

# Cultivating A Multiplying Church

Cell Church Training



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# I Introduction

## Preface

If there was one thing I wish I had learned in my first few years in pastoral ministry, it would have been the concept of “Cell Church”.

Cell church makes sense to me because as a model of church, it picks up all the church growth principles that most of us have known for a long time and places them in a framework that you don't have to be a rocket scientist to implement.

Cell church is not necessarily a radical form of church organisation but rather an attempt to corporately function in a way that produces nurture for its members and its priority is for seeking the lost. The Cell Church model for church is based around the Pauline concept that we are all members of Christ's body. The cells are the foundational structure of the body and thus the care of them is the body's utmost priority. It is this priority that distinguishes this model of church from churches that have small group ministry.

The Cell model is ideal for new church plants and for open progressive churches. The Cell model is not a program but a lifestyle that demands discipleship in members. Hence to transition an established church to a cell base requires significant time and should not be attempted unless strong commitment exists in leadership.

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# Some Facts About Small Groups

The research has been clear for a number of years that cell or group based churches are healthier and faster growing than traditional forms of church.

“...of the three aspects included in the overall level of involvement - church services, small groups, and hours of involvement - the most strongly related to vitality is the involvement of attenders in small groups.”

Shaping a Future p 47 National Church Life Survey

“Congregations with high levels of attenders comfortable about discussing their faith or inviting others to church tend to have higher levels of involvement in nurture activities, particularly small groups.”

Shaping A Future p 55 National Church Life Survey

“If we were to identify any one principle as the most important, then without a doubt it would be the multiplication of small groups.”

Christian Schwarz Natural Church Development p32

"A study comparing the NCD scores of cell churches and non-cell churches showed that cell churches overall scored significantly higher in all areas than non-cell churches. Combined cell churches' scores averaged 59 while

combined non-cell churches' scores averaged 45. Not surprisingly, Inspiring Worship showed the smallest difference (8 points higher for cell churches) and Holistic Small Groups showed the most difference (25 points higher for cell churches). Significantly, even churches that say they would focus on small groups over large group worship still had better scores for large group worship. This finding indicates that cells don't detract from corporate worship-- they add to it. Additionally, the rate of church planting-- in spite of the fact that the cell church movement has seemed to focus on getting larger rather than on planting more churches-- would seem to indicate that multiplication is in fact in the genetic code. Cell churches averaged 2.5 churches planted compared to 1.9 churches planted for non-cell churches. Finally, the study showed that cell churches demonstrated an average growth rate almost double that of non-cell churches.

*Cell Churches and NCD survey*  
CoachNet October 2002



# Definition of Group

An (effective) group is two or more individuals in face-to-face interaction, each aware of his or her membership in the group, each aware of the others who belong to the group, and each aware of the positive interdependence as they strive to achieve a mutual goal.

## What is the reason we come together for church?

### Encouragement:

“Therefore encourage each other...” 1 Thess 4:18

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up just as in fact you are doing.” 1 Thess 5:11

### Personal Growth:

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed...” James 5:16

“And let us consider how we can spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” Hebrews 10:24

### Relationship Priority:

“No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” 1 John 4:12

## Ellen White on Edification

“...the mere hearing of sermons Sabbath after Sabbath, the reading of the Bible

through and through, or the explanation of it verse by verse, will not benefit us or those who hear us, unless we bring the truths of the Bible

into our individual experience.” Ministry of Healing 514



“What is the object of assembling together? We meet together to edify one another by a mutual interchange of thoughts and feelings, thus making one another acquainted with our aspirations, our hopes, and gathering strength and light and courage from one another...” Review and Herald May 30 1871

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# Why Groups?

## Advantages of Groups

- Small groups:
- aren't limited by facilities.
- are geographically expandable.
- promote vital, interpersonal relationships.
- encourages lay ministry.
- aren't limited by finances.
- decentralized pastoral care.
- facilitates leadership training.
- promote the assimilation process.

## Groups Meet the Needs of the Church

### 1. Meets the two great needs of the church - Support & Mission

The famous Adventist missionologist Goodfried Osterwall research shows that "care" and community are some of the most significant factors for growth. "Conversely, increased apostasy rates appear to have a direct correlation to the lack of care and concern on the part of the people of God.

Other studies also show that the more people feel deeply cared for by the community of faith, the more active will be their participation. Small groups care for people and encourage people to become involved in the mission of the church.

### 2. Are a Stepping Stone for unchurched

Most Australians are not going to feel comfortable in visiting your church. The group not only help them establish their faith

but supports them in their transition to church attendance.

### 3. Small groups develop disciples

One of the reasons Christians gather in small groups is to grow as disciples. A primary way that this happens is through Bible study.

In Luke 6:46-49 Jesus tells about two kinds of builders - to emphasize what happens to us when we hear his word and obey, and when we ignore his word. The wise person hears God's word and put it into practice.

Knowing the Bible does not make a disciples. It is the application of God's word into our lives that makes us his disciples. In studying the word with others our understanding is enhanced and our resolve to act is strengthened.

#### As it is Today

Generally speaking SDA's have not made small group ministry a priority. And hence our fellowship, prayer, study and support has tended to be restricted to Sabbath. The National Church Life survey showed that small sharing groups or fellowships appear to be linked to attender's perceptions of significant growth in faith and high levels of involvement in outreach.

In the totals NCLS sample, 40% indicated involvement in small, sharing, prayer or Bible study groups. The percentage was much smaller in the SDACA sample where only 23% reported similar involvement.

#### Reasons why?

1. SDA\*s on the average are very busy people. Two busy with acquiring things and achieving in life. We are more highly educated than other church denominations, we have a higher per capita income than most others. We have accepted the cultural norm - and hence find it difficult to commit to a regular mid week ministry. LAODICEAN

2. SDA\*s on average are already highly involved on Sabbath in church life. SDA\*s spend more time than any other church groups in church activity.

3. The problem is that churches are not operating according to the principles rooted in the presence of God. The result is:

- Dead orthodoxy
- Lifeless institutionalisms
- loveless legalism
- rigid formalism.

## The Early Church and Groups

“It is hard for us to visualize what early Christianity was like. Certainly it was very different from the Christianity known to us today. There were no fine buildings. There was no hierarchy; there were no theological seminaries; there were no Christian colleges; there were no Sabbath Schools; there were no choirs.

Only small groups of believers . . . small fellowships.

In the beginning there wasn't even a New Testament. The New Testament itself was not so much a cause of these fellowships as a result of them. Thus the first books of the New Testament were the letters written to the little fellowships partly because of their difficulties, dangers, and temptations.

All that they had was the fellowship; nothing else; no standing; no prestige; no honor . . .

The early Christians were not people of standing, but they had a secret power among them, and the secret power resulted from the way in which they were members of one another.”

Elton Trueblood, *The Yoke of Christ*, p. 25

Characteristics of the early church (Acts 2:42-47):

1. Devoted to the teachings
2. Devoted to fellowship
3. Breaking of bread and to prayer.
4. Filled with the spirit
5. United
6. Had every thing in common - material
7. Gave to those in need
8. Meet every day in the temple
9. Meet in homes, ate together
10. Sincere, Glad, praising,
11. Enjoyed the favour of all the people
12. God added to their number.

They were highly devoted to fellowship with each other, to meeting together in on a regular basis in their homes. One cynic compares the modern Christian with the Pentecost one in this way:

And all those who had believed were apart and had nothing in common; and they began hoarding their possessions and property and neglecting anyone who might have need. And once a week the religious met for Sabbath morning worship plus Wednesday night Bible study. And all assembled with a divided mind, in their own churches on their own corners. And afterwards they all retreated to their houses in suburbia, to live the rest of the week apart from each other and in a life-style acceptable

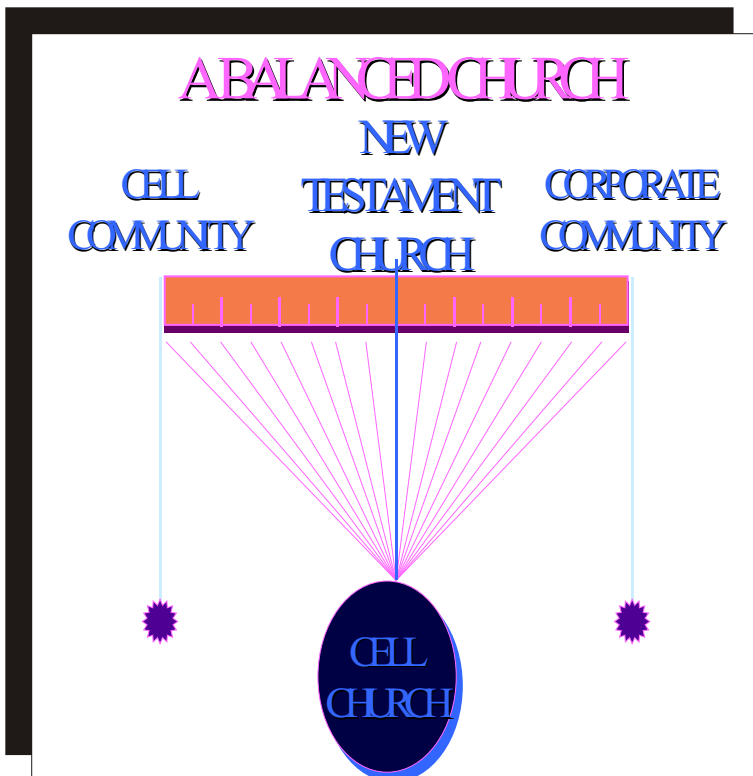
to their pagan neighbours. And they are  
a;one in sadness and insecurity,  
blaming Sod for their troubles. And  
they were laughed at by their  
neighbours. And God withheld from  
their midst any power or blessing and  
their number decreased day by day.

To give cell groups their rightful place in  
your church you will need to rethink some of  
the ways in which you currently operate as a  
church. It is important that your church  
begins to see small groups not as another  
program but the foundation upon which your  
church is built. You must avoid conducting  
activities that distract from the life of the  
groups.

