

EMAIL FOR WEEK 12

Good Evening,

It is Pastor Conrad again with this week's Study Guide number 10 for week twelve of the Church of Hope Evangelism and Ministry Training Course.

I trust that you have had a good week.

Sorry about the delay in sending you this week's Study Guide. I have spent much time putting this week's study guide together because it is the main teaching for this week's topic.

The topic for week number twelve is: Attributes of a healthy church / Experiencing God's power in our meetings

This teaching is based on the early church as per the book of Acts. In this teaching I have outlined the features of the early church that saw the Lord adding to the church daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:47)

In this week's teaching I have looked at the attributes of a healthy church that can be incorporated into our own church life and meetings based on a study of the early church as described in the book of Acts.

I have also added some practical keys that can help our churches to become community changing fellowships based on what other successful churches have implemented here in Australia.

It is so important as a church that we also look outside the four walls of our church and have a vision to reach out into the community with the love of Christ and the gospel message.

The church is a place where people can be encouraged in their walk with the Lord and have a sense of belonging and where they can grow in their walk with the Lord.

The attributes of a healthy church that are included in this week's study guide are relevant for both larger size churches as well as for smaller house group churches.

No matter what size church fellowship we have at present, we need to focus on,

1) Winning souls to Christ, 2) Making mature disciples, 3) Equipping and releasing people into ministry, and 4) Helping all those in our fellowship to feel connected and cared for. Jesus emphasized the importance of every single person to God in the parable of the lost sheep. **(Luke 15:4-7)**

Having fellowship with other believers was a big focus in the early church which experienced rapid growth. As believers our church fellowship is our church family where we can receive love and encouragement in our walk with the Lord.

In Acts 2:42 we see four major features of the early church that contributed to its rapid growth, "And they continued steadfastly in the **apostles' doctrine** and **fellowship**, in the **breaking of bread**, and in **prayers**." In this passage of Scripture we see that in the early church believers;

- 1) Continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (the