be “ONE.”

John 17:11,21-23

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, **that they may be one, as we are.**

21 **That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us:** that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; **that they may be one, even as we are one:**

23 **I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.**

- a. *Agape* (love) is perfected when the church becomes like Jesus.
- b. The Son (the man Christ Jesus) was ONE with the Father.
- c. It is the will of God for us to be ONE with God and with each other.

**D. The fully-equipped saint who is skilled at ministry and is in unity with the body is the KEY to Growth from God.**

1. We need to put aside all carnal efforts to build our church through traditional methodology (clergy doing the ministry and work; laity financing and being spectators rather than participants).
2. We need to re-structure our church according to the Apostolic pattern so that our growth will be “growth from God.”

Colossians 2:19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, **increaseth with the increase of God.**

- a. **THIS IS THE KEY TO RECEIVING AND MINISTERING TO A GREAT HARVEST.**

# **V. THE CONCEPT OF THE MINISTRY OF THE SAINTS**

## **A. There are two different concepts of ministry demonstrated to us in the New Testament.**

1. First, we are introduced to the ministry of John the Baptist.

a. He was the “forerunner” - His ministry laid the foundation for the ministry of Jesus.

2. Afterwards, we are introduced to the ministry of Jesus.

a. His was the ministry that was to come.

b. He was to set the example of ministry for all who would follow after Him.

John 14:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, **the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do;** because I go unto my Father.

1 John 4:16-17

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: **because as he is, so are we in this world.**

## **B. To see the importance of these two ministries as well as their differences, we must compare them:**

## **JOHN THE BAPTIST WAS:**

1. Almost exclusively a preacher.
2. A bold proclaimer — his ministry was proclamational.
3. A leader with charisma, who drew large crowds.
4. A famous and renowned man.
5. A preacher to crowds more than to individuals.
6. A fire-brand orator who did not purposely make disciples.
7. A single preacher who shared the stage with no one.
8. He spent his time in the desert and only ministered to the people that came out to him.
9. His most remembered messages were to crowds.
10. He was only the forerunner, not the one who was to come.

Matthew 11:7-19

7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

## **THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WAS:**

1. Primarily a teacher.
2. A gentle explainer — his ministry was relational.
3. A leader with no comeliness that we should desire Him.
4. A man of no reputation.
5. A minister to individuals more than to crowds.
6. A compassionate teacher who was a focused, determined disciple-maker.
7. A trainer of men and a leader of a multiple ministry.
8. He went to where the people were. He ministered to them where they lived and He ministered in their homes.
9. His most noted ministry was to individuals.
10. The one who was to come and who was the example of ministry to the New Testament church.

Isaiah 53:2-3

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with

9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

10 For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.

15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Philippians 2:5-11

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**C. John was the epitome of what most Apostolic preachers are today; his success in drawing a crowd was tremendous, but he was not the Lord's pattern for ministry in the New Testament Church.**

1. It takes more today to "build a church" than good singing and good preaching.
2. Before people will receive our message, we must meet their needs; this was Jesus's approach to reaching the lost.

**D. The Multiple Ministry of Jesus Christ is God's pattern for today.**

1. Jesus was referred to many times more frequently as a "teacher" than a "preacher."
2. The focus of His ministry was to individuals more than to crowds.
  - a. Luke 5:17-20 - Jesus ministered in a home.

Luke 5:17-20

17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

18 And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him.

19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

b. Luke 19:5-9 - Jesus brought salvation to a home.

Luke 19:5-9

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

9 And Jesus said unto him, **This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.**

c. Luke 10:5 - Jesus sent His disciples out to homes.

Luke 10:5 And **into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.**

3. Unlike John, Jesus was not a loner; He was the leader of a group.

a. While John wanted to bring people to God, Jesus wanted to both train and equip for ministry to those that He brought to God.

b. Jesus spent three and one half years training His disciples; after He ascended, He used them to build the church.

4. The ministry of Jesus was diverse because the people had diverse needs.

## **E. The ministry of John (preaching) had to DECREASE so that the ministry of Jesus (teaching) could INCREASE.**

1. Jesus did not eliminate preaching — He preached also — but He added a whole new dimension to spiritual ministry.
  - a. Jesus was (and is) a disciple maker.
  - b. The word *disciple* is defined as a “taught or trained one.”
  - c. Therefore, by definition, it is impossible to make a “disciple” by preaching.
  - d. Preaching proclaims; teaching explains.
  - e. Preaching inspires; teaching equips.
  - f. Preaching incites; teaching imparts.
  
