

# The Going, Growing Church

by Joseph Hovsepien

**“What’s the matter with the churches? Why are they closing down?” someone asked me recently. It would seem as though God has turned away and rejected the Church.**

**W**ell, it may be true that God has walked away from some churches because of their sin, worldliness, corruption and lack of Christ-likeness.

Let’s look at the early church—a going and growing church. It was a church aflame – from 120 to 10 million members in one century. It had few of the tools we consider necessary today: no printing presses or media ministries, no sound systems, no professional clergymen and leaders, not even church buildings.

But those early believers outdid us and would put us to shame today. With all our technological progress and education and organizational skills put together, we still don’t do well.

Why not? What did that church have that we need?

## **It was a Praying Church**

The church was born in a prayer meeting. Both men and women prayed in one accord (Acts 1:14). They prayed and they were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31).

Dear friends, let’s not forget that the New Testament Church was not established by Gentiles, but by Jesus Christ and His disciples, who were Jews. They brought the gospel to the rest of the world and now, many so-called “Christian” churches are ignoring and rejecting the Great Commission to go and evangelize all the nations.

Why does today’s Church have so little impact? I believe the reasons are many, but let me give you some that are obvious:

- Too many spectators, not enough workers and doers.
- Too much interest in the methods and not enough in the message.
- Too much concern about public image and not enough about the truth and godliness.
- Little or no concern for the lost and winning them to Christ.
- Few evangelistic meetings. Evangelism is largely forgotten today.
- Settling for lesser causes.
- Disregard and neglect of our mission.

Jesus’ words, “*You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth,*” seem to have been forgotten. But the world needs to hear the gospel today more than ever before. Let’s respond to that need.

We must not ever forget that we have the gospel because of those who were unstoppable. They – praying, loving and witnessing – marched ahead. We have the same marching orders. They changed the world. So can we.

When Peter was in jail they prayed (Acts 12). They prayed with such faith that it made them bold. They prayed so fervently that the building was shaken.



Prayer is vital if the Church is to move ahead. The church that is not praying is playing. The church is powerless without prayer.

### **It was a Loving Church**

Love made them share with others. Love enabled them to give to those in need. Love enabled them to put away their differences. Today, minor differences divide and cripple the church. Love united them. This kind of love brings revival. They loved things of above more than earthly possessions.

### **It was a Witnessing Church**

Jesus had promised that power would be given to all the believers who received the Holy Spirit to become His witnesses (Acts 1:8). And, of course, there was the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19). David Dawson said, “The silent pew is the curse and blight of Christianity.”

When the Apostles were arrested and thrown into jail, “an angel of the Lord came during the night and opened the doors and brought them out” – not to go home and hide, not to warn other members of the church to be quiet and politically correct – but to “...go stand in the temple courts and tell the people the full message of this new life.” (Acts 5:20)

And that’s exactly what they did-immediately. I believe that many have forgotten or misunderstood the purpose and role of the Church. One Protestant denomination in Canada has decided to be politically correct and, at their general council meeting, proposed to “reject and repudiate all mission and proselytism seeking to convert Jews to Christianity.” 

# Strange Combination!

by Dwight Hall

**Could two explosives be combined in such a way that they would make a universally accepted fire extinguisher safe enough for even a child to use?**

**Y**es. God did it. He took two volatile gases and made water.

Think of it. Fire will die without a supply of oxygen. Yet 33 percent of water is oxygen. And the basic element in one of the most dreaded bombs known to man is hydrogen. Who changed the nature of these elements? God did. Amazing!

It is also hard to imagine that two poisons could be put together in such a way that a person could taste them without dying. But God has done exactly that.

By itself, the hyperactive chemical sodium is harmful to the body. Chlorine, which is a pungent, stifling gas, is used in chemical warfare. Yet the wise Creator stirred these two elements together and gave us salt. When we use this perfect combination moderately, it is a delightful, helpful substance – a small measure of it is even necessary to maintain our health.

In like manner God can take our vile and volatile natures, turn them completely around and make us spotless, helpful and harmonious.

Over the years God has mended a multitude of broken hearts and shattered marriages! People with sharp tongues have become peace-makers and people

continued on pg. 6

