I Want the Church to Grow–But Do I Want Any More People? #5

Introduction:

1. How can I deal with the struggles between what I want to do and what I do?

For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice (Romans 7:19).

1. I WANT THE CHURCH TO GROW BECAUSE I WANT TO SEE PEOPLE SAVED–WHICH WILL CAUSE THE CHURCH TO GROW.
   1. The alternative is horrible.
      1. Shame and everlasting contempt.

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,

Some to everlasting life,

Some to shame and everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2).

* + 1. Outer darkness.

“ ‘And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth’ ” (Matthew 25:30).

* + 1. Everlasting punishment.

“And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matthew 25:46).

* + 1. Condemnation.

“Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (John 5:28, 29).

* 1. The opposite of this is:
     1. Everlasting life. Daniel 12:2
     2. Joy.

“His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord’” (Matthew 25:21).

* + 1. Eternal life. Matthew 25:46
    2. Resurrection of life. John 5:28,29
  1. This process indicates a change of place, relationship.

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:13, 14).

* 1. When this happens, we are added to the church–the church grows.

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:36-41, 47).

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13).

1. **BUT**–I MAY NOT WANT THOSE WHO ARE NOT IMMEDIATELY RECEPTIVE TO THE MESSAGE OF JESUS.
   1. James and John failed to realize Jesus’ mission. Luke 9:51-56
      1. It is true that those who reject Jesus will be condemned.

“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:18, 19).

* + 1. But Jesus’ mission was not one of condemnation, but of salvation.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:16, 17).

* 1. The trouble with God is is that He is too good.
     1. Jonah. Jonah 3:10-4:11
     2. Eleventh hour workers. Matthew 20:1-16
     3. Barren fig tree.

He also spoke this parable: “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, ‘Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?’ But he answered and said to him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. ‘And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down’ ” (Luke 13:6-9).

* + 1. Woman taken in adultery. John 8:3-11
    2. John Mark.

Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing.” Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark. But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus; but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God (Acts 15:36-40).

Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry (2 Timothy 4:11).

* 1. Fire from heaven is a quick solution to the problem of unresponsive people but we probably burn up many good people.
  2. Patience is the ability to put up with people you’d like to put down.

Conclusion:

1. I want to the church to grow, but do I want any more people?
   1. How many?
   2. What kind?
   3. Do I want more people in the church if God will check with me before He lets them in?
2. What does God want?
   1. All who are burdened with sin.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

* 1. All who want to be saved.

And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely (Revelation 22:17).

1. How will I cooperate with Him?
2. What is your response to God’s call?
   1. Are you weary?
   2. Do you have the desire?
   3. Will you come?