

**Multiplying Churches in Every Ethos: Session Three
Manhattan Christian College, October 1981**

Donald McGavran

In 1981, Donald McGavran presented a series of lectures at Manhattan Christian College. Over the next few journals, we will publish this series in a continuing effort to honor McGavran and his legacy of Church Growth Missiology. This is the second in the series. — Editor

This article has been transcribed from the taped lectures.

Female speaker:

It's in Ephesians 3, starting with verse 14: "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen."

Male speaker:

Let's pray together. Our Father and our God, you are indeed our Savior and our Lord, and we thank you for the salvation that you have so freely given to us. We pray, Father, that you would enable us to understand, with all the saints, the depths of the riches we have in Christ Jesus. And in that understanding we might feel a zeal, and a compelling force within us, to take that

message to the rest of the world. We ask this morning that you would give us all eyes that would see the unswerving purpose of God, and eyes for church growth. We pray that your Spirit would be on the speaker and on each of us, that we might understand those things that you have for us from your Word. For we ask it in Jesus' name and for his sake, Amen!

Most of you have already been introduced to our speaker. And I would just like to introduce to you a man, who, as he said last night, would like to be introduced as "a Missionary in the Church of Jesus Christ," Donald McGavran.

McGavran

Yesterday, I spent the two hours laying a biblical foundation for church growth. Church growth is not a gimmick. It's not something that we decide to do in order that we may have more members, more money in the church, and reduce the debt and do good things like that. Church growth rises in the will of God. The unswerving purpose of God is to save men through faith in Jesus Christ. Then I called to your attention the fact that the churches of the New Testament were greatly growing churches, and that normal churches grow. That growth is a mark of the living church, and that if our churches are living churches, they will grow. We belong to the Restoration Movement. And I think that maybe God is calling us to restore growth as a pattern of the church, that is manifested by the church, and is exemplified by the church throughout the world.

Now how about our churches in the United States at this time? Against that background, I want to spend this hour looking at the churches in the United States. And at the beginning, I want you to look at some of the typical churches or denominations here in the United States.

If we had a line of distribution across the platform here, here at this end let's put the churches that are declining; at that end, we'll put the churches that are growing. Over here, at the extreme left end—from where you're sitting—would be the Disciples of Christ, who during the decade (1965-1975), declined thirty-four percent. They can't do that but twice more if they are to be here at all (laughs). Thirty-four percent! Right behind them came the Episcopalians, who declined nineteen percent. They lost a fifth of their membership in that decade. Then there came the three big United churches: The United Church of Christ, the United Presbyterians, and the United Methodists. These churches lost twelve, eleven, and ten percent during that decade. Then there came some Lutheran churches, who lost four, and five, and seven, and eight percent. Then, when we pass the mid-

dle, we get into some growing churches, there were some slightly growing churches. The Southern Baptists grew five or ten percent. The General Conference Baptists, who were Swedish Baptists back in 1940 (then they changed their name to "General Conference Baptists"), and the forty thousand that they were in 1940 has become a hundred and twenty-five thousand in 1980: From forty-thousand to a hundred and twenty-five thousand in forty years. I wish that the Christian Churches in California had done as well. And maybe you wish that the Christian Churches in Kansas had done as well. And over on the far right, there would be the Christian Missionary Alliance, that grew at over fifty percent during that decade.

Now, look at the United Methodist story. I'm going to pull it out of that distribution, and we'll take a look at the United Methodist story. The United Methodist is one of the largest Protestant churches in the United States. They lost a million members between 1965 and 1975. They lost a million members, which was about ten percent, or eleven percent of their membership at that time. And that jarred them. To lose a million members is quite a jolt, no matter how big of a denomination you have. And so they looked around, and said, "We've got to get somebody who's concerned about this and who's an able man," and they chose Dr. George Hunter, who was then the Professor of Evangelism in one of their seminaries. And they said to him, "We want you to turn our denomination around." And they give him a quarter-of-a-million dollar budget, and a ten-men staff, and they said, "Go to it!" And he has been holding meetings in United Methodist churches, and church growth seminars in United Methodist churches ever since. The first thing he did, when he was given that assignment, was to come out to the School of Mission and Institute of Church Growth in Pasadena, and he said, "I want you to tell me all that you know." And we were very pleased to be of any help at all, and we had a very good three months together. George Hunter is one of God's men in America today. I saw him the other day. And I said to him, "Dr. Hunter, how are things getting along?" "Well," he said, "We're beginning to reverse the trend. In 1978, we lost .81%, in 1979 we lost .52%, in 1980 we lost .37%, in 1981 we'll probably lose .15% and we're going to bottom out in 1982. Once the decline starts, my friends', turning around is not child's play. Turning around is difficult. Getting a mentality, an expectation, an outpouring of prayer, a trying of many enterprises, in order that from the preachers to the last members of the church, there is a concern about the lost peoples out there, and an ability to find them and bring them back into the membership of the church.