# New Church Structure

For the last ten years or so the Adventist church in Australia and New Zealand has been grappling with the church's lack of

over the bones. "And as I prophesied, there was a noise and behold, a rattling; and the bones came together, bones to its bone. And I looked, and behold sinews were on them; and flesh grew, and covered them" (Ezekiel 37:7-8). All the parts became connected and then God told Ezekiel to prophesy again and "...breath came into them, and they came to life, and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army" (Ezekiel 37:10). The church of today has all the parts but there is a lack of connectedness and spiritual power.



The early church had a balance between the small home gathering of spiritual families and large corporate meetings.

A growing realisation for many is that our current way of doing church actually works against our ability to fulfil the mission of the church. Our local church structure hinders the gathering of the "parts" into the loving, faith sharing dynamic communities that God wants his body to be.

growth and member retention. Changes in worship styles, improved training of ministers and new outreach technologies have been implemented. However, with all the good initiatives, things generally are slow to improve. Some leaders have suggested it is too hard to change churches, that planting new ones is the church's only hope.

The problem with our current structure is that it is an edifice complex that is patterned after the temple model. We have confused the building the church meets in as the church itself instead of seeing the church as the people of God. When church buildings have been taken from us by oppressive regimes - like in Russia and China - and believers have been forced into homes, the church has thrived.

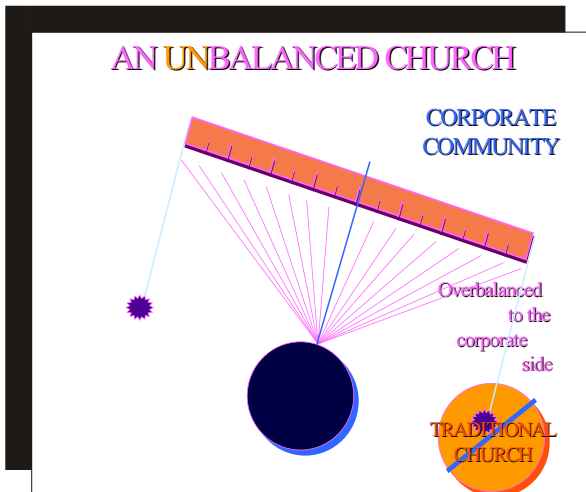
The message of Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is somewhat relevant for today. When Ezekiel looked over the valley he saw plenty of bones and parts - but they had no form. God instructed Ezekiel to prophesy

Church buildings should exist only as a convenient place for God's people to gather, they are not the place where true fellowship - "Koinonia" happens - that happens in the

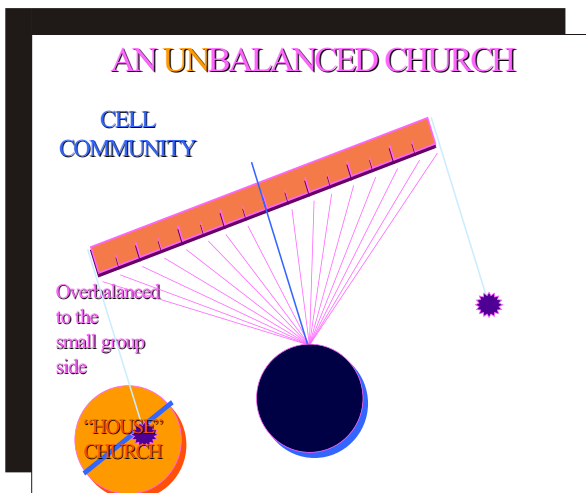


homes. This was the place where early Christians met to worship. The gathering of the early Christians at the temple was primarily for the purpose of large-scale public witness. House churches were not a strategy for growth or an additional church activity. The church in the house was the church!

It is not until we change our perceptions of church and our view of the way God expresses Himself in the world through the church that real kingdom growth will occur. The witness of Scripture is clear as to what the foundational structure of the church needs to be. The early church was a small group movement. The church of Pentecost was home based, they met in their homes daily (Acts 2:42-47).



By 312 AD Constantine had moved the church from regular home meetings and large group meetings to almost exclusively



conducting meetings in special buildings. Consequently the church became an audience. Constantine's cathedral paradigm has lasted for seventeen centuries. It was characterised by:

- people go to a church building (cathedral)
- on a special day of the week (Sunday)
- and someone (a priest)
- does something to them (teaching, preaching, etc.)
- or for them (ritual)
- for a price (offering, tithes)

By building cathedrals and placing rituals and leadership with those buildings, Constantine changed the very nature and life of the church as originally designed by Christ. The church's ability to nurture new members, to edify the body, to train necessary leaders and to deliver the gospel to the world was neutralised.

The Reformation was a revolt against papal authority but not against the Roman concept of the church as an institution. Martin Luther, the leader of the Reformation, intended to reform church structure along with church theology. But, unfortunately he hesitated in doing so because of political considerations and the fear of losing the movement to the Anabaptists. (See statement of Luther.)

Today eighty percent of church attenders are consumers, not producers. They are consumers because the traditional church has no viable context in which to make them producers, or use them in a productive way. The church is held hostage in its attempts to reach the lost by the consumer majority. The edifice structure of church allows the immature members to dictate the ministry focus of the church.

What is the paradigm shift required to break this cycle of consumerism? Beckham in his excellent book *The Second Reformation* suggest two things:

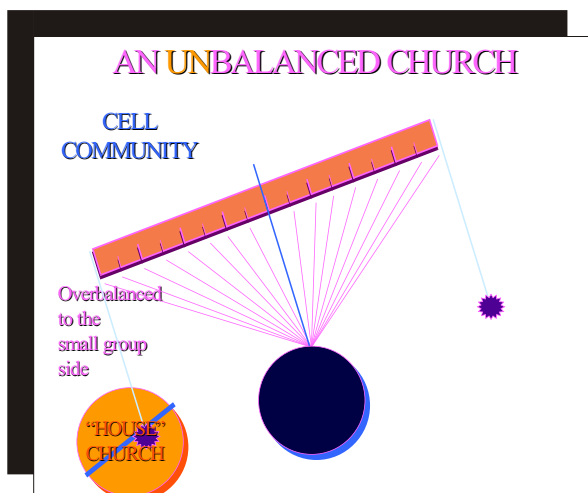
- Get the consumers off the backs of the 20% of the church members who are producing Christians so they can penetrate the world with the gospel.
- Change “consumer Christians” into “producing Christians” so they are part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

Now before we are too harsh with the “consumer Christian” let’s remember that they are to some degree a product of the system. It is within the context of the home/cell group that the “consumer Christian” is challenged to become a “producing Christian.”

The early Adventist church was a home based movement. Ellen White made this definitive statement about the importance of small groups:

“The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to us by the One who cannot err... let them keep their bond of union unbroken, pressing together in love and unity, encouraging one another to advance, and gain courage and strength from the assistance of the others” (7T pp. 21-22).

Small groups are not simply a program or a technique to grow the church but an emphasis in building Biblical Christian community that



leads to a powerful witness to Jesus in the neighbourhood area.

For a number of years some pastors, conference department directors and administrators have attempted to give small groups a higher profile in the Adventist church. Since beginning the Adventist Small Group Network back in 1995, we have identified many serious and some successful attempts by churches to function as cell based churches. However, the majority of churches struggle to make it happen because they see small groups as another add-on program. They have not made the transition from an “edifice” structure church to a “cell” structured church.

It would seem to me that there are two options available to us who are committed to the vision of cell structured churches. The first is to transition our churches from their current structure to a cell structure. This will take between three to five years to achieve. This will only succeed if the leaders of the church can be convinced and involved in small group ministry prior to any corporate restructuring. Any attempt to restructure before leaders have captured the vision will meet with resistance and possible failure.

The second option, which is a very necessary one in some locations, is to start a new cell based church plant. This option has the advantage of a new culture (the cell structure) and discipling can be set in place much more easily. The disadvantage of new church plants is the cost and resistance from the parent church.

Whatever the option chosen, the body of Christ will be a much healthier organism when its cells are functioning in a united purpose. If we continue to focus our attention on only certain components of the body’s activity we will continue to have poor health in our churches. For small group ministry to succeed in extending the Kingdom of God, we need to take the next step and place them

where they belong as the foundational structure of the church.

## References

Beckham W.A., *The Second Reformation: Reshaping the Church for the 21st Century*, 1997 Touch Publications Houston Texas USA.  
Freestone I., *Houses Churches: Facilitating Community* Unpublished Manuscript, Raunch Neighbourhood Churches NSW Australia.  
Banks R. & J., *The Church Comes Home: A New Base for Community and Mission*, 1986 Albatross Books NSW Australia.

# Cell Church Versus Program Based Church

By John Reid

## What is a program based church?

I see a program based church as one which sets up various programs in response to perceived needs, or often just because “it’s the way things are done.” These include Sabbath School, Sabbath morning worship, informal evening services, music programs, children’s ministries, youth ministries, evangelism (visitation and door-to-door), mission oriented groups, service oriented groups, midweek Bible studies, prayer meetings, committees of various sorts... The list goes on and on.

None of these things are bad in and of themselves. The problem comes when:

their purpose for existing eventually becomes to maintain themselves. In a way, they come to be considered sacred, even if they show little fruit.

- they have little, if anything, to do with each other. There is no sense of overall vision.
- they compete with each other for the time, energy, and money of church members.
- a tiny minority of the church (rarely more than 15%, according to

Neighbour) is heavily involved, while the majority is happy just to “attend.” The majority serve as chair-warmers while the minority eventually gets burned out. (This is Christianity?)

- they enforce the notion that church life consists of activities, not relationships.

Each activity has an understood “script” which people follow. The result is that people think they are spending time together, but are actually quite insulated from each other.

What are the heartfelt needs of the people in your Sabbath School / choir / committee / Bible study? Do you know? Does anyone know?

You end up involved in so many church activities that you don’t have any time for non-Christians. Often, you really don’t know any well enough to call them your friends!

There is nothing wrong with programs; cell churches around the world have programs. But a deliberate effort must be made to shed the tendencies I describe above and guard against them. Programs must serve people, not the other way around.