2. Everyone with the Holy Ghost is ordained of God to participate in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

1 Peter 2:9 **But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:**
  
3. The concept of “clergy” and “laity” is a doctrine of the catholic church; it must be forsaken by Apostolics.
  - a. The leaders of the church are called to equip the saints through the ministry of the Word.
  - b. The saints are then able to reach far more people than the leaders could on their own.

4. As the transition was taking place, the ministries of John and Jesus operated simultaneously for a short period of time.

John 3:22-23

22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

- a. It was necessary that the transition from one to the other be such that it was a process not an event.

5. When John the Baptist's ministry was preiminant "preaching" was the focus. However, when John and his ministry decreased, Jesus' teaching ministry increased.

6. John the Baptist's ministry primarily brought people to repentance and batized them in water.

- a. But, Jesus' ministry focused upon making these "new converts" into His disciples.

7. The New Testament Apostolic Church today MUST follow this example.

- a. The "teaching ministry" MUST become the primary ministry of any Church that desires to fulfill all of the Lord's expectations for His Church.

8. OUR FOCUS DETERMINES OUR PRIORITY IN REGARDS TO MINISTRY TYPE UTILIZED:

- a. If our priority is making "converts," then we will primarily use the "preaching" focus.

- b. If our priority is making disciples, then our priority will be both teaching and producing teachers.

Hebrews 5:12-14

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

## **F. God ordained that the Saints participate in the ministry of reaching the world.**

1. Every person whom God fills with the Holy Ghost has a place in the body's ministry.

1 Corinthians 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

2. God never intended that the pastor do all of the ministry; in fact, in a true Apostolic church it is impossible for the pastor to do it all.

- a. God has gifted all of the members of the body with spiritual abilities.

Romans 12:4-8

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

- b. It is the responsibility of the fivefold ministry to prepare the saints to use their gifts and abilities in the will of God and to His glory.

c. It is the Elder's responsibility to direct and help each individual to find their place in God's plan and purpose and to help facilitate their fulfilling God's will for their lives in His Kingdom.

3. There were so many people who Jesus wanted to reach that it became "expedient" for Him to go away.

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

a. WHY? Because His followers could reach far more people with Him working THROUGH them than He could by working alone.

b. This is still true today. The church can reach far more people by being actively involved in ministry than the preacher could ever reach alone — especially if he is primarily ministering from a pulpit.

## **G. The Hour demands that we seek a new Priority.**

1. The focus of the leaders of today's church must be the preparing and equipping the saints for the work of their ministry.

2. God has given to all of us (not just preachers) the ministry of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and **hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;**

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and **hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.**

20 **Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.**

3. Like Stephanas we must all become addicted to the ministry.

1 Corinthians 16:15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and **that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,**)

## **VI. THE NECESSITY OF THE SMALL GROUP MINISTRY IN THE ENDTIME CHURCH**

### **A. Did God have a plan for caring for the results of the Day of Pentecost?**

1. Who cared for the 3000 souls who were saved on the Day of Pentecost?

- a. If only the twelve apostles cared for them, each of them had 250 people to take care of as a result of that one day alone.
- b. If all 120 disciples were involved, then each of them only had 25 people to deal with.
- c. Which scenario seems the most reasonable or logical? Obviously, the second!

2. The Lord promised that He would restore the Church to its full Apostolic power in the last days.

Acts 3:19-21

19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

- a. This power must have a conduit to flow through to be effective.
- b. The conduit is Apostolic structure!

**B. If we believe that there will be revival, we must prepare ourselves to be involved in it and to care for the results of it.**

1. Many are spending much time praying and fasting asking God to give them a harvest.
2. The problem is that they would not know what to do with the results of the harvest if it came.
3. We are not prepared to care for the great numbers of people Jesus wants to save before the rapture.
4. One person's ministry per congregation cannot meet the needs of the harvest; the SMALL GROUP ministry involves the whole body.

**C. The Apostolic Method is found in evidence in church history.**

1. Over 500 years ago, the Bohemian Brethren used the concept of the SMALL GROUP ministry.
  - a. They were a very missionary minded group of believers.
  - b. They sent "missionaries" throughout the world before anyone but the Catholics was doing so.
  - c. Later, this group was called the Moravians.

2. John Wesley (an Anglican priest) was “converted” (“my heart was strangely warm”) in a Moravian Home Meeting on Aldersgate Street in London.

