

did what they had been observing in Jesus for the last few years. If Jesus had successfully moved them from seekers to servants, why wouldn't that work for others?

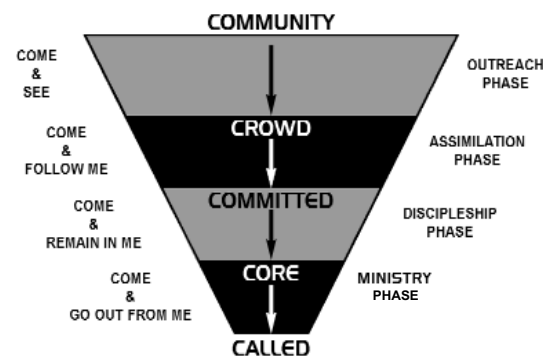
THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH SIMPLY APPLIED JESUS' FOUR-STEP STRATEGY OF DISCIPLE-MAKING.

First – They challenged people to “Come and See.” They personally invited interested seekers to discover more about Christ in the Temple courts and in their homes.

Second – They encouraged seekers to become active participants in small Christian communities.

Third – Within small Christian communities they trained and equipped believers for ministry.

Fourth – Once people were equipped for service, they mobilized them to be part of an entire movement of multiplication.



This simple strategy, applied over and over again, produced incredible results in the New Testament church. So many lives were touched that in **Acts 21:20**, the Scripture says... “*When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: ‘You see, Brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the Law.’*” Does that sound like your church?

#4: THE CHURCH HAD A BIBLICALLY BALANCED PLAN

The strategy of Jesus determined the structure of the church. Believers in Acts met daily in their homes, and the Temple courts. Most important was not when they met, but what they did when they met. How we structure the church is not nearly as important as what it accomplishes. Jesus is concerned more with the end product than He is the means by which we do it. The church simply needs to be structured in a way that four things are taking place.

1. The church must structure for outreach! If the structure and schedule of the church prevents outreach from occurring, the church will never become a movement of multiplication.

2. The church must structure for assimilation! If the structure and schedule of the church does not allow for relationship building, the church will never become a movement of multiplying disciples.

3. The church must structure for discipleship! If the church is not organized in a way that helps believers go deeper in their

faith and get equipped for ministry, she will never be a movement of disciple making.

4. The church must structure for ministry! If the church is not mobilizing and motivating trained disciples to do ministry, she will never become a movement of multiplication.

Jesus started a movement of reaching out, plugging in, building up, and sending out. Does the structure of your church fit the New Testament model?

God wants your church to be an impact church. If Impact Ministries can help to train or resource you to become an explosive movement of multiplication, please contact us at the address on this brochure.

For more information, contact:

IMPACT MINISTRIES

c/o *CROSSROADS CHURCH*
2564 Highway 154
Newnan GA 30265
(770) 254-0291 Office
(Ask for Sandy Nash)
(770) 254-1176 Fax

© 2002, Ken Adams



THE IMPACT CHURCH

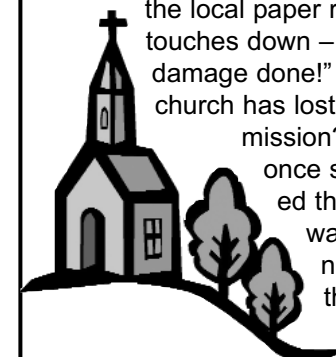
by Ken Adams

Most of my life I have lived in the Deep South. As a native Georgian, I have grown up in the Bible belt. If you ever come to Georgia, there is one thing you'll notice about the Bible belt. There are churches on just about every corner!

After having grown up in a world saturated with churches, I have often wondered why the church isn't making more of an impact. Why have all these churches not impacted their communities for Christ? How can you have churches every few miles yet have communities not be transformed by their presence? Maybe the church is irrelevant? I once heard about a church that was wiped out

by a tornado and the headlines of the local paper read... “Tornado touches down – no apparent damage done!” Maybe the church has lost sight of her mission? Someone

once said, “God started the church the way He wanted it, now He wants it the way He started it.”



If the church has lost her mission and become irrelevant to the culture, let's take a look at how to restore her to God's original purpose.