The Nazarene story is well worth telling. It illustrates a great deal about church growth in America today—about effective evangelism in America today. The Nazarenes broke off from the United Methodist church in 1906. They were not satisfied with the theology, the concern, and the dedication of the United Methodist church. So they formed a denomination of their own. And for the first forty years, they grew like this year by year. Tremendous growth! Today there is more than six-hundred thousand of them. But along about 1950, the pace slowed down. 1960 it slowed down still more. 1970 the church of the Nazarene plateaued. Their headquarters, you know, are right here in Kansas City. And probably all of you have had contact with Nazarene churches. They plateaued around 1970. And under the impact of the Church Growth Movement, they began to search for reasons “why is it that the denomination has almost ceased growing?” “Why is our curb that was going like that, level-off and now it is going like that?”

Now when you inquire into causes, you don’t ask the denomination as a whole, you go to individual congregations. You study the Nazarenes in Kansas, or in Missouri, or in North Carolina, or in wherever it is there churches are. And you observe what is actually happening. Because any serious consideration of the growth of churches must take exact and scientific account of what is happening in individual congregations. What they found was this: That the growth of the church didn’t correlate with many things that they had expected it to correlate with. But it did correlate, quite exactly, with their starting of new churches. Back in 1910 and 1920 and 1930, when they were starting scores (maybe even hundreds of new Nazarene churches), the Church of the Nazarene (the national denomination) grew like that. But long about 1950, they began to say, “To be a church of the Nazarene means to be a respectable church, with a fine church building, with red carpets on the floor, and nice appointments, and a trained minister, and a good staff, and a wonderful choir, and a smooth service, where the people, when they come, say, “That was a wonderful service!” “That is what we want the Church of the Nazarene to be!” “And a lot of these small churches (struggling churches) that are getting inadequate preaching, and inadequate understanding of God’s word, that’s for the birds. We’ve got to quit that sort of thing.” And so they concentrated on making the Nazarene congregations respectable, beautiful, worshipful, devout places. And the growth slowed down. And they said to themselves, “Maybe we were mistaken?” And the more they looked into it, the more they became convinced that they were mistaken. And so about six or seven years ago, 1975

thereabouts, they resolved to stress the planting of new churches. They asked me to speak to them at a meeting of their high command in Napa, Idaho. They've got a college in Napa, Idaho. And about a fourth of the town is Nazarenes. It's quite a strong Nazarene center. And there, in that center, they had a meeting of some of their great leaders to consider the growth of the church. And one of the men that was there was the district's superintendent from North Carolina. He came all across the United States to attend that meeting. And he said, "Dr. McGavran, the reason I've come here is because I want to train Class 3 leaders." (Now Class 3 leaders, some of you know from Dr. Beard's classes, are the unpaid or slightly paid leaders of small, new churches. You see, Class 1 leaders are the people who work inside the church—this is the Sunday school teachers, and the choir director, and the ushers, and the deacons, and the others who take care of the people who come to the church. Class 2 leaders people who go out every week, away from the church, to where the non-Christians are, to where the lost are, out there! They're out a way from the church, a taskforce of evangelism. And Class 3 leaders are the unpaid or slightly paid leaders, part-time leaders of small, new, struggling churches). And I said, "why do you want Class 3 leaders?" "Well," he said, "we have about sixty Nazarene churches in North Carolina, and I've resolved to plant two-hundred new, small churches, and I've got to have two-hundred Class 3 leaders." He was coming under the spell of that new strategy of the Nazarenes.