From this time, Wesley began to teach the NECESSITY of a supernatural “conversion” experience. His preaching/teaching produced MANY converts. To take care of these converts, he followed the Moravian example.

- a. He learned the structure that he used to organize and train his converts from the Moravians.
- b. He formed “nurture cells” for new converts which met in homes each week.
- c. These “cells” were clustered into groups called “religious societies” which met weekly in public places.
- d. The “religious societies” of a geographical area met together weekly as a church with a pastor.
- e. The “nurture cells and religious societies” were not led by “professional” ministers.
- f. **Both Wesley’s ministry AND methods were so Biblical that the “fruit” of his ministry exists in many forms to this day. As we will consider below, pentecostalism can trace its roots directly back to Wesley’s ministry.**

3. George Whitefield was a CLOSE friend and contemporary of John Wesley.

- a. He was a great preacher and revivalist who ministered especially in Great Britain and the United States.
- b. It is historical fact that he preached to crowds of up to 80,000 people and had tremendous results.
- c. **There is nothing left of Whitefield’s ministry today! Why? He was not a disciple maker.**
- d. **Wesley was a disciple maker: he founded what we know as the Methodist church and the results of His work are with us even today.**

4. In fact, out of the original Methodist movement came the Holiness movement of the 1800's. The Holiness churches were the core group of all those who first received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost in the early 1900's. Therefore, John Wesley and his concepts of church are found in the roots of the Pentecostal movement. **Consequently, our own spiritual roots are found in what this study calls “the SMALL GROUP ministry concept.”**  
**WHAT HAPPENED TO US? HOW DID WE GET SO FAR FROM OUR ROOTS?**

5. The great Pentecostal revivals in South America during the 50's and 60's were strengthened by small home meetings.

6. Both North America and Russia received the revelation of baptism in Jesus Name around 1915, and both have about the same population.

a. Russia presently has two to five times as many Apostolics as North America (depending on how and who is counting).

b. The reason is that the Communists outlawed real Christianity which forced the church to meet secretly in home meetings.

c. North America has continued to use a traditional church structure which has stunted (for the most part) the growth of our churches.

d. Currently, the Apostolics of China can only operate as home groups. Yet, they have tens of thousands of believers.

## **D. The Korean Example is amazing.**

1. Dr. Paul Yongi Cho has built a church of over 750,000 in Seoul, Korea using the concept of home meetings.

2. I HAVE PERSONALLY WITNESSED THIS CHURCH AND ITS NUMBERS WHICH ARE BASED, BUILT UPON, AND PRODUCED BY ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY UPON MUCH PRAYER AND THE “CELL MINISTRY” (their name for “small groups”).

**E. Pastors have a major decision to make today: will they continue with ineffective traditional methods or will they lead their churches into Apostolic structure and revival?**

1. God establishes His concepts and principles by using the most adverse of circumstances and extreme challenges.
  - a. The Holy Ghost tames our most “unruly” member — the tongue — from the very beginning of our walk with God.
  - b. The nation of Israel was far larger than any local church could ever be, yet God had a plan for effectively “pastoring” them as a single congregation.
  - c. The early church grew to 10,000 plus people in a very short time; however, the Apostles were prepared, they used the plan that the Lord taught them.
  
2. When God made the first man, He saw that Adam was incomplete.
  - a. He said, “I will make him an help meet for him.”
  - b. The man represents the father dimension of leadership, the woman represents the mother dimension.
  - c. The NIV calls the woman “an helper suitable for him.”
  - d. The Living Bible says, “an helper suited to his needs.”
  - e. One modern scholar interprets it, “a power equal to man.”

3. Every pastor has needs that only the mother dimension of leadership can fulfill.
  - a. Could Adam have had children without Eve?
  - b. Eve made Adam complete.
  - c. Only the mother dimension of leadership is able to make the ministry of the pastor all that God called it to be.
4. Every pastor must decide whether or not he will stay with tradition or implement the SMALL GROUP ministry in his church.

## **VII. THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR IN THE SMALL GROUP MINISTRY.**

### **A. The Pastor's position in Scripture.**

1. The primary job of a pastor is to feed the sheep with wisdom and knowledge.

Jeremiah 3:15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.
2. Paul declared that pastors must give an account of their sheep to God.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.
3. A pastor must not lose sight of his true purpose in the church.

