

# VITAL SIGNS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

A study on Acts 2:40-47

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# THE EARLY CHURCH – 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

- ▶ Members DEVOTED themselves to:
  - ▶ The apostle's teachings
  - ▶ The Fellowship
  - ▶ The Breaking of bread
  - ▶ Prayer

# CHARACTER OF THE EARLY CHURCH

- ▶ SELF FINANCED COMMUNITY
- ▶ POTLUCK
- ▶ FAVORING one another
- ▶ DIVERSITY
- ▶ GROWING

# HEALTHY CHURCH IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

- ▶ MINISTRY
  - ▶ LOVE
  - ▶ SPIRITUALITY
  - ▶ COMMUNITY
  - ▶ LEADERSHIP
- 

# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY HEALTHY CHURCH CHARACTERS

- ▶ Transforming lives
- ▶ Growing individuals spiritually in a growing community
- ▶ Inspiring the heads, hearts and hands
- ▶ Increasing in quality leading to quantity

# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY HEALTHY CHURCH CHARACTERS

- ▶ Embracing CHANGE
- ▶ Remaining RELEVANT
- ▶ Showing FRUITS of the SPIRIT

# NATURAL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ **Main Objective:** *An emphasis on developing healthy churches utilizing the “All by itself principle,” encouraging Creativity, Authenticity, Diversity, Rediscovering Biblical concepts relating to peoples’ everyday lives.*

# CHRISTIAN A. SCHWARZ

- ▶ Founder and developer of the Natural Church Development
- ▶ Scientific surveyed churches and helped 70,000 successful growing churches in the process



# 8 QUALITIES CHARACTERISTICS OF HEALTHY CHURCHES

- ▶ Empowering Leadership
- ▶ Gift-based Ministry
- ▶ Passionate Spirituality (Radical balance)
- ▶ Effective Structure
- ▶ Inspiring Worship Service
- ▶ Holistic Small Groups

# 8 QUALITIES CHARACTERISTICS OF HEALTHY CHURCHES

- ▶ Need-oriented Evangelism
- ▶ Loving Relationships

# SIX GROWTH FORCES BEHIND THE 8 QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS

- ▶ Interdependence
  - ▶ Multiplication
  - ▶ Energy Transformation
  - ▶ Sustainability
  - ▶ Symbiosis
  - ▶ Fruitfulness
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# ELLEN G. WHITE ON GROWING HEALTHY CHURCHES

- ▶ “A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work... But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing.” *Selected Messages 1:121*

# ELLEN G. WHITE ON GROWING HEALTHY CHURCHES

- ▶ “A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. While the people are so destitute of God's Holy Spirit, they cannot appreciate the preaching of the Word, but when the Spirit's power touches their hearts, then the discourses given will not be without effect.”  
*Selected Messages 1:121*

## ZECHARIAH 4:6

► “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord Almighty.”

# PRAYER AND FAITH

- ▶ “Prayer and faith will do what no power upon earth can accomplish. We need not be so anxious and troubled. The human agent cannot go everywhere, and do everything that needs to be done... Earnest prayer and faith will do for us what our own devising cannot do. *EGW – Manuscript Releases – 8:2 | 8*

# #1 EXPECTATION IN CHURCH

▶ “The number one expectation people have of the church today is to feel the presence of God.”

- *George Barna*



# THREE LITMUS TEST OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

- ▶ Spiritual condition of individual members
- ▶ How members relate to each other within their faith community
- ▶ How the congregation relates to the world beyond its doors to those who are not believers.

# WANTED: TRUE GODLINESS

- ▶ “A healthy church is composed of healthy members, of men and women who have a personal experience in true godliness.”

*EGWhite – Mind, Character and Personality, Vol2 p710*

# SUGGESTIONS FOR A HEALTHY SPIRITUAL LIFE

- ▶ Be a Serious Christian
- ▶ Move Past Defeat
- ▶ Take Responsibility

ACTS 2:40-47

▶ People DEVOTED  
themselves... DAILY

## 2 TIMOTHY 1:8-12

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given

## 2 TIMOTHY 1:8-12

To us un Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

## 2 TIMOTHY 1:8-12

For this reason I also suffer these things;  
*nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know  
whom I have believed and am persuaded  
that He is able to keep what I have  
committed to Him until that Day.*