And then there's a great story that comes out of Oregon. In Oregon, also, the Nazarenes are a small people, perhaps fifty churches in the state as a whole. But as they started thinking church growth, and praying church growth, and estimating their situation, and estimating the real opportunities in the various parts of Oregon—like any state, Oregon is not just one homogeneous whole; there are different kinds of Oregonians, those in the high country, those in the Willamette Valley, those in the big cities, those in the deep rural areas, there are many different kinds of Oregonians—and as the Nazarenes looked at that, they said, "There must be a lot of new Nazarene churches here." And so they had an annual meeting, an annual convention at Bend, Oregon, which is east of the Cascades, in the high country. And at that meeting there was a lot of prayer, and at that meeting there was a lot of repentance, and at that meeting there was an intense searching for the will of God, and out of it all there came a call for a special offering: to multiply churches in Oregon. At that meeting they raised two-hundred and fifty-thousand dollars. Over and above anything they were already doing. It didn't

diminish their mission giving. It didn't diminish their local church giving. Two-hundred and fifty-thousand dollars! And then they called for twenty-four families of missionaries, these were mostly graduates or even undergraduates of their colleges and seminaries in the Midwest. And they put these twenty-four families into a bus, over here in Kansas some place, and they drove out to Oregon. And there they set to work. These were also part-time. The two-hundred, fifty-thousand didn't pay the salaries of all those people. But it helped. And they started establishing churches.

Now in the city of Eugene, where I lived for a number of years (which I know quite well), where there are a lot of Christian Churches (Church of Christ)—perhaps fifteen or twenty of them—they were three Nazarene churches. At the end of three years, there are now more than twenty new Nazarene churches in the Eugene-Springfield area. They have planted them. They intend to nurture them. And those twenty churches have not taken a single member from the existing three churches. Those are all new people. One out—in this suburb that suburb, this subdivision that subdivision, that university wherever it happens to be. And around Portland they've done the same thing. There a cluster of churches has grown.

Now when you contrast that with what the Christian Churches (Churches of Christ) have done in the Eugene-Portland area, it's quite startling. Because our people have started, I think, one new church in the last ten years. Around Portland they've done better. They've started eight or ten new churches up there. But what this story tells us is, that if you believe it is God's will, and if you see the opportunity there, and if you set yourselves to do it, and if you align your will with God's unswerving purpose, there is a harvest to be reaped.

The Nazarene denomination has appointed one man (Dr. Raymond Hurn), as head of the department for church multiplication. He has his headquarters down here at The Paseo, in Kansas City at their national headquarters. And he devotes full time to surveying the whole United States, and Canada too, I think. And finding new churches that ought to be and can be established. Now, this story—this history, because it isn't a tale; it's an exact account—has great meaning for all of us, and for all Christians here in the United States.

Now let's briefly turn to two great brotherhoods here in the United States: the Southern Baptists and the Northern Baptists, who are now called American Baptists. In 1900, both of those bodies had about a million-and-a-half members, as did the Christian Churches. And the Southern Baptists engaged upon a

policy of planting churches everywhere. They now number more than fourteen million. The Northern Baptists (the American Baptists) are still around a million-and-a-half, or maybe a little bit less. Now, and then again in California, in 1935 there were twelve Southern Baptists churches in California. "Because," they said, "we're Southern Baptists and California is Northern Baptists territory. There was that old line drawn right after the civil war, Northern Baptists in the north, and Southern Baptists to the south. And the line ran south of California. But some Southern Baptists had gone over to California and they had established Southern Baptists churches and there were just twelve of those Southern Baptists churches in the state of California. And the Southern Baptists saw large numbers of Southern Baptists going to California. And they noticed that they weren't being enrolled in Northern Baptist churches, and so they said to the Northern Baptists, "Look, you guys, if you're not gonna to take care of these, we're gonna come in." And the Northern Baptists made, appropriately, angry noises. "Your gonna invade our territory, this isn't fair, this isn't brotherly, your violating ministerial ethics, and on and on." The Southern Baptists heard these angry noises, paid no attention to them, went right on in (chuckles). Today, there are more than a thousand Southern Baptist churches in California: From twelve to a thousand, between 1935 and 1981.