A good barometer to judge the usefulness and attitude of a program is to ask, “Does this build up believers’ relationships with God, with each other, and with the unsaved, or does it get in the way?”

In the context of a cell church, it’s important to ask, “Does this program strengthen edification and evangelism in the cells, or hinder it?”

## **New Testament church Versus Traditional Program Based Church**

<b>NT was small group centered</b>	<b>PB are building centered</b>
<b>NT was a body based church driven by small group</b>	<b>PB church is program driven</b>
<b>Small groups were central</b>	<b>Small groups don't exist</b>
<b>Focus was small groups</b>	<b>Focus is Sabbath service</b>
<b>They were outward focus</b>	<b>Inward focus</b>
<b>Decentralized</b>	<b>Centralized</b>
<b>Many lay leaders</b>	<b>Mostly professional leaders</b>
<b>No clergy/laity division</b>	<b>Reinforces clergy/laity division</b>
<b>Many opportunities</b>	<b>Fewer opportunities</b>
<b>Many points of entry</b>	<b>One point of entry</b>
<b>Seeks to multiply itself</b>	<b>Sends out planters of new churches</b>

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# SDA's and Small Groups

In the total National Church Life Survey 1991 (NCLS) sample, 40% indicated involvement in small, sharing, prayer or Bible study groups. The percentage was much smaller in the SDACA sample where only 23% reported similar involvement.

## Why are SDA not as involved in group life?

1. SDA's on the average are very busy people.

Two busy:

- Pursuing a career.
- Earning a good income.

We have adopted the cultural values.

2. SDA's on average are already highly involved on Sabbath in church life.

SDA's spend more time than any other church group in church activity. NCLS

3. The problem is that many churches are not operating according to the principles of being rooted in the presence of God. The result is:

- Dead orthodoxy
- Lifeless institutionalisms
- loveless legalism
- rigid formalism.

## Characteristics of 21st Century Church

As we look at the New Testament church we see a number of key principles that should be part of the modern church.

- A greater dependency on prayer.
- The integration of disciple-making small groups that are the basic building blocks of the church.
- Pastoral leadership where pastors are allowed to lead and members are given the work of ministry.
- Obedience to fulfil in a productive way the mission of the church.
- Worship that is a result of living within a community of believers in a dynamic way.
- A structure that produces evangelism, pastoral care and leadership development.
- The ability for churches to multiply their ministries and themselves in new churches.

## Change of Values

- Less isolated from the world in which we live.
- More relevant to the needs of society.
- More compassionate in how we use people within the church.
- Reaching more people than just promoting programs.
- Less materialistic with huge debts.
- More redemptive and less political.
- Less influenced by the world that we want to influence.

## We need the following components:

- Structure : that involves more people in decisions, that allow ministry candidates to rise to their potential, and transfer ownership to the entire congregation

- Values : We need not only to say the right values but have them implemented in our lives.
- Context : We need a clear understands that God has committed himself to bring in the great harvest by using us. By living in this context we will be much more fruitful than we've been in the past.
- Relational skills : relational skills are absolutely essential - teamwork, ability to listen, ability to confront, ability to freely exchange ideas, etc
- Prayer : small group based strategy that are birthed in prayer and committed to the mission of the church.
- Holy spirit : We need to seek the wisdom and leadership of the Holy Spirit in building the church, through His gifts.

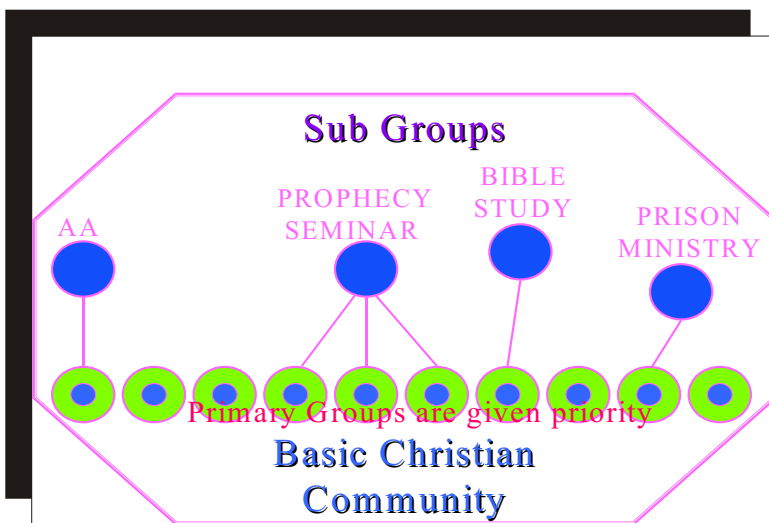
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# Cell Church Structure

## Primary Group Priority

Multiplying small groups is the most significant factor in high quality growing churches according to the latest research.

This fact warrants that multiplying small groups should be given the highest priority in the life of the church. They should be seen as the foundational structure of the church. They should be given the best support and be jealously protected. Everything in the church should be an extension of the churches group life and should flow from their combined strength.



There are two types of groups in a cell based church. The first, and of highest priority, is the primary group. This group is the foundational structure of the church. The second is the sub-group. These groups exist for special ministry and outreach. The sub-group's work is subservient to the primary.

Ideally all members of the congregation participate in a primary group. The primary

groups are the spiritual families of the church. They are like a mini church within the church. They include both young and old Christians.

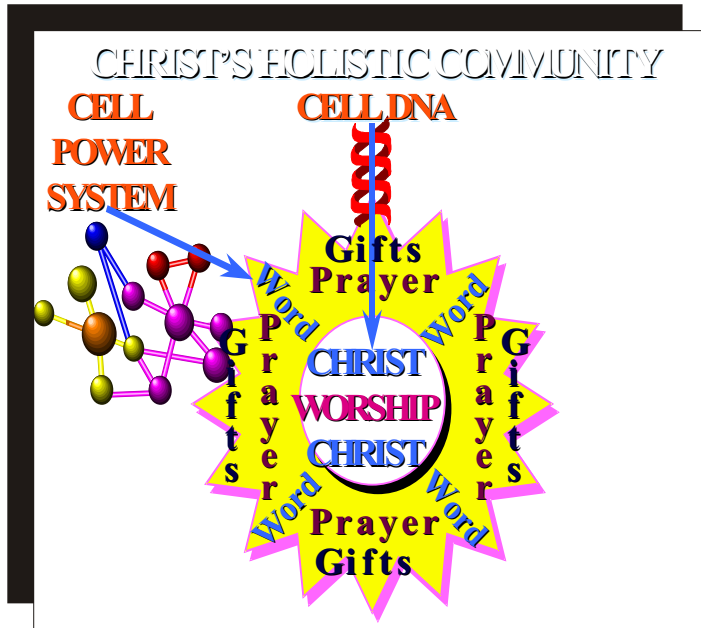
Each primary group possesses the following four components:

**Equipping:** Each group possess a function by which new believers can provide a sponsor for the new believers, who guides them through their journey of growth from infancy to adult hood. This includes a personal Bible study program with supplementary training from the church. The group provides a place where members can explore their talents in ministry. The primary group is the place where discipleship is facilitated.

**Accountability:** The primary group develops strong trusting relationships between members. This allows for a high level of personal accountability to be formed. This may be enhanced through a partner system. Each primary group is held accountable to the whole

through the leader's co-ordinator who meets on a regular basis with cell leaders.

**Leadership:** The primary group aim is to multiply itself. This requires training a new leader. At every level apprentice leaders are trained for future leadership. The primary group is the source of new leaders for the church.



**Evangelism:** Every primary cell is committed to enlarging the kingdom of God. This is done individually, as a group and in co-operation with other groups or the whole church. New believers are trained to sponsor (disciple) other new believers with 12 to 18 months.

The primary cell carries out the basic functions of the church:

- Evangelism
- Edification
- Discipleship
- Fellowship
- Bible study
- Accountability
- Ministry

Healthy cells means a healthy church.

Christ is the DNA of the primary cell. He sets its values and mission. We experience Christ's presence as we meet together. We enjoy a taste of the loving relationship that exists within the God-head.

The power of primary group life is found within the prayer of member's, the exercising of each persons spiritual gifts and the application of scripture to members lives.

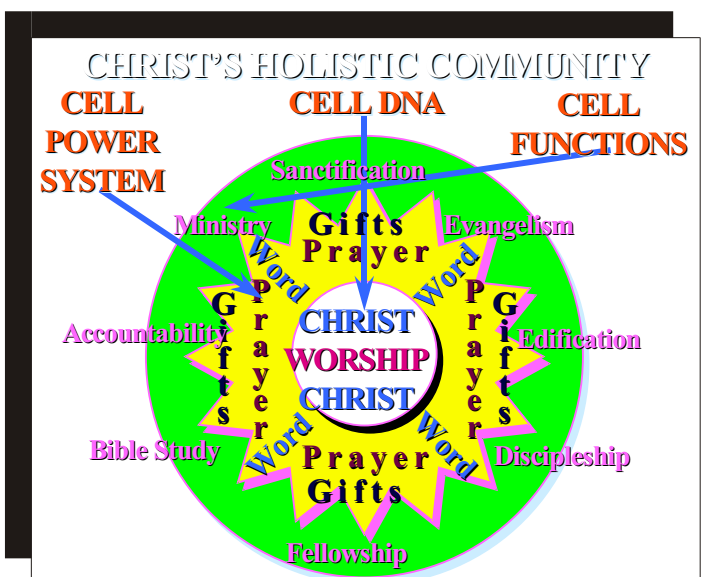
Holistic primary cells grow! They not only grow the individual members but also the number of participants in the group. It is for this reason that they are given priority in the church.

Sub-groups are made up from members of one or more primary groups. These are specialised outreach groups or ministry groups. The personnel are usually mature Christians. The size varies, but are often small. They meet separately from the primary group for specific tasks.

The outreach sub-groups provide a contact point for unchurched people.

Its focus is sharing time with unbelievers in a non-threatening way. The sub-groups may minister to specific human needs like alcoholism, parenting, divorce recovery, food etc.

