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struck dead by the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11). Still, *“believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women”* (Acts 5:14). Churches are blessed, not cursed, by confronting and correcting wickedness among the members.

**Disciples multiplied when evangelism was active.** *“Daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying...”* (Acts 5:42-6:1). Instruction in the word of God was occurring both in a public venue and in private study.

**Disciples multiplied when internal problems were resolved.** *“There arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, ‘It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith”* (Acts 6:1-7). A real problem surfaced among the brethren in that material needs were being overlooked. Leaders in the church it seriously, not dismissing anyone, but facing the problem and rectifying it. Immediately afterward, growth continued!

**Disciples multiplied when scary Christians were received into fellowship.** *“When Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him. When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus. Then the churches*

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*throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied”* (Acts 9:26-31). The disciples of Jerusalem were reluctant to accept Saul of Tarsus owing to his homicidal past, having initiated a murderous rampage against the church. Nonetheless, he had obeyed the gospel and was saved in Christ’s blood, so Barnabas vouched for him and the church accepted Saul as a member. Thereafter, the church was at peace, and the disciples were increasing in number.

**Disciples multiplied when they moved out of their comfort zones.** *“Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord”* (Acts 11:19-21). Ideally, they would not have been scattered by persecution, but in that dispersion, they had occasion to spread the word of God, resulting in conversions.

**Disciples multiplied when enemies of the church were struck down.** *“Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. And the people kept shouting, ‘The voice of a god and not of a man!’ Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. But the word of God grew and multiplied”* (Acts 12:21-24). This King had executed the apostle James (1-2) and intended to do the same to Peter (3-4). He was a mortal threat to Christians, so his punishment by God made it safer to serve the Lord at that time.

**Disciples multiplied under every circumstance.** Whether peace or persecution prevailed, the word of the Lord grew. Whether material problems or spiritual problems had been addressed in the church, the word of the Lord grew. There is no one situation that is especially conducive to the spread of the gospel. The gospel just needs to be preached. When it is, souls will respond.

**"WHAT MUST I DO  
TO BE SAVED?"**

**ACTS 16:30**

**LEARN THE GOSPEL**

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

**BELIEVE IN CHRIST**

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

**CONFESS CHRIST**

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 3:19; 17:30

**BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST**

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF  
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

**HEBREWS 10:24-25**

**SUNDAY**

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

**WEDNESDAY**

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

**THURSDAY**

Men's & Ladies' Studies @ 6:20 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard  
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.  
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN  
ANY TRESPASS...  
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

**GALATIANS 6:1**

**CONFESS TRESPASSES**

James 5:16; 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 8:22

**PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS**

Acts 8:22

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS  
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN  
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

**PROVERBS 25:11**

"Rebuke is meant to make the sinner feel uncomfortable. We shouldn't be making people feel comfortable on the road to hell."

- Darrell Powell

**"WHOLE COUNSEL"**

**ACTS 20:27**

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**"THE NUMBER OF THE DISCIPLES WAS MULTIPLYING"**

Bryan Matthew Dockens

If growth is the goal of the present church, then it behooves Christians to observe the circumstances under which the church of the first century enjoyed its growth and duplicate those circumstances.

**Disciples multiplied in the midst of persecution.** Ideal circumstances are not required for the Way of the Lord to flourish. *"As they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand"* (Acts 4:1-4). When tribulation first arose against the church, the church grew, regardless.

**Disciples multiplied following the discipline of church members.** Churches might be reluctant to chasten their own for fear that the negativity of correction will conflict with the positivity of soul winning, but that is not reflected in the first-century example. Ananias and Sapphira, a couple in the church in Jerusalem, were confronted by the apostle Peter for dishonesty and, when they stuck to their lie, were - Continued on page 2 -

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