I wish that the Christian Churches (Churches of Christ) had done half that well. What I am saying to you this morning is that there is a vast reservoir of unsaved, lost people waiting to be won. Waiting to be won! We stand again, my friends, where our Lord stood there in Samaria. You remember the scene? He was standing there, the disciples were standing there, and I'd imagine that he heard them, overheard them, talking and they'd say, "You know, this program that our Lord is carrying on, it's a wonderful program, but it will take time." Actually, this is April or maybe May. It will be about four months: we're sowing the seeds now, but in four months then will come the harvest. And the Lord turned to them and said, "Look, look on the fields, they are all ready right to harvest. Hey, you, its not May, its September or October and the corn is ready to cut." We've got to look on the fields and see the fields that are ripe. We've got to develop, my friends, a harvest theology. There are theology's of work, and there are theology's of play, and the theology's of this and the theology's of that, let us develop a theology of harvest. And when we do so, we will see that the Bible is a book of theology of harvest.

As you read the epistles of Saint Paul, you'll see that again

and again he's simply reaching into a ripe harvest. You have to change the simile just a little bit to hear that man from Macedonia saying, "Come over, the fields are white! Thrust in the sickle! You can get many sheaves here in Macedonia!"

Now note the difference, please, between those who search for lost sheep and those who care for the flock. Some shepherds are carrying for the flock—that's their job, the people who come to church, that's our task. We preach the word to them. We teach their children. We invite them to come in, we be very nice to them when they do come in. We call on those who come to our church, of course. We'll do all the things we need to do. But we are here to care for the flock and to maintain this church. I was in a church in Indiana, one of our churches, one of our great churches. Around the turn of the century, it had twelve hundred members. And the church was on a corner lot downtown. No parking around; just a corner lot. The entire church property wasn't much bigger, than this building squared out there. A big two-story affair. And about thirty years ago, they decided that wasn't the place for them, so they moved out to a suburb. They bought five acres. There's a lake in it, it's a beautiful place. They've got a wonderful church there. And today their membership is seven-hundred, twenty-nine. They shrank from twelve-hundred to seven-hundred. But the church is a beautiful church. And it gives more for missions today than it did then. And it's a live, throbbing congregation. Then the members of the Christian church were one-tenth of the population of the town. Today, the members of the Christian church are two-percent of the population of the town. That's the kind of history, my friends, that we must not repeat. That's the kind of history that is unnecessary to repeat. That's the kind of history against which our Lord says, "Look on the fields, there're ripe, already to harvest!"

Now let's look at the Christian Churches. I grew up in Indianapolis. I lived there between 1913 and 1923. And I know the town fairly well. In 1913, there were four, big respectable churches (Christian Churches) in Indianapolis. There were Downey Avenue Christian Church, where Butler College was, and the faculty and the students attended there. It was a big, thriving Christian Church. There was Central. There was Third. And there was Second. And then around the turn of the century, 1895, 1900 (somewhere along someplace), these churches had appointed a city missionary. And that poor man had gone all over Indianapolis, establishing little, struggling, beginning, ratty Christian churches. They met in barns. They met in abandoned school houses. One of them met in a bar, which is conveniently

empty Sunday morning. They met in all kinds of places. They didn't get very good preaching. And they were struggling little churches. I preached for one of them, when I was a senior at Butcher College. I got on the streetcar Sunday mornings, and rode five miles down to the center of town, changed to another street car, rode five miles out the other way, out to Speedway. And there was a little church, it had about as little space in it as this (a little bit more). It was an old, abandoned one-room schoolhouse. And there were ten or twelve people gathered there. They paid me five dollars a Sunday, out of which I had to pay my streetcar fare, coming and going. They survived my preaching, which was good. And today, if you go back to Speedway, you won't find that little ratty church. You'll find a church with fifteen-hundred members, and a staff of four or five ministers, and three choirs, and quite an impact on the community. That's what happened to those little churches. Those little, beginning, ratty churches grew-up. And today, Indianapolis is full of big, thriving Christian Churches.

I'd like to contrast that with what happened in Detroit. In Detroit, around the turn of the century, we had one Christian Church. And there was a wonderful preacher there, he was a spellbinder. People came to hear him from all around. It was a notable Christian church. And when he passed off the scene, the church decided they'd get another; the best preacher in the United States. And they did. He was a very famous man, and he was followed by another famous man. And the policy of that church was there's just going to be one Christian Church in Detroit. There's just going to be one. It's going to be the best church in Detroit. And it was. They achieved their aim. But as the Christian Church people from Ohio, and Indiana, and Kentucky, and Illinois, poured into Detroit as that became a great factory town, some of them (a few of them) united with that church. Most of them didn't unite with any church. Some of them became Baptists, or Lutherans, or Presbyterians or what not. And in 1954, I was talking to a man, who, with great difficulty, had established a second Christian Church in Detroit. What a contrast between Detroit, where shouldn't have had fifty-five churches but a hundred and fifty-five Christian Churches. If we had had a church planting policy, it would have been one of the great power centers of our brotherhood.