Some ministries of the church can be cared for by sub-groups working in conjunction with primary groups. For example worship hosting could be rotated around the group with some co-ordination from a sub-group. The challenge is knowing what can be successfully handled by primary groups and what needs to be handled by a sub-group.

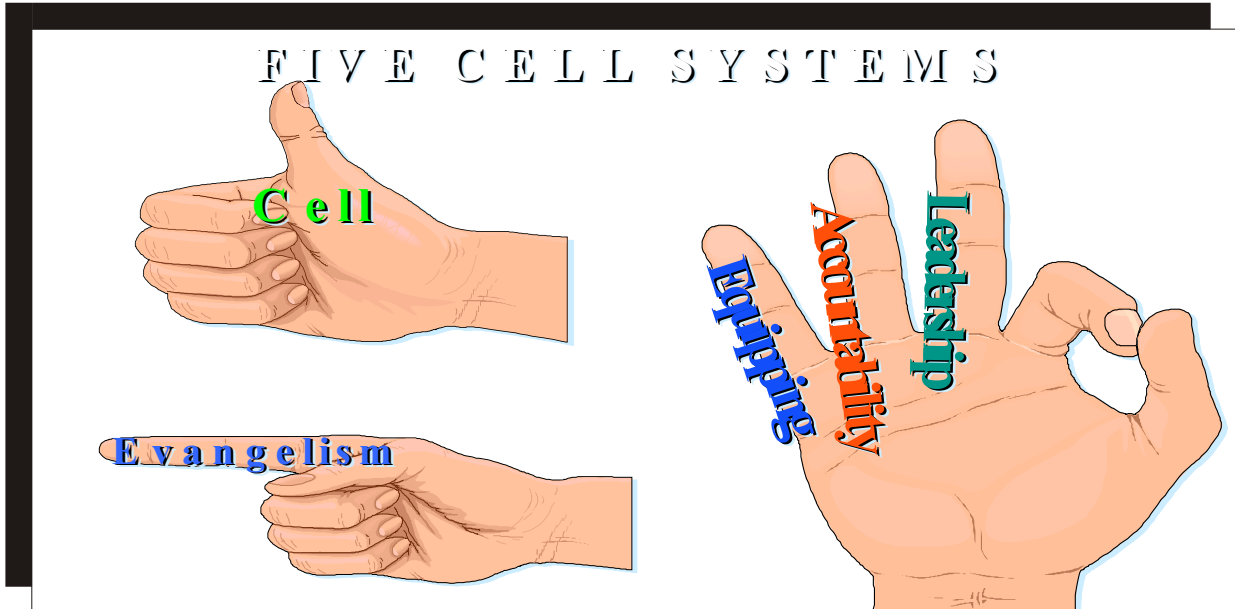




Unfortunately, many churches allow the sub-groups to dominate the life of the church. When this occurs primary group life is reduced resulting in an unhealthy church. The weaker the primary cell life the less connected is the body to Christ, the weaker the power of its members and poorer the ministry function of the church.

When the program of the church is more important than the people, you know that you have allowed the sub-groups to dominate. When the primary groups are strong your church sub-group ministries will be highly effective.

# Cell Functions



Cell church is not necessarily a radical form of church organisation but rather an attempt to corporately function in a way that produces nurture for its members and its priority is for seeking the lost.

The hand is a helpful illustration of the various functions need in each of the Cells that make up a Cell church. All the fingers work in relationship to the **thumb**. All systems in a cell relate out from and back to the cell.

The **smallest** finger represents the weakest in the cell who must be prepared.

The **second** finger is the ring finger which suggests responsibility. The cell has a system of support to and for each other.

The **middle** finger is the tallest. This represents the biggest people in the cell . .

.the leaders/Fathers. These must be trained to oversee the cell.

The “**pointer**” is the finger that picks things up and directs. This is the evangelism direction of the cell.

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# **S**mall Group Principles

- 1. Follow a 12 to 15 people formula**
- 2. A group must be more than a navel gazing society**
- 3. A group should naturally grow and intentionally multiply**
- 4. Groups should multiply in a 6 -12 month growth cycle**
- 5. Each group has a vision inside the parameters of the larger vision.**
- 6. Groups should be supervised and guided on a ration of 1 to 5**
- 7. An intern should be assigned to every role of leadership**
- 8. Meet weekly**
- 9. Move house to house, at least quarterly**
- 10. Break into sub groups during the cell meeting as the group increases**
- 11. Delegate jobs.**

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# C Cell Meeting

## THE CELL MEETING AGENDA

FOCUS	ORDER	ACTIVITY	RELATION
CHRIST	WELCOME	<i>Entrance into Fellowship</i>	You to Me
CHRIST'S PRESENCE	WORSHIP	<i>Exaltation in His Presence</i>	Us to God
CHRIST'S POWER	WORD	<i>Edification in the Word</i>	God to Us
CHRIST'S PURPOSE	WITNESS	<i>Evangelism Vision &amp; Prayer</i>	God thru Us

The above diagram outlines the different components of a cell meeting.

**Welcome:** The welcome is a time of catch up with each other. During this 15-30 minutes, group members disclose information about themselves, what's happened since they last met.

**Worship:** The worship phase is a time for recognising God in our meeting. A time to praise him through song and prayer.

**Word:** The largest part of the meeting is given to the study of the Word. The study time not only looks at what God is saying to

us through His Word but a time to apply it to peoples lives.

**Witness:** The final phase is one of discussion and prayer regarding our witness. It is this period that commands significant prayer for living out the implications of what God has said to us in His Word.

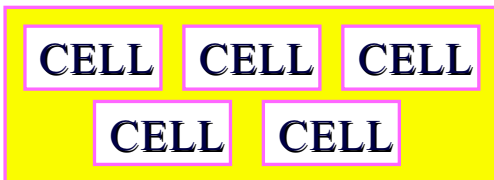
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# Ladership

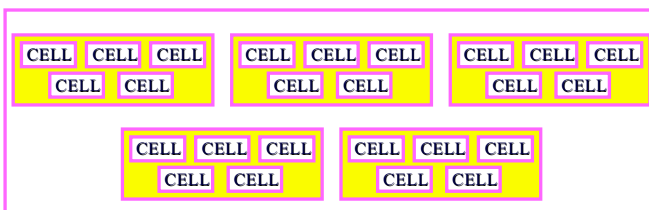
## Managing a Cell Church



THE BASIC BUILDING BLOCK IS A CELL GROUP. It has one Cell Leader and one Intern.



For every FIVE CELLS, you have one ZONE SUPERVISOR and one Intern.



For every TWENTY FIVE CELLS, you have one ZONE Coordinator and one intern.

A TEAM OF COORDINATING LEADERS oversee the “whole church” which may consist of several congregations.

## Cell Church Structure

By John Reid

In a cell church, the cell groups are not totally independent entities left to their own, but are overseen in a careful structure to ensure that every person receives pastoral care and equipping.

I am a Small Group Leader with people in my group. As a Small Group Leader, I also belong in a group of Small Group Leaders led by a Small Group Coordinator.

This group, as well as the Small Groups we lead, is what we call a Subzone. My

coordinator is, in turn, in a group led by a Zone Pastor. (The Zone Pastor is the first level of leadership that is a full-time position.) And my Zone Pastor is in a group with the other pastors, led by the Senior Pastor.

Small Group meetings are held every week; Subzone meetings are held every other week. The job of each level of leadership is to nurture the people in their immediate group and to oversee the small groups. The Coordinators are expected to spend time during the week with their Small Group Leaders, and to go to one Small Group meeting a week. The Zone Pastors are expected to spend time during the week

with their Coordinators, and to go to a couple of Subzone or Small Group meetings a week. There is also a quarterly meeting where the whole Leadership Team (Small Group Leaders, Small Group Coordinators, and pastors) gathers to re-focus the vision, share testimonies, get training, form strategies, and pray.

Also, every week I fill out a Small Group report. This report includes:

- who was at the meeting.
- what contact I had during the week with each member.
- any significant outreach to non-Christians.
- evaluation of the Small Group meeting. comments, questions, testimonies, and problems.

The form is a carbonless triplicate form, with one copy going to my Coordinator one for my Zone Pastor, and I keep one for myself. The Coordinators and Zone Pastors also fill out similar weekly reports about their Sub-Zones and Zones.

For the most part, I am given guidance on leadership by my leaders, trusted to do my best, and regularly report how things are going. But there have been times when my wife & I have encountered problems which overwhelmed us. At such times, we call our Small Group Coordinator, day or night, and ask for help. It is a tremendous relief to know that help (in prayer, counsel, just having someone to unload on, and intervention if need be) is always there. And if my Coordinator doesn't know what to do, we go to our Zone Pastor.

Some may criticise this kind of church setup for leading to abuses of authority and heavy-handed, cult-like control. This is where it is crucial to see that structure alone is not enough; we must also adopt Jesus' teachings on leadership (Mark 10:42-45). As soon as you think of this kind of church setup as a hierarchy or pyramid, then it doesn't work

because those two words have strong connotations of "control." As our Senior Pastor puts it, it's not like a normal hierarchy because it's upside-down: the Small Group members are the ones we are trying to serve and empower for ministry, and succeeding levels of leadership demand more service, with the Senior Pastor as the servant of all. This notion of leadership as servanthood is vital for cell churches.

Changing structure is easily accomplished; we have spent a year focusing on the more fundamental problem of changing our values and lifestyles. The cell church paradigm is successful insofar as it capitalises on the importance of interpersonal relationships. You can't just say, "Here, let's organise ourselves in such-and-such a way," and expect it to work. It requires a change of values, shedding our religiosity, and opening our lives and homes to each other and to the lost.

Values drive structures, not the other way around. Simply adopting a certain structure cannot make a church into a Cell Church. We need God to infuse our hearts with a passion for himself, for his Church, and for the lost — a passion that expresses itself in close relationships, giving, loving, serving.

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# Apprentice Leaders

## Lifting the Lids

by David Limiero

As I've interacted with small group leaders from my own congregation and with small groups pastors all over the country, I've found that most of us involved in small group ministry share the same major challenges. One of those challenges is developing enough new small group leaders. We cannot start new groups without new leaders, so this often puts a lid on our ability to continue to reach out and include new people in our groups.