## **B. The Pastor is to be a Leader.**

1. The pastor (shepherd) is to lead his flock.
  - a. If he has to “drive” them, they are not sheep, they are goats.
  - b. The Lord will not accept goats.

Matthew 25:31-46

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

2. Pastors who lead well are worthy of “double honor.”

a. To lead means to be out front showing the way to go.

b. If sheep get ahead of the shepherd, they get lost.

3. **Jethro told Moses that he was to show the people WHERE THEY MUST WALK AND THE WORK THEY MUST DO** (Exodus 18:20).

### **C. The Pastor is to be an Equipper.**

1. In Ephesians 4:11,12; Paul stated that pastors along with the full five-fold ministry are to “fully equipped” their saints (Amplified Version).

a. The Greek word *kartartis* translated “perfect” means “the consummate artistry, the epitome of skill.”

b. This should be the goal of every pastor’s ministry: to “fully equip” the saints to being able to minister to people’s needs with the “epitome of skill.”

2. The primary reason that saints fail in ministry is that they are not equipped to do what they have been asked to do.

3. Jesus trained and trusted those He chose for ministry. He also provided the oversight necessary to protect them.

## **D. The Pastor is to be a Preparer.**

1. Jesus saw His purpose as preparing the disciples to carry on after He was gone.
  - a. He poured Himself into them.
  - b. He showed them how to minister.
  - c. He let them ask questions.
  - d. He allowed them to minister.
  - e. He corrected them when they erred.
  - f. **When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were fully equipped.**
2. The time and energy Jesus invested in His disciples demonstrated His faith that outpouring was coming.
  - a. What good is a great outpouring if no one is equipped to care for the new converts?
  - b. Our faith ought to propel us into action.
  - c. The only thing limiting the size of our church is the lack of preparation which is caused by our limited faith.

## **E. The Pastor is to be a Trainer of Saints.**

1. Training involves experience and instruction.
  - a. Experience is a product of time and opportunity; it can take a long time for someone to acquire experience.
  - b. However, the impartation by instruction of that which is learned by experience can be controlled by the instructor.
  - c. Teaching transfers the experiential knowledge of the instructor to the student.

- d. Consequently, the student does not have to spend the time learning by experience that which the instructor is willing to impart by training.
  - e. Time is saved; knowledge is transferred; progress is accelerated.
2. Paul instructed Timothy to impart what he learned to people who would be faithful in imparting it to others.
- 2 Timothy 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.**
3. For instruction to be effective, it must be accompanied by the opportunity to experiment by doing what has been taught.
- a. Jesus allowed His disciples to minister while He observed.
  - b. The SMALL GROUP ministry provides an opportunity for the saints to put into practice what they have been taught.
  - c. SMALL GROUP elders (deacons / presbyters) supervise and monitor the ministry of the saints and guide them as they experiment in new spiritual areas.
4. Well-trained, fully-equipped for ministry saints produce growing, flourishing churches.

# **VIII. THE PASTOR IS EITHER THE CEILING TO GROWTH OR THE CATALYST FOR IT; CONSEQUENTLY, THE FOLLOWING ARE WAYS THAT THE PASTOR CAN HINDER THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH:**

## **A. Doing the Saints Ministry.**

1. Pastors have a specific God-ordained ministry — it is NOT the same as the saints' ministry.
2. Neither the body nor the pastor will grow if the pastor involves himself in the saints ministry instead of training and trusting them to do it.
3. When the pastor tries to do both his and the saints' ministry, both he and the people will wear away.

Exodus 18:18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

## **B. Relying on Self AND Self-effort — Doing everything themselves.**

1. Pastors must be Spirit-led and Spirit-motivated.
2. All activity that is born of (conceived by and produced by) the flesh is flesh.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

### **C. Harboring personal fears and insecurities.**

1. Personal insecurities make it difficult for a pastor to trust his saints with ministry.
2. Paul said he must “put away” those things which would affect him from his childhood.

1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

### **D. Suffering from low self-esteem.**

1. Some pastors suppress spiritual growth of saints because they need to feel like they are the most spiritual person in their church.
2. A pastor must ask himself why he is afraid of anyone outshining him.

### **E. Fearing rebellion and church splits.**

1. A pastor will reap what he sows; to be trusted, we must trust.
2. He has nothing to fear if sows love, instruction, and trust.

## **F. Trying to do God's job rather than one's own.**

1. A pastor must keep his job in its proper perspective: he is NOT the mediator between God and man.
2. JESUS is the mediator between God and men and He is the "church builder."

