
❖ CrossRoads ❖

Volume 16 Issue 3

“Worship * Grow * Send”

March 2010

There lies a great tension in all missional churches. The polar tension can be summarized by two words:

Inward.

Outward.

Both are attitudinal postures. One is strategic and biblical.

The Inward Posture

Some churches focus heavily *inward*. Internal issues and caring for those who are already part of the congregation tend to use up all available energy and resources.

If you look at a calendar of events, strategies and culture of an inwardly focused church, you might notice many elements are geared toward those who are already in the congregation: Pot-lucks. “Fellowship” events. A particular style of music that the “insiders” like (but might alienate those in the broader culture). Christmas parties. Sunday School (or small groups).

The result? A well-cared for (and well-fed) congregation, if not dangerously consumeristic.

Fellowship is high. “Discipleship” is emphasized (if “knowledge” minus obedience defines discipleship). Missional thrust is low.

The key question you might hear tossed around: *what can I get out of church? How can I be fed?*

The inward posture is unfortunately

damning those who aren’t yet a part of God’s Kingdom.

The Outward Posture

Some churches focus heavily *outward*. Many resources and energies are used at seeking out those who have not yet experienced a relationship with Jesus.

A look at their calendar of events, strategies and culture might prove this: Servant evangelism initiatives (and other servant hood type activities that take place outside the four walls). A particular style of music or environment (that can be embraced by the local culture). An awareness to define confusing “religious” language, if used. A focus on how many are “sent” vs how many are gathered.

The result? A mobilized congregation. There is good rapport with the community as people realize they exist for others. People meet Jesus.

Key questions you might hear expressed in an outward focused church: how might *other people* get to experience Jesus?

Unfortunately, a heavy leaning towards this posture is often obtained at the expense of those who have already been gathered and entrusted to the church’s care to help grow them and mature them in the Lord. Furthermore, fellowship and the practicing of the “one-anothers” might be neglected.

So a great tension exists. Focus too much on one or the other and significant implication will soon be manifested.

That tension keeps people (like me) awake at night.

The heart of God lies somewhere in the middle of those two churches. Just think of the Acts 2 church. They experienced great church life together, but also were also highly effective at reaching their local community.

Even Jesus dealt with this tension while calling the disciples to his great mission. Mark records this: “[Jesus] appointed twelve, designating them apostles, *that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.*”

Mark 3:14

Jesus appointed people who would offer him friendship and companionship (inward) but also who would be devoted to the mission to be sent out to preach (outward)!

The default posture for most churches, if left alone, drifts towards an inward posture. Over time, our individual needs trump the Mission if we’re not constantly reminded of the reason we exist as a body of believers.

Paul Borden, the Executive minister of “Growing Healthy Churches” writes about this in his book “Assaulting the Gates:” *“Most people in most congregations think that their congregation exists to serve their needs.*”

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They do not see the congregation whose purpose is to use its resources (people and money) to reach others.

The congregation, in the minds of most of those attending, is not seen as a place for them to be mobilized to reach their world. Congregations often lose sight of the fact that the church seeks to meet their spiritual needs not as an end unto itself, but to prepare them to meet the needs of those who face the greatest spiritual need, life without Jesus Christ. We feed armies so they can fight, not so they can have a fine dining experience.

It's a cutting commentary. The inward posture threatens to derail the mission of Christ's church.

When I go to church, I often ask myself a question that I'd like you to ask yourself: "did I come for *me* or did I come for a *mission*?"

Sure, I have needs and desires that I want met.

Sure I want to be inspired, but for what end? So I can get a spiritual buzz for a few hours? Or so I can be better equipped to live a more impactful life for the kingdom?

Sure I want fantastic music at church, but for what end? So that I can worship God myself and enjoy the rhythm? Or so that I can invite my friend who

might be engaged by it and encounter God through it for the first time?

Sure I want my church to offer a fishing night with the guys, but for what end? So that I can "hang with the guys" and have fun? Or so that I can invite my friend who desperately needs some Godly men in his life?

Sure I want the pastor to be funny, but for what end? So that I get to laugh and be entertained? Or so that those who are hostile to the gospel might open up and relax as God's word is presented?

Sure I want good donuts to be served at church after the worship service (before it, too!) but for what end? So that I can stuff my face full of powdery bliss? Or so that someone might experience warm Christian hospitality and provision?