Developing new leaders is not only an important goal for small group ministry. It is also at the centre of Jesus' command to make disciples (Matt. 28:18-20), and Paul's admonition to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."

Jesus himself used a small group to mentor his twelve disciples into effective leaders.

### Lifting the L.I.D.S. on Leadership

The question for most leaders is not "Should I develop an apprentice leader?" but "How do I develop an apprentice leader?" Because a lack of apprentice leaders can put a "lid" on the growth of your group and church, I have developed a simple acrostic based on the word "lids" to help small group leaders develop apprentices:

- Step 1: LOOK for rising leaders.

- Step 2: INVITE apprentice to share leadership tasks.
- Step 3: DISCIPLE apprentice until they can replace you.
- Step 4: SEND new leader into ministry.

This four-step process is easy to remember and provides an intentional way of recognising, developing, and empowering rising leaders God has already placed in your group.

### LOOK for Rising Leaders

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Matthew 9:37-38

Consultant Carl George makes an important distinction between the two types of leaders you are looking for as you build your group's leadership team: assistants and apprentices. Each is important to the health of your small group.

1. Assistant Leaders assist the leader in his/her facilitation of the group. Host/Hostesses and Social co-ordinators fall into this first category.
2. Apprentice leaders replace the leader. They are leaders-in-training who will go on to lead their own group or take over leadership of the current group.

In order to look for a rising leader, you have to know what they look like. Rising leaders share three characteristics:

- Faithfulness: Do they take assignments seriously? The issue of faithfulness goes beyond a person's belief in Jesus. It is an issue of stewardship: When you invite someone to take on an assignment (step two), are they faithful to complete it?
- Availability: How many hats are they wearing? At my church we teach the "2 1/2 Hats" rule. We encourage people not to overextend themselves, but to limit their ministry involvement to serving as a leader in only one ministry, a regular participant in another, and on an infrequent or project basis in a third. Ideally, leading a small group should be someone's only leadership role.
- Relationship: Could you be part of a group without this person? While you might be in the same group with your assistant leaders for some time, you and your apprentice should be planning for the day when you lead separate groups.

Your spouse or your best friend might be good assistants, but they should not be your apprentices.

As you look for rising leaders, remember to pray! Jesus asks us to pray specifically for more workers for the harvest. Look for the key characteristics of rising leaders and bring these people before God in prayer. After you have identified some rising leaders, invite them to share your leadership tasks.

#### INVITE Apprentice to Share Leadership Tasks

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much." Luke 16:10

The second step in the leadership development process is inviting rising leaders to take on leadership tasks in bite-sized pieces. In order to do this effectively, you

need to have a clear understanding of your responsibilities as a small group leader.

Carl George suggests that small group leadership tasks occur in two time frames:

1. At every meeting (he calls this "minute one to minute sixty" representing the 60 to 90 minute group meeting).
2. Between every meeting (he calls this "minute sixty to minute one" representing all the time between two group meetings).

One of the mistakes I made in first training leaders was to focus on the group meeting time. I have since learned that what happens in between meetings is often more important to the development of a healthy group.

What leadership tasks do you accomplish in these two time frames?

At every meeting you might:

- lead an icebreaker
- lead the study time,
- lead the prayer time, or
- lead sub-groups.

Between every meeting you should be: making personal contacts with group members and prospects, praying for and with group members and prospects, planning group social, services, outreach activities, and preparing the lesson.

In step two, you give rising leaders the opportunity to perform these tasks in bite-sized pieces. You might ask someone to lead the prayer time, or make contact with an absent member before next week's gathering. Continue to watch and observe their faithfulness in handling these responsibilities. Those who handle these responsibilities well are your rising leaders.

#### DISCIPLE Apprentice Until They Can Replace You

"A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his



teacher.” Luke 6:40 The goal of apprentice development is that the leaders-in-training will have gained experience in all the tasks of leadership before leading their own group. This will require an intentional process of repeated invitations. You should invite rising leaders to try all aspects of group leadership and give them extra attention in their weak areas.

The following process of discipling can act as a guide:

- I do, you watch
- I do, you help
- You do, I help
- You do, I watch
- You do, someone else watches

This discipling process can take several months, as the rising leaders get a chance to practice leadership activities both during and between meetings. Throughout the process, you will need to provide ongoing coaching and encouragement. It’s important to meet with your rising leaders outside the normal group meeting for these coaching sessions. You can often accomplish this in an extra 15 minutes before or after the normal group meeting.

At the end of this process your apprentice should have a wealth of experience in all aspects of leading a small group. You should have a solid mentoring relationship with this apprentice because of your shared times together. All of the process so far has been leading to the final step: releasing your apprentice to lead a group of their own.

#### SEND New Leader Into Ministry

The final phase of the leadership development process is that of commissioning and sending the new leaders into ministry. Thom Corrigan of Pilgrimage/NavPress encourages groups to have a leadership commissioning ceremony when a new leader is ready to assume responsibility for his or her own group. As a

group leader, you should announce several weeks in advance that you will be releasing these leaders to lead their own group, and encourage other group members to pray about joining them.

There are two possible leadership opportunities for the new leader:

They can assume the leadership role in the existing group, while you are sent out to lead a new group. They can be sent out to lead a new group, while you continue to lead the remnant of the existing group.

When commissioning night comes, ask the new leader to stand in the center of the circle to receive the prayers of the group and a laying on of hands to commission them into leadership. At the same time, ask anyone who would like to join the new leader to also stand in the center of the circle for prayer. Whether the new leader stays to lead the current group or ventures out to start a new group, shower them with prayers of blessing. Make this a celebration!

#### **Lifting the LIDS: A Model for Developing Apprentice Leaders**

Continue to stay in contact with your apprentice as he/she takes on the role of group leader, and give the new leader guidance in looking for rising leaders in the group that he or she leads. In almost every church, the lack of small group leaders is the primary bottleneck to spiritual and numerical growth. This is not new Jesus himself lamented the lack of workers for the harvest. By focusing on looking, inviting, discipling, and sending, you can help lift the lids that inhibit your group’s potential for even greater impact.

David Limiero is the Interim Senior Minister of the First Christian Church in Naperville, Illinois, a far-western suburb of Chicago. Copyright 1997 by David Limiero and The Small Group Network, Inc. Used with permission.

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# Cell Groups Are For Children Too.

When Jesus took a child and set him in the midst of the disciples (Matthew 18:2) He was doing more than making a point about seeking status in the Kingdom. He was also demonstrating something important about the nature of the family of God.

Children belong in the family of God. They are not potential members “when they grow up.” They are not to drift around on the edge of the family of God, nor are they to be put into a high class baby-sitting service to keep them happy while the adults do their “church” thing.

The children need to be close to the church family so that they know they have a whole community of spiritual aunts, uncles brothers sisters, grandmothers and grandfathers who surround them with love. They need good models of what Christians are like: father models, mother models, teenage models, single models, senior citizen models.

Every person in the church is valuable in the life and experience of the children. They can offer friendship, conversation, company, answers to questions, and prayer.

The adults also need the children. Like the disciples, we tend to get the life of the Kingdom upside down. We think that status is based on age, or education or spiritual maturity. Jesus reminds us that in God’s eyes we are all children - children of the Heavenly Father and that status never changes, no matter how old we grow. Like children we are asked to honour and obey our Divine Parent.

If, therefore, children are a vital part of the church family, how do they fit into a cell group church? Why should the children’s ministry have a different philosophy and method from the rest of the church? When you examine the important reasons for having cell groups as the core units of adult church life, you can quickly see that those reasons are just as valid for children. Like adults, children need to come to faith and grow spiritually. They need friendship and encouragement and support in their lives. They need a place to ask questions and share their troubles. They need a place to learn how to serve others, and how to pray for, and reach out to, their friends. Even though children have different levels of understanding and experience, they still need to be recognised as people and followers of Jesus.

There are two models for incorporating children into a cell group church. Both models work in different contexts. Both contexts are valuable. Different churches have chosen to use one or both styles of ministry at different times.

## Model #1: Children’s Cell Groups

Children need to have cell groups with their own peers. This means they can discuss their problems in the forum to which they belong. Children can minister most effectively to each other and pray for each other with sincerity and spontaneity. I have seen children praying earnestly for each other’s school tests, families, sickness, bad habits, journeys, pets, and other unchurched friends.

I have seen children give counsel to each other in problems in a way an adult could not have done; we don't live in their playgrounds with their contemporaries.

A children's cell group is marked by a sense of belonging. The leader is respected, but is also accepted as a member of the group. There is a different vocabulary. We do not speak of teachers, pupils, lessons, classes, etc. That describes a schooling model. Instead we speak of leaders, members, studies, groups. The relationship is that of a family. The leader is guide, facilitator, model, pastor and equipper. The aim is not to produce Bible graduates but to produce Christians whose lives are dedicated and effective. It is "Life Knowledge", rather than "Head Knowledge." This does not mean there is no Bible teaching. Rather, the Bible is central as our great resource in growing in our faith and ministry. Children are taught to participate in discovering the Bible, and to get involved in working it out in the hard battleground of the school yard and the home front.

Children's cell group is flexible. They are not limited to one time-frame or one purpose. One children's cell group may be a nurture group for young Christians. Another may be a group involved in some ministry - perhaps worship, or a special project. Another children's cell group may be an outreach group - like a target group. In all cases, the relational element is essential. All the children must have the chance to report in on what is happening in their lives and to find help, prayer and understanding. If we do not know the children's needs, how can we minister to them?

If Sabbath morning is a difficult time for some children, a children's cell group can be held on Friday evening, Sabbath after lunch, or any time a group of children can be gathered around a leader. Some churches have children's cell groups at the same time as adult cell groups, with joint worship and sharing.