You see my friends, as we care for our churches we must constantly look for the people out there who have no Savior and no Master. Who are living their own lives. Who are lost. There're eighty million people in the United States. So, a Lutheran professor at Gettysburg Seminary says, "Eighty million who have no

contact with any church whatever." Eighty million of them! And there are at least eighty million (maybe a hundred million) of very nominal Christians. They have their name on the roll someplace. But that's about it. They may go to Christmas or Easter, when their daughter gets married she'll be married from that church, and when they die, they'll call the preacher. That's it.

What we found at the Institute of Church Growth in Northwestern Christian College in 1961, we started a church in our front room. We bought a house out on the far edges of the city, and there was not church within four or five miles of our house, so we decided to start a church in our house. And it grew up there in the front room. And as Mrs. McGavran and I were calling one evening on the surrounding people, we stopped into a house, and after passing the time of day (you know how it is when you go on these church calls), and then we said, "We'd like to invite you to our church." And the man immediately said, "What church is it?" I said, "It's a Christian Church." "Oh," he said, "thank you very much, we wouldn't be interested, we're Methodists." So I backed off. And we started talking about other things. Little bit later, I said, "When did you move here?" "Oh," he said, "in 1930." This was nineteen-hundred and sixty—thirty years ago. And then I said, "By the way, where are you a Methodist?" "Oh," he said, "in Phoenix, Arizona" (laughs). That man wasn't a Methodist anymore than I'm a Hot'n Tot. He was a lost soul. He wasn't going anywhere. He had his name back there on the book. But he was out of Christ. And there are a hundred million such people. We've got to see those people. We've got to bear them on our hearts. We've got to ask God to give us power to find them, and win them. Some of them are not very winnable. But we've got to court them. We've got to search for them. We've got to find ways of leading them to know the Lord.

Let me tell you the Alliance story, because, I think, that as we look at this task, we must see the exact facts and I think they will encourage us. The Christian Missionary Alliance was founded in 1887. Nearly a hundred years ago. So, in 1977 (ninety years after they were founded), under the impact of the Church Growth Movement, they said, "We haven't been doing very much growing in the United States. We've been a great missionary body. We've sent missionaries all around the world." They're about a hundred-thousand Alliance people, and they send out eight-hundred missionaries. It only takes a hundred Alliance members to send out one missionary. It's really a wonderful denomination. But here in the United States they haven't done much growing. So they said, "Our centenary is ten years from now. Let's covenant with God to double (double!) between

77' and 87.'" They had a great meeting up in Iowa. Not to far from here, by the way. And at this convention, where they were covenanting with God and with themselves, with each other to double, they wore great big buttons ("Think Double"). And when I got there to speak, they put one of these on me. Think Double! I thought that that was quite commendable. But I was a bit skeptical as to whether they could achieve that goal. You know, it's easy to say, it's difficult to do. So I wrote to their headquarters about six months ago now. And I asked them how they're getting on. And they wrote back saying, "We're ahead of schedule." If they continue to grow, from 81' to 87', at the same rate that they've grown from 77' to 81, they will double here in the United States, in that decade. Believe me my friends, these are days of harvest. And as we develop a harvest theology, and as we look on the fields, and as we have compassion on the lost (as we have compassion on the lost), our churches will begin to grow.

Now, I've been telling you about denominations. And I don't want you to get the impression that it's all a denominational affair. This thing starts with local churches. This summer in Northeast Ohio, I met a little Philippino pastor. He was an immigrant to this country. He'd been here for a number of years. He was studying first in college, then seminary. And while he was doing that, he was pastoring a church out in the Northeast corner of Ohio. Way back out of the mainstream of life, there wasn't a big town within five miles where that church was. The story was this: In 1810, the Trinity Reformed Church was established and built quite a nice church building there. And that Reformed Church lasted until 1910—a hundred years. And then it closed its doors. And some years later, a group of Friends in the vicinity, said, "Well, here we are, we've been meeting in a house, let's see if we can buy that church." So they bought that church, an old abandoned church. And they met in there. And when Mr. Preator, the Philippine, student pastor came there, it had a membership of eighty. And as he explored the territory round about, and called on people, he found a lot of unchurched people—unchurched families, some of them slammed the door in his face; some of them said, "thank you, we're not interested"; some of them said, "we're Roman Catholics"; some of them said, "we're Baptists"; and his was a Friends church, remember. They're not a very evangelistic people. But he kept on. And soon he had a hundred. Then he had a hundred and ten. In 1978, he had a hundred and twenty. In 1980, last year, he told me he had a hundred and fifty. And then he said, "We built a new church." They left that old Reformed Church building that had been there

