

PAUL'S FORMULA FOR CHURCH GROWTH

Int.

1. Aim: To show some of the principles of church growth, especially personal involvement.
2. The early church grew very fast
 - a. Acts 6:7 - "the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly"
 - b. Acts 12:24 "But the word of God grew and multiplied."
 - c. Acts 19:20 "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."
3. The church is the place where people are reconciled to God
 - a. Eph. 2:12-16 - we are all reconciled in the church by the cross - a return to favor
 - b. Therefore the most important task we have in this world is to BUILD UP THE CHURCH.
 - c. Jesus said that the growth of the church would be like a grain of mustard seed when planted. Even though the seed was small, the tree grew large. So it was to be with the church. - Matt. 13:31-32
4. How is this growth to be accomplished?
 - a. Paul gives us a formula in Ephesians 4:1-17
 - b. A formula is a concise way of expressing information symbolically
 - c. $E = MC^2$
 - i. An equation derived by the twentieth-century physicist Albert Einstein
 - ii. E represents units of energy, m represents units of mass, and c^2 is the speed of light squared, or multiplied by itself.
 - iii. The formula implies that any small amount of matter contains a very large amount of energy
 - d. Here is the formula of Paul for church growth: $CG = R [A T A L]$

Discussion

I. PAUL'S FORMULA FOR CHURCH GROWTH

- A. *Get your attitude right - Eph. 4:1-3*
 - 1. Walk worthy - live in an honorable way as a Christian
 - 2. Lowliness and meekness - humility not pride is the right attitude
 - 3. Patience - longsuffering - not hateful and short tempered
 - 4. Unity of the spirit in the bond of peace

- B. *Get your teaching right - Eph. 4:4-6*
 - 1. Oneness of all - one body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism, God
 - 2. Doctrine is important for church growth
 - 3. We must teach what the Bible teaches to be the Church of the Bible.

- C. *Get your Activity right - Eph. 4:7-16*
 - 1. Spiritual gifts were given to some of the early Christians
 - 2. Gave some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.
 - 3. To mature the saints - to help the Christians develop and grow
 - 4. So they can be a part of the work of the ministry
 - 5. And thus help build up the church to make it strong
 - 6. And all be united in the one faith
 - 7. Be no more children - unsure of what we believe

D. Get your living right - Eph. 4:17-31

1. Do not live as the Gentiles
2. Put off the old man with his sins
3. Put on the new man
4. Examples:
 - a. Lying = speak truth
 - b. Anger = control wrath
 - c. Stealing = work for needs
 - d. Corrupt communication = what is good
 - e. All bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, and malice = be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another.

II. HOW TO GET YOUR ACTIVITY RIGHT - Eph. 4:7-16

A. Involvement of every member is essential in church growth

1. Involve all =
 - a. V. 13 "Till we all come in the unity of the faith,..."
 - b. V. 16 "From whom the whole body fitly joined together..."
 - c. He did not tell some of us, or a few of us or the leaders, but all of us
 - d. Every member is important and necessary for the growth of the church.
2. Involvement is not the only thing essential
3. Unless we have our attitude right, our teaching right and our living right, then our involvement will not be profitable for church growth

- B. I Cor. 12:12-- many members of one body "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ."
1. There are certain needs of the body to be supplied in order for it to function properly
 2. Every part of our body is involved when it is functioning the way it was intended to function.
 3. The same plan was given for the church
 4. We have many members but all must be involved in carrying out the mission of the church. - I Cor. 12:13-31 - Esp. v. 18 "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."
 5. The entire body of Christ must be convinced that the work of the Lord is a "good work" and each individual must become involved.
- C. Three things essential to involvement of all members
1. Maturing the saints
 - a. Involvement in the work of the church is for faithful members - II Tim. 2:2 "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."
 - b. The members will not be involved unless they are mature
 - c. They have matured to the degree that they can handle the task given them to perform

2. Work according to their ability and maturity
 - a. Must be qualified for the work
 - (1) Everyone is not qualified to be an elder or deacon- I Tim. 3
 - (2) Everyone is not qualified for the work of preaching - Women are excluded - I Tim. 2:12
 - b. Wise leaders develop programs of work which fit the abilities of their people
 - (1) The work must fit the ability of the people
 - (2) The leaders must study the members to see what they can do
 - (3) Every member has time and talent - They are to be used for the glory of God
 - (a) I Pet. 4:10 "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."
 - (b) Each Christian has a gift, a special ability from God.
 - (c) The abilities are to be used in the service of Christ in the church.
 - (4) Most members come and sit. The talent is there but the commitment is lacking.
 - (5) We need to find a way to involve everyone
 - c. Delegate the job to someone.
 - (1) Give them the responsibility to carry out the job
 - (2) Have guidelines
 - (3) Expect reports of the work
 - (4) Commendation for work well done
 - d. Ill. Thomas Edison said "I never did anything worth doing by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident; they came by work."

3. The intended purpose of the work
 - a. Involvement of the members in any work is to "edify" or "build up the body of Christ" - Eph.4:12
 - b. Involvement just for the sake of having people involved is not profitable and will not result in church growth
 - c. If the end result of any work is not the building up of the body then it is foolish to try to get members involved in it.
 - d. We need to think of the work as the Lord's work. I Cor. 15:58 "Abound in the work of the Lord."

D. What is the result of involvement?

1. Members continue to mature even more - Eph. 4:13
2. They are no longer tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine - Eph. 4:14
3. They can speak the truth in love - Eph. 4:15
4. The whole body is fitly joined together and compacted with each member doing his part according to the degree of his ability. - Eph. 4:16
5. The church grows numerically and spiritually
6. A church that has members involved will have:
 - a. Right attitudes developed
 - b. Sound doctrine - the members will read and study and search the scriptures daily - [Acts 17:11] - to be sure that if any man speaks he speaks as the oracles of God [I Pet. 4:11]
 - c. Members who are practicing pure & undefiled religion - Jas. 1:27

Conclusion

1. Church growth is the desire of God and Christ - They want each member to be involved and to participate in the great work of the church.
 - a. Every person is a missionary or a mission.
 - b. We should be trying to lead someone else to Jesus or someone should be trying to lead us to Jesus.
2. It is our goal to grow
3. We do not have to go and study the denominations to see how it is done.
4. We need to study the word of God, then study our people.
 - a. Help them to mature
 - b. Then develop activities and programs to fit their abilities
 - c. That will build up the body of Christ
5. Then the church will Grow as God planned.
6. Here is the formula of Paul for church growth: $CG = R [A T A L]$
7. *CG* - Church Growth
 - a. *R* - Right
 - b. *A T A L* = attitude, teaching, activity, living

End Notes

1. F.H.C. Lectures 81, p.24 "Church Growth Assured by 100% involvement" by Leon Barnes
2. F.H.C. Lectures 84, p. 260 "More Involvement and Participation" by Marvin Rainey
3. File on "Church Growth"

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