Children's cell groups have the same growth dynamic as adult cell groups. The ideal size for a children's cell group is an attendance figure of eight. If that number grows beyond twelve, the group should divide. This means we need to plan to divide. Every children's cell should have a trainee leader - an intern in training. This person learns leadership through watching and modelling the work of the leader. The leader should spend time explaining what is happening and letting the intern take leadership under supervision. Then, when the time comes to divide, there is a leader ready who already knows the children so they do not feel they are being sent off with a stranger. One thing that has been proved in churches which use children's cell groups is that they do grow. Children love to come to a group where their Christian lives and service are taken seriously.

When a child who does not come from a Christian home comes to the group, it is essential for the other children to realise they have a responsibility towards that child. Children should not be embarrassed because they do not know much about the Bible. Their attendance should not be criticised. It may be hard for them if they come from a divorced family or a family which has other priorities on Sabbath. The children need to be taught to make their group a loving, welcoming place for new children.

Some of these problems can be handled well if the children in a cell group are of mixed ages. This often frightens the leaders at first, but once they have tried it, most leaders are delighted with the results. Discipline is easier in a group where the ages are mixed. There is not as much tendency to gang up against one or two children or against the teacher.

There is less aggression. Children are usually happy to minister to children one or two years younger than themselves. They will come alongside to help. Younger children look up to the older children and try to be like them.

Children are usually more sensitive to children with special needs.

Curriculum is often a problem in this area because it is age-graded. But then, most existing curricula are not designed for children's cell groups. That is why many leaders are experimenting with their own material.

However, ordinary curriculum can be adapted if the leaders have a clear understanding of what they are trying to achieve.

Dealing with children across a wider age group works very well once people are accustomed to the idea. (This topic really needs its own article.)

Model #2: Integrated Adult/Children Cell groups:

The group meets together and has some time of worship and sharing together. Everyone prays for each other. The children then go to another activity - their own cell group or maybe sleep or homework. At the end, they come back together to report in and eat together. Sometimes they have a children's evening. That night, they meet earlier and do things that the children can enjoy - drama, storytelling testimony, singing, music, drawing etc. Sometimes they plan a "child-free night." Every-one in the group gets a baby-sitter. This model works well because the children really get to know the adults of the cell group.

They are not just their parents' friends. The cell group is often enriched by the contributions of the children. Often they challenge the wisest heads. The children learn that other adults apart from their parents, love and follow Jesus. It also makes it easier for new adults to bring along their children to the group instead of leaving one parent out. It is often a good thing for one adult to take special concern for the children and have a few special activities available for a moment

of need. However, each adult will have something to offer the children and the children will minister to the adults.

Children's cell groups are not just a device to keep the children happy. They are a vital part of a cell group church. They may be organised with a zone pastor and with training for group leaders. Children who grow up in a cell group need to experience the life of the church from their earliest years. You cannot keep them in a "school" atmosphere and then expect them to relate to the cell group congregation later. Jesus gathered the children around Him. He did not send them off to a school. The children need to understand the loving community in which they are growing into mature Christian life.

Code of Ethics : FOR CHILDREN'S LEADERS - Believing that God is calling me to serve children in this community:

1. My first priority in leading children will be to seek the welfare of the children; physically, socially, educationally and spiritually.
2. I will sincerely try to meet with the child's family so that we can get to know and understand each other, for the benefit of the child. I will also try to understand and respect the child's cultural background.
3. I will give the parents or care-givers full information about the program I am leading and what time it begins and ends. I will co-operate with the parents in seeing the child gets home safely.
4. I will not do anything that will damage a child's trust. I will try to protect the child from all forms of abuse while he or she is in my care.
5. If I suspect that a child may be hurt by the abusive actions or attitudes of another person I will report that suspicion to a responsible person so that it can be investigated.

6. If I wish to talk to the child alone, it will be within the sight and sound of other people.

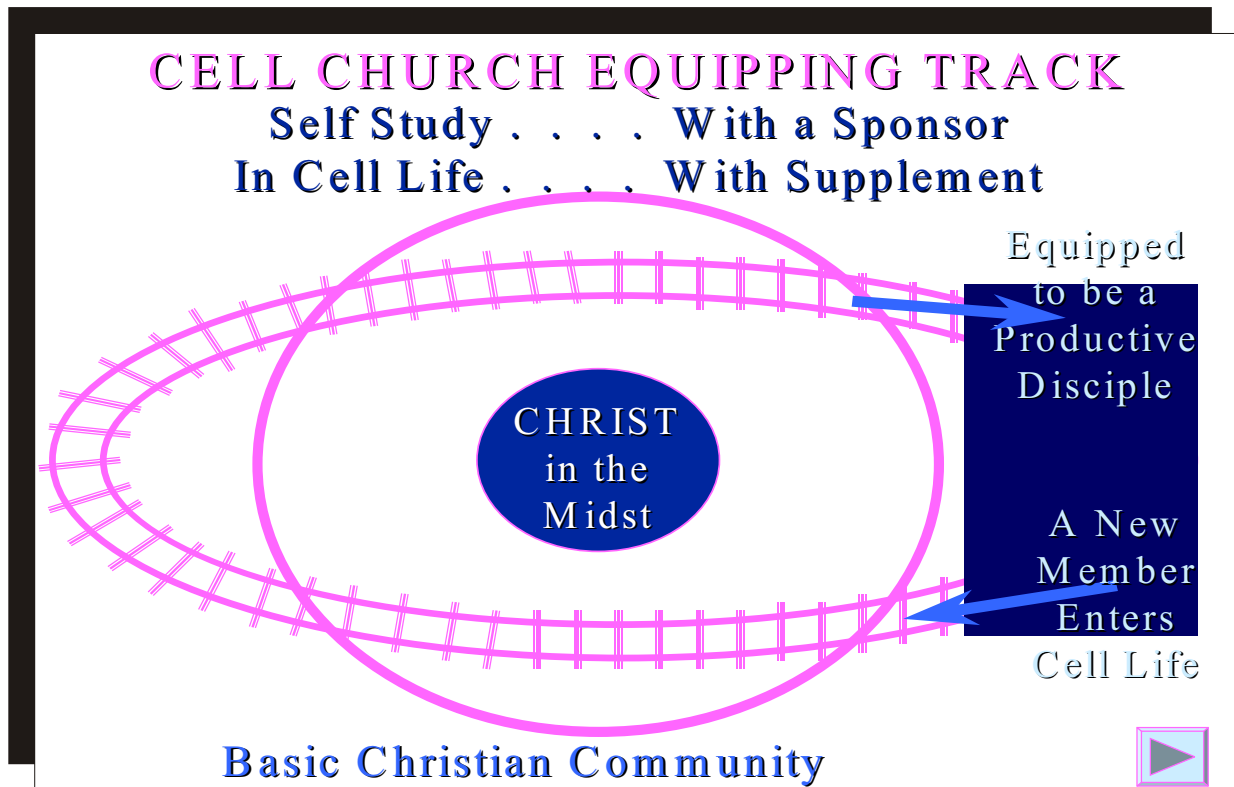
7. I will answer a child's questions openly and honestly. I will tell the parents how their child is responding in attitudes, behaviour, growing maturity and faith.

8. I will work with the children to set some agreed guidelines for acceptable behaviour within the group. I will expect the children to act on the basis of those guidelines and if a child consistently breaks them I will try to find out why.

9. If a child is distressed, I will try to offer comfort and help. I will encourage them to find the appropriate help for their needs. I will pray for each child regularly and let them know that I care about them.

Dr Lorna Jenkins  
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# Equipping Track



William Beckham's Equipping Track

Essential to growing new disciples is an equipping track where new comers are nurtured and trained. The key components of an equipping track are:

- Sponsorship: Every newcomer is assigned a sponsor who acts as a mentor. The sponsor will meet with the newcomer on a one to one basis in Bible study etc.
- Supplementary Events: The church will offer special training events to assist the newcomer in their growth- Spritual formation, Faith Sharing, Spiritual Gifts etc. These may be weekend retreats, one day seminars provided by the church or local Conference.
- Cell life: The newcomer sponsor is assigned from the group they attend.

After 12-18 months the newcomers then is given opportunity to act as a sponsor.

The newcomer needs to work through a study program that covers the basics of Christianity, how to live as a Christian and the basic teachings (doctrines) of the church.

# How to obtain lasting growth

By Ian Freestone

Perhaps you have heard this before: If I gave you the choice of having one dollar a week for fifty two weeks OR one cent a week and an amount each week that is double the previous week's amount, which of the two would you choose?

It is the difference between being \$52 better off AND \$22,517,998,136,852.48c better off! That's 22 trillion, 517 billion, 998 million, 136 thousand, 852 dollars and 48 cents.

The first is an example of the principle of addition, the second illustrates exponential or multiplication growth.

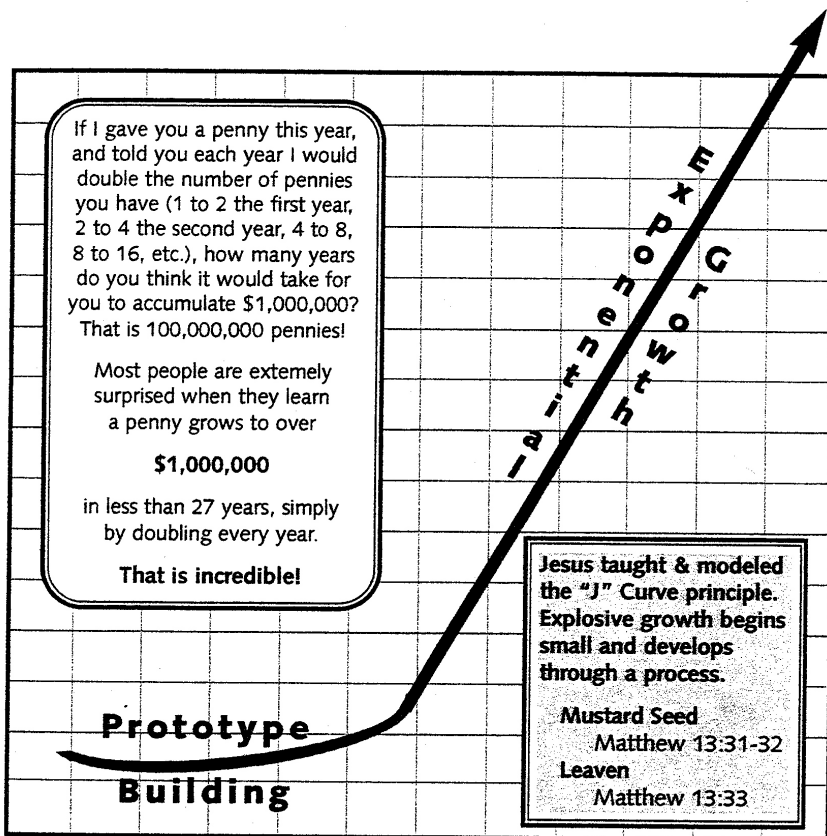
It can be illustrated another way:

Suppose an evangelist sees 1,000 people

become believers every day. At the end of the first year there would be 365,000 new believers. Now that's revival!!