for a hundred years, and they built a big new church up on the main highway—still a long distance out of town. And then he said, “I’ve read all the church growth books that I can lay my hands on, and I’ve found a good many things in them that we can practice. I found some things that we can’t practice.” But he said, “In 1981, we’re going to lift our hundred and fifty to a hundred and eighty-one.” A hundred and eighty-one in 1981—I thought that was a nice touch! That’s the way church growth begins. That’s the way it will begin in your church. That’s the way it will begin in other churches. It begins with a man, who covenants with God, who looks for the lost, who isn’t discouraged by his failures, who continues on, who doesn’t say, “what can a Philippino do in America?” But says, “Philippino or not Philippino, this isn’t done in my strength, it’s done in God’s strength. And pleases God, as he pours his power into me, I can do his work.”

Now, then, what does all this mean for you? These stories, what do they mean for you? What do they mean for us this morning? I am gonna suggest several meanings.

First of all, I would urge you to plant your feet firmly on the biblical foundation. I was emphasizing this yesterday. Align your will with the unswerving purpose of God. Be sure that this is not something that you resolve to do, say frankly and openly to God, “Here, I am, use me!”

Second, true New Testament churches must be growing churches. And as your part of a restoration movement, resolve to restore growth to the Christian churches of this land. Too many of them are sealed off. Too many of them are sleeping. Too many of them are not growing. Too many of them aren’t caring for the existing saints, and the sheep that are shivering out there on the mountainside. They’re not caring for them. And then hear the Lord say, “Make disciples.” Believe me, my friends, this is commanded by scripture.

This is not a sudden enthusiasm, as the Church Growth Movement spreads across North America, as such that it would have little power. But it’s there in scripture. And scripture commands us. The Lord commands us “to make disciples.” And the implications of the teachings of Jesus Christ throughout the New Testament are very clear, that we’re to go out and seek the lost. He came, you know, “to seek and save the lost.” And if we are true followers of his, we’ll go out and seek and save the lost. You have communion every Sunday. And as you take the bread and the cup, do you say, “thank you Lord for my salvation.” If you do, I expect the Lord will say, “I gave my life, I went to the cross, for the salvation of all peoples of the earth.” How far have you

gone. As we take the communion, let it speak to us about the lost out there for whom Christ gave his life. Plant your feet firmly on biblical foundations, and second, learn effective evangelism.

Effective evangelism is not something that you're born with. It's not something you get when you're baptized. Effective evangelism—presenting the gospel effectively, seeing the opportunities—they don't just happen to people. Mr. Preeato, the Friends student pastor there in Northeast Ohio, he didn't see the opportunities there the first time he preached in that little Friends church. He had to go out and call on people, day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, before the magnitude of that opportunity—the magnitude of that disaster burst upon him. Learn effective evangelism. Now there are many systems: home Bible study is one, it works very well; revival meeting is another, it works very well; evangelism explosion is another, that works very well. Learn them. I'd like to see a hundred men and women learning effective evangelism out there.

Most of our colleges and seminaries have classes on evangelism. But not too many of them take those classes on evangelism out. See what they can do. Bruise their knuckles out there. Come back licking their wounds. Find out what they did that was mistaken. And go back out there until they are successfully evangelistic out there.

I'd like to see all of our colleges and seminaries have that kind of classes. I'd like to see teams of four men and women, covenant in their sophomore year, perhaps, to plant a church, a new church, in some area within a hundred miles of here. And those four men (maybe four men, four women) who would work that area until there was a church planted there. I was visiting a small Bible College in Lima, Peru. Now, Lima is the big city of Peru down on the coast. And in this Bible College, the principal said, "When students enroll here, we take teams of three men each out to a section of the city and we say, 'During your three years here, you will be planting a church here. If you get stuck, a member of the faculty will help you. But at the end of three years, you'll have a church. And one of you will become pastor of the church that you have planted.'" I said, "Tim," in amazement and some skepticism, "does it work?" He said, "We're planting churches all over this city." Now, Manhattan doesn't have quite the opportunities that Lima, Peru does. And I wouldn't think that you could do that inside Manhattan. But I think you can probably do it in Kansas, and Iowa, and Nebraska, and the territory in 'mid-America,' in general. Learn effective evangelism.