Sure I want three screens projecting lyrics, sermon notes and series branding, but for what end? So I can spend an hour in a "cool" environment? Or so someone can walk in and for once, think that Christians seem relevant and worth listening to?

You get the point. It's really not about *us*.

KingsWay needs to constantly fight drifting towards an inward posture if the manifestations of those postures threaten to disturb our primary, God-given mission to make more disciples. Inward postures are only acceptable as they relate to equipping and enabling people to live kingdom centered, kingdom equipped, and kingdom effective lives.

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National Ministry News

Staff at American Baptist Churches USA Mission Center in Valley Forge, Pa., shed their shoes Monday, February 1, to stand in solidarity with their Haitian brothers and sisters in Christ, whose lives, homes and communities were torn asunder by January's massive earthquake.

Shoes were parked outside office doors and cubicles throughout the day as visible signs of the day's spirit of reflection—reflection about the depths of despair shared by hundreds of thousands of Haitians affected by the natural disaster of epic proportion. Walking shoeless throughout the Mission Center, staffers also symbolically helped to carry the burden of grief borne by untold Haitians who lost loved ones.

At a morning worship/action hour focused on the Haiti crisis, National Ministries' Executive Director Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III acknowledged that "we can't know how people feel when they are going through something like this, but we can sit with them through the difficult days. That is what Solidarity Day is all about."

With barely a seat left at the gathering in the Mission Center dining room, the worship/action hour's offering totaled more than \$1,300; additional contributions are expected in the coming days. Donations from Chin and Karen Burmese refugee groups totaling \$700 will be added to the Mission Center funds.

Wright-Riggins announced that the first \$20,000 raised by Mission Center staff will be used to support Haitian American Baptist churches seeking to send members to their home country to help with recovery. Wright-Riggins also announced that the first \$10,000 collected will be matched by National Ministries, American Baptist Home Mission Societies.

HOSTING A GROWTH GROUP

Do you have the gift of hospitality? Just love it when people come to your home? Can't wait to try that new recipe for a great dessert and want to share it? If so.... Here's an opportunity to get involved with the next Trimester's Growth Groups. We are looking for host homes in the Maineville area. See Ben Kelly on Sunday for additional information.

Pray With Us...

Health: Juanita Ansteatt, Debbie Hughes, Mary Jane Crothers, Pam Morrison, Bonnie Nitzsche, Cathy Ball, Sister Mary Grace Burg, John Coffman, Pat Edwards, Katie Eppert, Dan & Kenny Evans, Dave & David Grubb, Steve Hall, Becky Haun, Scott & Sharon Huston, Maryann Miller, Carey Pierson, Sandy Pugh, Mary Schutte.

Other: Pat Edwards, the Mason Deaf Church, Adam & Tonya Metzger, Erik Nystrom, 2010 Church Council, Prayer Team, our volunteers, Nominating Committee, our nation and Military Personnel .

Answers: Erik Nystrom’s safe return, New employment opportunities, South Lebanon Elementary School, 2010 Council, New attendees, the Metzger family, the Rahmes family, Outreach Team, willing volunteers, unity in Spirit, and God’s abundant opportunities for KingsWay and His miraculous financial blessings for the ministry.

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Again, hear the words of Borden: *“We feed armies to fight, not so they can have a fine dining experience.”*

Do you keep coming to KingsWay for you? Or do you keep coming to KingsWay to join the mission?

* * *

Get fed. May it enable you to “go.” Get inspired. May it propel you to serve. Be ministered to. May it compel you to minister to others.

Adam

**KingsWay
Community
Church**

**Adam Metzger
Senior Pastor
Adam@mykingsway.net**

**Justin Rahmes
Worship Arts Pastor
Justin@mykingsway.net**

**Marlene Evans
Office Administrator
Marlene@mykingsway.net**

398-5900

**Web Site:
Mykingsway.net**

Happy Birthday!

March 8 - Sherry Bryant

March 15 - Melanie Flach

March 19 - Alex Evans

March 24 - Lisa Witmer

March 24 - Joshua Emerson

March 30 - Zander Kalman



March 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Evans' Growth Group 6:30 PM	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Council Meeting 6:30 PM	10	11	12	13
14 Balsmeyer's Growth Group 7:00 PM Daylight Savings Time Begins	15	16 Evans' Growth Group 6:30 PM	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Balsmeyer's Growth Group 7:00 PM	29	30 Evans' Growth Group 6:30 PM	31			

CrossRoads
 KingsWay Community Church
 P O Box 203
 Milford, OH 45150