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and **one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;**

Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock **I will build my church;** and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

## **G. Having an unfocused vision.**

1. Attempting to reach an entire city is too broad a vision to focus on.
2. If he focuses on equipping his saints, the Lord will use the saints to reach his city.

## **H. Spending too much time on unproductive trees.**

1. Some pastors are continually drained of spiritual energy due to the time demands of a few saints who require the pastors constant attention.
2. If saints minister to these people, the pastor is freed to devote his time to leading the flock as a body.

## **I. Counting on “spiritual babies” to bear children.**

1. In nature, babies do not bear babies; child bearing is a result of maturity.
2. In the church new converts should NOT be the primary people involved in soul winning.

## **J. Trying to make the church grow beyond one’s capabilities.**

1. A church body cannot be more spiritual than the pastor.
2. If a pastor is personally equipped to pastor a church of one hundred, the Lord will not give him a church of five hundred no matter how much he prays.

# **IX. THE BENEFITS OF THE SMALL GROUP MINISTRY ARE:**

## **A. Pastoral effectiveness is strengthened.**

1. Many pastors labor under an impossible work load.
2. The SMALL GROUP ministry spreads the load out among the saints.

## **B. Stability of the church is improved.**

1. Unity which is based on true fellowship has great depth and strength.
2. The SMALL GROUP ministry promotes the “fellowship” which produces the unity and community which allows the church to remain strong during crisis even if the pastor dies or resigns.

## **C. Saints learn to Minister and to Lead.**

1. Many saints are frustrated because they have no outlet for their godly desire to serve.
2. SMALL GROUP ministry provides both the training and supervision which creates an atmosphere in which saints can effectively serve.

#### **D. Availability of spiritual support for new converts and other saints is expanded.**

1. When the pastor and his staff are the ones the saints depend on for their spiritual support, the support available to the church as a whole is severely limited and becomes more limited as the church grows.
2. The SMALL GROUP ministry transfers the responsibility for providing spiritual support to the saints.

#### **E. Outreach and discipleship are more effective.**

1. In the SMALL GROUP ministry everyone is involved in outreach.
2. Reaching out to others is the normal result of home ministry.

#### **F. Evangelism is taken into the community.**

1. Traditionally, the only way to win people was to get them to come to church.
2. The SMALL GROUP ministry takes the church to them.

#### **G. A more subdued approach is made available.**

1. Some people struggle with demonstrative worship.
2. The SMALL GROUP ministry provides a way to prepare people before they ever visit a service.

## **H. Evangelism is made a group effort.**

1. Many saints have a desire to win the lost but feel as though they are all on their own.
2. The SMALL GROUP ministry gets everyone involved in some way.

## **CONCLUSION:**

### **A. Religious tradition is one of the greatest barriers to receiving the blessing of endtime harvest.**

### **B. King Hezekiah faced the problem of religious tradition when trying to restore the spirituality of Israel.**

II Kings 18:1-4

1 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.

2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah.

3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did.

4 He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.

1. Israel had been burning incense to the “brazen serpent” since the time of Moses.

2. He “break in pieces” the serpent and called it “Nehushtan” — “just a piece of brass.”

### **C. The serpent had originally been an object of faith.**

1. Moses had made it according to God's instruction.
2. Yet it had become the object of vain and traditional worship.

### **D. The expectations created by religious tradition must be overcome if we are to be prepared to accommodate the results of the outpouring of the Spirit which has been promised.**

1. It is always difficult to discard traditions that have been practiced a long time.
2. In addition so many of us have brought the traditions of our previous religious affiliations into the truth.

### **E. The SMALL GROUP ministry dashes some "Pentecostal" traditions.**

1. The Apostles met in the Jews temple and in private homes.

Acts 2:46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

2. We, Pentecostals, have traditionally had only a "temple" ministry.

**F. Expanding our ministry to include meeting in homes is the key to effectively caring for and building relationships with the newborn Child of God and is the most effective method of evangelism in this hour.**

**THIS IS NOT AN DISCUSSION OF “A MINISTRY” OF THE CHURCH!**

**THIS IS A REVELATION OF THE “MISSING HALF OF THE CHURCH!**

**NONE OF THIS IS ABOUT STARTING A “NEW MINISTRY” THAT IT IS OPTIONAL FOR PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN.**

**THIS IS ABOUT A MINISTRY THAT ALL TRUE DISCIPLES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WILL PARTICIPATE IN!**

**IN JESUS' NAME!**