## THE "J" CURVE PHENOMENON

"J" Curve: a graphical illustration of the exponential growth phenomenon: growth appears flat for a period of time, then increases rapidly.



Jesus modeled the "J" Curve principle for 3 1/2 years because He knew there can be no vertical explosion until a horizontal base is laid. We must carefully develop the base of the "J" before we will experience the vertical explosion!

Joey Beckham

Suppose another person in one year leads one person to Christ and spent that year training them and encouraging them in a discipling relationship. At the end of the first year there would be two believers. are quickly bonded to the church in a practical and life giving way.

Mmmm, pretty slow growth huh?

But if in the second year the two disciples each led one other person to the Lord and that pattern is repeated for the next 20 years the discipling ministry of those initial two people multiplies out to 1,048,576 people!

But hang on! Meanwhile our evangelist is leading 365,000 people to Christ every year. Surely there is more fruit in that? Well in terms of converts there is, in fact 7,300,000. BUT by year 25 the ministry of one leading one, then discipling one to lead one NOW HAS 33,554,432 believers and the super evangelist has slowed by comparison to 9,125,000. In fact the number reached by the decipler by year 26 is not reached by the evangelist until year 184.

In the long run it is Not as fruitful as the practise of discipling that involves people getting involved with other people's lives to train and equip them in service to God.

Simply channelling converts into a New Believers Class has a limited ability to make a substantial difference in people's lives. The model of Jesus is one of discipling. He gathered 12 to be with him. There will always be the challenge and opportunity of "the crowd". Crowds are mixed blessings really. But investing time and our lives into raising up believers who can reproduce themselves is a pattern that we cannot really negotiate on.

The cell church model provides a context for such discipling to take place.

Both during the cell meetings AND through one-on-one times with cell members outside the meeting, believers can be equipped to become disciples. Through this emphasis on relationships and community, new believers



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# Cell & Corporate Evangelism

Cell churches thrive on evangelism. This evangelism begins with each individual member, each group and corporately as all groups work together in a harvest type event. Harvest events may be a traditional style Public Evangelism program or seminar to special days etc.

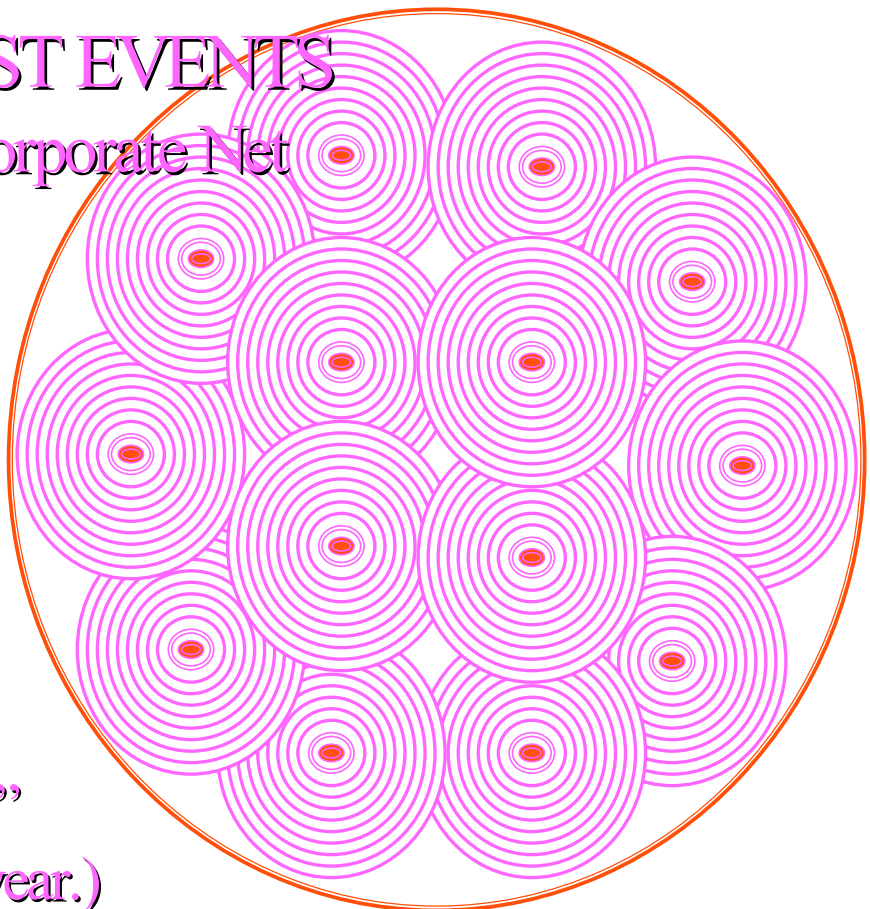
The important thing is that all groups 2 or 3 times a year work together in harvest activity.

## EVANGELISM NETS

### HARVEST EVENTS

Are a Corporate Net

Each cell becomes part of a Corporate Cell Net system that cares for part of the “catch.” (3 times per year.)



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# **C**ell Failure

- 1. The Cell isn't perceived to be Church.**
- 2. Unhealthy dependence on the leader.**
- 3. The Cell is too large.**
- 4. Bible lecture is the focus.**
- 5. Christ isn't the DNA of the Cell.**
- 6. The Cell is seen as another meeting**
- 7. No intern/s.**
- 8. The Cell lacks a community core.**
- 9. There is no sanctification track.**
- 10. The Cell has superficial edification.**
- 11. The Cell has no vision to grow.**

# Transitioning to a Cell Structured Church

## Check List before attempting to transition.

Most of the following should be in place before a church should attempt transition.

- Meaningful worship.
- Efficient programs and activities.
- Committed leaders with a clear vision.
- A good number of “Innovators” & “Early Adopters”.
- Position according to gifts.
- A Biblical understanding of the church and its mission.
- A church congregation prepared to change.
- The holding of Biblical values.
- Some kind of small group ministry already.
- A healthy amount of community already present.

## Three Approaches:

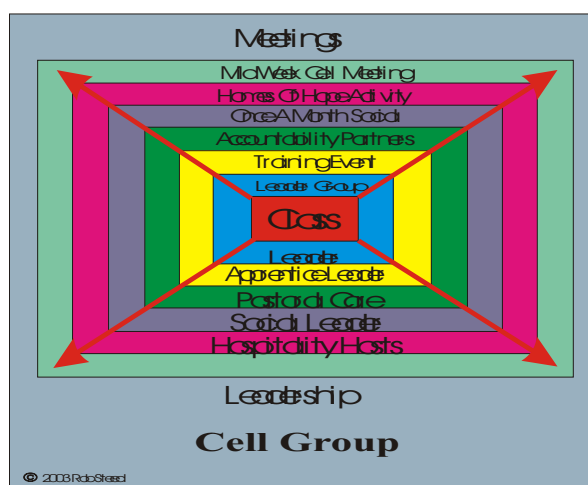
1. Sabbath School: Use the existing Sabbath School class to transition. The six steps that are outlined at the bottom of this page can be achieved over a 2 - 3 year period. In following this approach it is important to recognise that not all classes will transition at the same rate or level. The leadership team will also need to look at ways that other departments of the church can work with and through the classes.

2. Establish new Home Groups: This approach will produce the greatest impact but is not suitable to all churches. It needs to be

based around the key leaders using a prototype approach.

3. Combination of Both 1 & 2. Ultimately SS class and home groups should be the same group. This increase the assimilation opportunities for new comers and strengthens the leaders ability to encourage commitment.

## Sabbath School Class Approach



The Sabbath School Class Transition Process is based around the existing Sabbath School classes. The classes are transitioned into holistic cell groups by adding six new components in the following order:

1. *The first addition is to appoint Class leaders.* Class leaders will be, overtime, elders. Their role is to provide leadership to the class, to facilitate and delegate persons for the various ministries of the class. Leaders

will be required to attend regular leader meetings.

2. *Apprentice leaders will be appointed to each class.* They will learn and prepare for future leadership by sharing in the task of leadership. Part of the training requirement for Apprentice leaders is to attend a leadership training event. This training will be provided by the Small Group Co-ordinator.

3. *Pastoral care persons will be chosen for each class by the Class leader in consultation with the Pastoral Care Coordinator.* Their role will be to oversee the spiritual needs of class members as well as those members assigned to them who do not attend. They will organise class members into accountability partnerships and find sponsors for new Christian members.

4. *Each class will appoint one or two members to organise a once a month class social activity.* These people will work closely with the Hospitality Hosts in planning suitable activities for “seekers”.

5. *In order to provide an outreach to seekers each class will in consultation with the Leaders Team appoint a Homes of Hope hosts.* Their role is to conduct, where possible, a weekly social activity for seekers. They will include some members of the class. Seekers, when appropriate will be invited to the class monthly social.

