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## Introduction

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## Introduction

Gary L. McIntosh, Editor

One of the basic understandings of an academic journal is that it is a place where scholars can debate issues in a collegial fashion. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that articles would be published in *the Journal of the American Society for Church Growth* which challenge the research and viewpoints of other writers. By publishing such critiques, it should be clear that no animosity is intended. It is my hope that a continued dialog will be opened for further clarification of the issues.

Of course, whenever challenging articles are published, the opportunity will be given for a response from those being challenged. There is room in our journal for different viewpoints, but they obviously do not represent the thinking of all of our members. Remember the note in our journal that reads,

The Opinions and Conclusions published in the Journal of the American Society for Church Growth are solely those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the American Society for Church Growth.

As regular readers of the JASCG will recall, the Spring 1999 issue included a review of Christian Schwartz's *Natural Church Development*. Mr. David Wetzler, publisher of ChurchSmart Resources has written a strong response to John Ellas and Flavil Yeakley that will be found in the book review section of this issue. A short reply from Drs. Ellas and Yeakley follows Mr. Wetzler's response.

This Fall issue of the journal also includes some strong cri-

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tiques which I am sure will be interesting to many of our readers. John Crabtree Jr. has written a "Critique of David Cannistraci's Understanding of the Gift of Apostle and the Emerging Apostolic Church." This hard-hitting article pulls no punches as it presents the other side of the issue.

Dr. Larry McDonald's article "Rethinking the Gift of the Evangelist: Reflections on C. Peter Wagner's Teaching" wrestles with the issue of whether there is or is not a gift of evangelism. Those interested in evangelism will find Dr. McDonald holds a different viewpoint than Dr. Wagner.

Dr. John Hammett asks, Where does the zeal for evangelism come from? His study and answer is presented in "The Great Commission and Evangelism in the New Testament." Dr. Larry MacDonald presents a new way of measuring church growth in "Measuring Numerical Church Growth Rates."

Rev. Van Elliott has written a solid review of "Behind The Stained Glass Windows," a recently released book analyzing financial giving in churches throughout the United States.

—Editor