

## Sunday Service Sermons

**18 April 2021**

Quiet Growth

What kind of growth is quiet?

What kind of growth is not quiet?

We, as "People of God" should be about growth.

As individuals, as Christians, as a family, and as a church.

I am going to share some ideas about church growth today that might help us be more comfortable about the subject.

I hope it will!

Are we a dying church?

If so, what do we do about that fact?

Just accept it and die or should we be doing something to prevent our dying?

The first question we must answer is: Do you believe that God can enable this church to grow?

Yes there are churches that are doomed to stop operation. Do we have to be one of them?

God wants His churches to be viable, active and inviting others to join in the new life.

God gives the increase.

The church is growing in numbers and strength in many places in the world.

Today I will invite us to share in the thrill of seeing God adding to the church daily those who are being saved.

Just like in the days of the Acts of the Apostles.

As God gave quiet growth to the first century churches, and as he continues to bless his church with growth all over the world, so he desires to give growth in our church also.

The Lord of the harvest invites us to actively participate with him in this quiet growth.

Quiet growth-God gave in the first century.

Jesus spoke of the kingdom of heaven as a tiny seed slowly, quietly, miraculously growing.

Luke tells us that, "The number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly" *Acts 6:7*.

"The word of God grew and multiplied" *Acts 12:24*

And one day standing before the throne, we will see a great multitude that no one can number.

*Rev. 7:9*

Jesus used harvest language in his teaching.

"See how the fields are already white for harvest" *John 4:35*.

This harvest will produce a multinational Christian fellowship.

The people of God may be Samaritan, Greek, Roman, Jew, or Gentile, but they will be sealed in the one body by the gift of the same Spirit *Acts 11:15-17*

Luke's recording of about three thousand souls converted at Pentecost points to the quiet growth and grand harvest.

Listen to the continuing record of the quiet growth that God gave in the first-century churches:

"More than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women: *Acts 5:14*.

In Samaria "the multitudes with one accord gave heed" *Acts 8:6*

"All the residents of Lydda and Sharon . . . Turned to the Lord" *Acts 9:35*

In Antioch "A large company was added to the Lord" *Acts 11:24*

So there was quiet growth given by God in the first century.

Quiet growth--God continues it today.

The same Savior and the same Holy Spirit make the church grow today.

God did not die; nor does he sleep.

His power is making things happen all around the world today.

One missionary from Kenya talks about quiet growth, We have grown from six to sixty churches in seven years. We believe that the soundest way to bring people to Christ and toward spiritual maturity is to start many, many small churches as rapidly as possible. We have found that there are five necessary steps in starting a church.

First: The prayerful probe of needy areas and the tracing of the distribution of people.

Combining New Testament distribution with visitation.

Second: The teaching of church extension principles to pastors and lay leaders.

We stress the Holy Spirit bringing the harvest.

Third: the setting of reachable but measurable goals and sub-goals.

For example, every believer seeking to win one person to Christ every month, and every church starting a new church every year.

Fourth: providing limited but adequate funds.

We help each church to some small degree with simple building.

Fifth: we implant the conviction that small is beautiful.

Christ shook the world with eleven faithful men.

Among one tribe on the coast of Africa more than four thousand converts were won to Christ and over one hundred new churches started in less than two years.

Five teams, each composed of one elder and one seminary student, began visiting villages.

When the team entered the village, they would find a family willing to let them teach.

They would then teach adults the fundamentals of the faith for five days.

At the end of the week, an invitation would be given to accept Christ.

Those responding were baptized and formed into a congregation.

Then each team moved on to the next village.

Two more teams were added.

Finally. Phase two began, each village received follow-up work.

The next phase was a mobile Bible school originally conducted by teachers from the seminary.

In all this we see God giving quiet growth.

Yes, churches can grow, and churches are growing as millions turn to Christ, thousands of churches expand, and other new thousands of churches are planted.

God continues silent growth today.

Quiet growth--God invites us to participate in this growth.

God can do some amazing things with one congregation, or even with one person.

One unlikely person who was invited by the Lord to participate in quiet growth was Bruno Frigoli.

Bruno had been a bodyguard to Mussolini, and after years of hiding, he was born again as a new man full of love.

Bruno became an ardent Bible student totally committed to Christ.

The Lord invited Bruno to participate in his plan of quiet growth among the Aymara people of Bolivia.

What can God do with one person?

When Bruno began his ministry among the Aymaras in 1968, there were only 20 churches of his denomination in Brazil.

At the end of 1972 there were 104 churches.

At the end of 1974 there were 300 churches.

By 1980 there were more than 600 churches.

The Bolivian revival became a South American revival, reaching into nineteen South American nations.

God's quiet growth includes personal growth in the fruit of the Spirit.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" *Gal. 5:22-23*

Growth in Christian graces is a privilege and a duty of God's children.

The Lord of the harvest also invites us to take part in growth by personally reaching out to the world.

To your life and to the life of our church, let us apply thoroughly these principles of quiet growth.

1. Quiet growth requires spiritually dynamic leaders.

2. Quiet growth requires serious prayer by individuals and groups.

3. Quiet growth requires home Bible studies with non-Christians.

4. Quiet growth includes house-to-house evangelistic visitation.

Growth is God's alone to give.

We cannot impart life to any plant.

But you and I must be obedient to God by sowing the seed.

Watering the plants, and cultivation of the field.

We must do this in such a careful manner that growth of the church of Jesus Christ will result.