

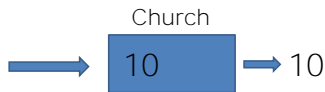
CLOSING THE BACKDOOR OF THE CHURCH

“You did not choose Me but I chose, and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, so that whatever you ask of the father in My name He may give to you.”

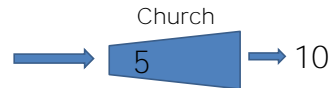
JOHN 15:16

“The church’s come and go syndrome”

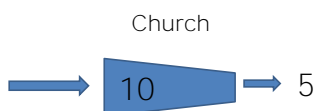
- People came, stayed for a while, then they all went out.



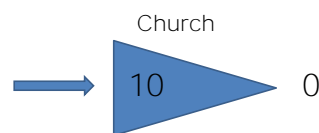
- The few people who came in stayed for a while, but when they went out they brought others out with them.



- People came, most of them stayed, and hardly few of them left.



- Many people came and no one wants to leave.



Working Principles that address the backdoor problem of the church

1. Personal encounter with Jesus

1John 1:1-3

- That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

- The life appeared; we have seen it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

- The apostles personally touched, heard, saw the Lord Jesus!
- Encounter with Jesus will transform **and revolutionise one's life.**

2. Lovely Fellowships

1Thessalonians. 2:7-8

- **“But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us.”**

Lovely Fellowship is a church where the people are authentic, loving, caring, joyful and warm.

- These are the environments that serve as breeding ground for growth.
- **And it is best maintained in the “small group” relationship pattern.**
- **The idea is called “growing small”.**

- Accumulating and accommodating the additional believers yet ensuring that the lovely environment of the fellowship is maintained.
- There is a tendency when the church becomes larger the temperature of the fellowship becomes colder.
- **“We grow lovelier as we grow larger.”**
- Growth happens best in the small group knitted relationship.
- Healthy cells make the body healthy.

- **Why small group system doesn't work in some churches?**
- The problem is not in its concept but on its development process.
- There are 3 major reasons why small group **don't work:**
 - failure to break the independent spirit
 - failure to overcome obstacles in developmental process (exploration, transition, community, outreach)
 - failure to focus on discipleship and leadership development for multiplication

3. Unity and Purity of the church
Luke 5:2

“He saw at the water's edge two boat, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets.”

- Unclean nets drive away fishes.
- Broken nets lose out the fishes.

4. Availability of Spiritual Food
Ruth 1:6

“When Naomi heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of His people by providing food for them, she and her daughter-in-law prepared to return home from there.”

- When there is bread in the house of God people will come and stay.
- Church starvation leads to church stagnation.

5. Sense of vision and purpose
Pro. 29:18

“Where there is no revelation [vision], people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction.”

- People love to see where they are going and how to get there the best way possible.
- And they want to be involve in it.

6. Church's relevance

- 1 Cor. 9:20, 22
- **“To the Jew I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law...” to the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.”**

- Innovating relevance of church images and services without compromising its foundational doctrines and spiritual values.
- (facilities, structures, parking, audio-visual technologies, etc.)

- Satan is very clever in keeping all his victims in confinement to his wicked philosophy and false beliefs because he mastered the “art of relevance and likelihood.”

The Lord Jesus said:

“...be as shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves” Mat. 10:16

Make the people come easily to the church and that they would not want to leave when they experience the **loveliness of the Church’s genuine** godliness.