And then study the very different pieces of the Kansas, mid-

America mosaic. We're not just living in mid-America. We're living in a mid-America mosaic. There're many, many different kinds of people out there. There're different kinds of communities. You go to West Kansas, and you see the small towns out there. There're not like the small towns in Northeast Kansas, where there's a declining rural population, you have one; where there's an increasing rural population, you have another; where you have laborers of the Hispanic background, you have still another; when you get into the big city, you have this kind of community, and that kind of community, and that kind of a community, and that kind of a community; there are small towns, there are growing cities in Arizona and Kansas too. There are small towns in Eastern Kansas. There are unchurched minorities. There are youths from broken homes. There are trailer courts that have no churches in them. There are small developments around towns and cities. As I flew out here on Monday, and would look down around all the cities without exception, you'd see farmland and then suddenly you'd look down and there was a farm there but now there's fifteen houses and roads; that's become a development. And there're people in all those houses; and there out five miles from town, or maybe ten miles from town. And then here's another one, and here's another one, and here's another one, and here's another one. Now I couldn't tell from the air, but my guess is that none of those developments had a church in them. And the earnest Christians drove into town. I have no doubt. But if they weren't quite that earnest, they spent Sundays in their gardens. You know, improving their houses, building additions, and on and on. That's a kind of community where Christians can be multiplied.

Perhaps what we should do in colleges like this is to teach courses on the sociology of the area in which the college is. There's a lot of sociological knowledge. Oh there's a lot of sociological knowledge! There are books on the sociology of Kansas, or on rural Kansas, of urban Kansas, of the minorities of this, that, and the other thing. And a course, taught from a Christian perspective, on the sociology of this land, would be a very rewarding course. It would tell you exactly what these pieces of the mosaic were.

I had the great pleasure and privilege of addressing the faculty in Cincinnati Christian Seminary (it used to be Cincinnati Bible College) last spring. And I said to them, "as you look out here on Cincinnati, these aren't just all upper, middle-class whites, are they?" "Oh no," they said, "there are lots of different kinds of people down here." "Oh there are many different kinds of people down here!" I said, "how about teaching a course on

sociology in the seminary here, so that your graduates would have a realistic understanding of the pieces of the mosaic?"

I'm asking the question, what does all this mean for us here this morning? And here I am suggesting that we study and learn the very different pieces of the mosaic. And then, my friends, my last suggestion is that we bathe all this in a constant torrent of prayer. This is not our work. This is God's work. Let us fall on our knees. Let us ask God lead us. Let us ask God to forgive our mistakes, our carelessness, our past indifference. Let us ask God to show us where he wants us to work, where the harvest is ripe. And as we do this, and as we yield ourselves to God, he will show us; because the harvest is ripe, and there're his people out there waiting to be won.

Female:

Why don't we stand and have a word of prayer before we leave our time. I do have one announcement to make. That following right this, Dr. McGavran is going to meet with all the missions students that are here this morning. Mark, would you dismiss us in a word of prayer?

Mark:

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you so very much. We've had this man come here and speak with us, to enlighten us about the church's main objective and goal. We should all have that growth attitude in our minds and our hearts and go out from this place today, and as we finish up our college education, helping others realize that, trying to spread the gospel in our country and around all countries. I ask that you be with us the rest of this Missions Emphasis Week. Pray that you'll help us to take the knowledge that we've received here and apply it to our situation in our lives. Help us through this day, Lord. We just give all credit to you in all things. Pray this in your Son's name, Amen!

Writer

McGavran, Donald A. (1897-1990): Dr. Donald A. McGavran is widely noted as the founder of the modern Church Growth movement. After a distinguished career as a field missionary in India (1923-1954), he served as a traveling researcher and visiting professor of Church Growth missiology. In 1961 he founded the Institute for Church Growth in Eugene, Oregon and eventually became founding dean of the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

