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Introduction to Special Section on Gary L. McIntosh

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SPECIAL SECTION

The Life and Works of Gary L. McIntosh

This section of the journal highlights the life and writings of Gary L. McIntosh, one of the fathers of the Church Growth movement and, for many years, the editor of the predecessor of this journal, the Journal of the American Society for Church Growth.

I first met Gary more than 15 years ago at Biola University where Gary teaches, at the first Great Commission Research Network conference that I attended. As I was new to the network, several people told me that I needed to meet Gary McIntosh. I had heard of him because of the many books he had written, but I did not want to impose on him in any way or act like I wanted a privileged discussion with one of the organization's famous members. Finally, someone introduced me to him, and I was immediately struck by Gary's friendly, humble demeanor. He was much more interested in getting to know me than talking about the many important things he had done or written about. Many others have also been struck by Gary's servant spirit and desire to serve the Lord.

The first article in this section, written by Gary's former student Gordon Penfold, presents an overview of the many books that Gary has written, some of which are very well-known and others less so.

The second article is written by Gary, telling his story in the Church Growth movement, which has now evolved into a research-based focus on effective evangelism and disciple-making.