The churches I have seen on most street corners in the South are quite different from the church described in the New Testament. The book of Acts describes an explosive church, a healthy church, a growing church, and a multiplying church.

Just think about it! The church in Acts was a church plant with no building, no budget, and no baptistry. They did not have stained glass, padded pews, elaborate sound systems, and fellowship halls. The New Testament church didn't have committees, choirs or a constitution. They didn't have video screens, ball fields, bookstores, or tape ministries. The early church did not conduct musicals, have building campaigns, nor administrate a host of programs. The church in Jerusalem didn't have a copier, a computer, or do direct mail pieces. The church of the original disciples didn't have denominational meetings to attend, controversies over Bible translations, or wars over worship styles. No. The church in Acts simply cared about people. They met in homes and the Temple courts. They devoted themselves to fulfilling the Great Commandment and Great Commission. They followed Jesus' model for ministry. They used the same strategy for ministry Jesus used and they became a movement of multiplication. And did they multiply! The one hundred twenty from the upper room (**Acts 1:15**) multiplied into thousands that filled Jerusalem (**Acts 21:20**). That, my friend, is an impact church! That is a church that is a force to be reckoned with. That is the kind of church God wants all churches to be.

I believe there are four reasons why the church in Acts grew so rapidly and I believe those same reasons are needed in the church today.

#1: THE CHURCH HAD A CLEAR PURPOSE

I don't think the Apostles took a week-end retreat to craft a vision for the church. I'm fairly sure they did not attend any conferences on developing vision. In fact, I don't think the disciples even had a vision statement printed on their bulletins or stationery. My goodness – how did they ever survive?

Funny, even though the Apostles never did what many pastors and elders do today in terms of vision, they always knew exactly why they existed. You see, Jesus gave the church a very clear vision just before He left earth. Jesus gathered His disciples together and in His very last words uttered on earth He stated the church's mission. The mission of the church was to be the exact same mission of His life...

"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And teach them to obey all that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20)

The church of Acts was never confused about why they did what they did. The last words of Jesus were a constant reminder of why they did what they did. The church did not need a new vision. The vision Jesus gave them was the only vision they would ever need.

Over two thousand years have come and gone and God's vision for the church is still the same – "make disciples"! How clearly does your church see the vision Christ gave His church?

#2: THE CHURCH HAD A CONSISTENT PRODUCT

If the Apostles knew the reason they existed was to make disciples of all nations, how could they know if they had been successful? If nothing else, they needed a target to shoot for. That target was Jesus. The Apostles were successful when they made disciples who modeled their lives after Christ.

Christ's model is the end product of the disciple-making church. We are called to make disciples and those disciples ought to look like Jesus. Jesus was the perfect model of a "mature and multiplying" disciple.

As we look at the early church in the book of Acts, we see the members of the "first church" modeling the characteristics of Christ. In **Acts 2:42-47**, the New Testament believers demonstrated the characteristics of community, identity, maturity, and ministry. All of these characteristics were the exact same characteristics they had observed in Christ's life.

The target for today's church is no different than it was two thousand years ago. Our goal is to produce "mature and multiplying" disciples. When the church produces mature and multiplying disciples she is fulfilling the vision Christ gave her.

Is your church hitting the right target? Take a look at the following questions to get a gauge of how your church is doing.

Are people in your church living in Christian community? Are they committed to small group and serving others with their spiritual gifts?

Are people in your church identifying with their heavenly Father? Is their behavior becoming more like Jesus? Do they live to honor and glorify the Father?

Are the people in your church going deeper in their faith? Are they devoted to prayer and Scripture? Do they manage life's resources for God's glory?

Are the people in your church involved in the ministry of making disciples? Do they share their faith? Are people being baptized? Do you see multiple generations of disciples being made?

#3: THE CHURCH HAD A CULTURALLY RELEVANT PROCESS

The New Testament church knew they existed to make disciples that looked like Jesus, but how were they supposed to do it? Was the denomination going to send them a neatly packaged disciple-making program? Did they need to attend a church growth conference? Were they supposed to bring in a consultant in strategic planning?

Don't you think it ironic that the strategy used by the local church in Jerusalem was the exact same strategy used by Christ? DUH! I'm guessing that the Apostles simply