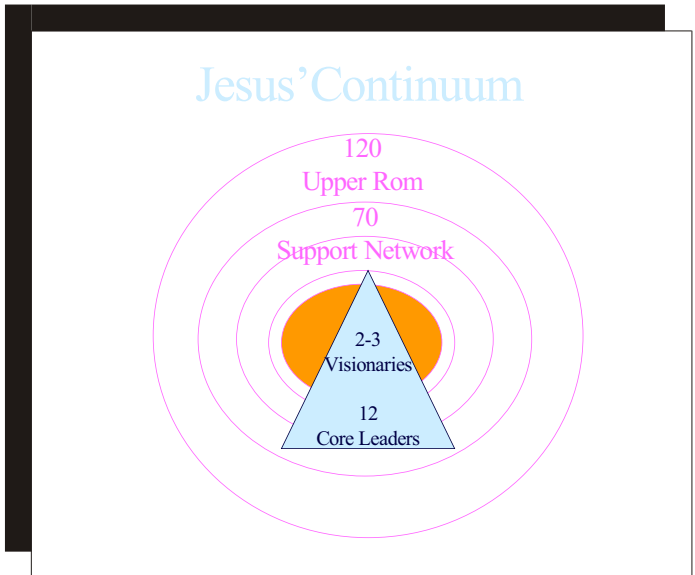
6. *Class leaders will begin a mid week Cell Meeting where class members and “seeker” friends attend.*

## Prototype Start Suggestions

1. Proper preparation is essential before beginning a prototype.

2. Build a prototype out of committed and mature Christians.

3. Other sub systems strengthen the prototype cell model.:Accountability - equipping - evangelism - intern training - leadership huddles.



4. Prepare existing groups for the prototype.

5. The quality of the prototype must never be compromised.

6. Identify and choose the initial team.

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone... And in him you too are **being built together...**”

### Establishing the Pattern

A simple method for transitioning into a cell church is by firstly selecting three couples who are committed to the Lord, who are open minded for change and are influential within the church. The pastor and leading elder should be involved in this initial group. If the key leaders of your church do not qualify then it is not advisable to attempt major

transition at this time. An alternative option is to look at the establishment of a new church.

The initial team should meet as a group for 3 to 4 months. This should be both a hands on experience of group life plus a training time. Once we are confident that the participants understand the model of Cell church and have developed the skills of group facilitation they should then be released to form their own group of three couples and to enter the same process.

This should be repeated at on more level if the church is large enough. Groups should not be allowed to multiply in this period. It is essential that we are sure that groups are holistic. It is possible for groups to multiply but if the pattern is wrong then the ongoing multiplication will stop.

Achieving wholistic groups prior to releasing them for multiplication may require that members of groups be rearranged. If all those who have the gift of Evangelism are in one group then other groups will find it difficult in attracting new believers. A group that is made up of only one type of person will fail. It is the role of the cell leaders and supervisor to ensure that the groups continue to be wholistic.

## Understanding Change

Changing the values and structure of a Program Based church to a Cell structure requires a long term change strategy.

One of the key principles for achieving change in any organisation, including churches, is to involve people in the change process. This involvement in identifying issues "...begins the change process by bringing issues to the surface and seeding the organisation for change...",<sup>2</sup> says Warwick. The seeding occurs by arousing interest in what will be done with the results of the fact-finding and by enlightening leaders through questions asked in the process.

It is helpful in monitoring any change to understand that there is a predictable process that occurs. Different groups move at different rates in accepting change.

"First there are the *Innovators* who conceive the idea. They are followed by the *Early Adopters* who support the idea. It is this second group who often make the best advocates as they are converts of the concept. They may be more credible than the innovators who are so committed to their brain-child that they are open to the charge of lacking objectivity. Next comes the *Early Majority* who have been convinced by the Early Adopters. It is when you reach this phase that you can be reasonably assured that the idea is going to roll. Following them come the more cautious *Late Majority*, who are only prepared to move with the crowd when they are satisfied that they will not be in a minority. Last of all the *Laggards* who, if they come at all, will only do so with reluctance. They await the first moment of faltering so that they can have the satisfaction of declaring, "I told you so!"<sup>1</sup>

Leaders need to monitor the stages of change and be aware of who the key people are in each group. The perceptive leader then can, if necessary, facilitate ways to bring the next group on board. Understanding the predictable process of change encourage leaders to be patient with those who are less able to encompass change immediately.

It is important to diagnose the possible resistance to the proposed change. The four most common reasons why people resist change are: 2 '

1. Parochial Self Interest: People resist change is that they think they will lose something of value as a result.
2. Misunderstanding and Lack of Trust: People also resist change when they do not understand its implications and perceive that it might cost them much more than they will gain. Such situations often occur when trust is lacking between the person initiating the change and the

recipients. Misunderstandings need to be addressed rapidly before resistance sets in.

3. Different Assessments: Another common reason people resist change is that they assess the situation differently from those initiating the change. This may be because opposing parties have different information.

4. Low Tolerance for Change: People also resist change because they fear they will not be able to develop the new skills and behaviour that will be required of them. People sometimes resist change to save face; to go along with the change would be, they think, an admission that some of their previous decisions or beliefs were wrong. Or they may resist because of peer group pressure - their friends' attitudes.

Resistance to change can be dealt with in a number of ways: 1

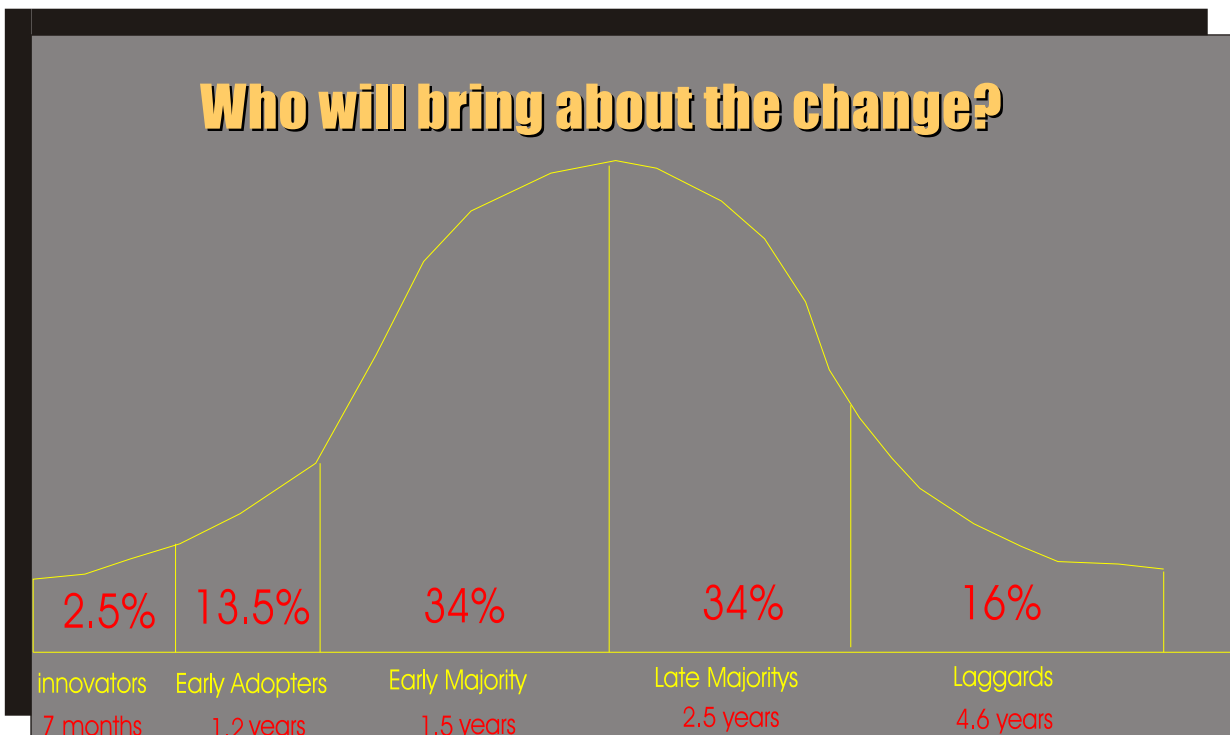
**Education and Communication:** One of the most common ways to overcome resistance to change is to educate people about it before hand. Communication of ideas helps people

see the need for and the logic of change. The education process can involve one-on-one discussions, presentations to groups or memos and reports. This is important particularly if resistance is based on wrong information.

**Participation and Involvement:** If the initiators of the change involve the potential resisters in some aspect of the design and implementation, they can often forestall resistance. In collaborative change efforts, the initiators listen to the people the change will affect and uses their advice.

**Facilitation and Support:** Another way that leaders can deal with potential resistance to change is by being supportive. This process might include providing training and assistance to those being effected. This strategy is particularly helpful if fear and anxiety lie at the heart of the resistance.

**Negotiate and Agreement:** Another way to deal with resistance is to offer incentives - new ministry opportunities, additional responsibilities - to active or potential resisters. Negotiation is particularly appropriate when it is clear that someone is going to lose out as a result of a change.



**Explicit and Implicit Coercion:** To force people to accept change by threatening them - loss of position, membership. Force produces strong resentment. This would only be appropriate in serve crisis situations where speed is essential.

Often change fails to occur because those involved are being asked to cope with too much change. People cannot deal with too much too quickly. They may back off to consider the implications. Sometimes expectations have been raised beyond what is possible. This is followed by frustration, then apathy. Other times change fails because the change was not needed.

Ultimately the test as to whether you have managed change effectively is whether the majority are on-board. If this is not the case you more than likely have not finished the change process. Ellen White made this comment to church leaders, "When your will is in harmony with the divine will, you will be in harmony with one another..."

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# Calendar Planning Process

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G

10%

## Catalytic Calendar

**Planning: Vision Catalysts must add vision casting, identifying leaders and beginning a 1st cycle pattern cell to their busy schedules.**

100%  
Existing  
Church  
Activities

Y  
E  
A  
R  
1

20%

## 1st Calendar Planning

**Protect the time of the visionaries, innovators and core leaders (Up to 12)**

80%  
Existing  
Church  
Activities

Y  
E  
A  
R  
2

50%

## 2nd Calendar Planning

**Release early adopters (Up to 70) to implement the strategy. Schedule all essential cell church components.**

50%  
Existing  
Church  
Activities

Y  
E  
A  
R  
3

90%

## 3rd Year: Implementation

**The majority of activity is carried out through the primary and sub group ministry.**

10%  
Existing  
Church  
Activities



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# C Conclusion



Our Cell Group bags, uh, befriends another unbeliever!

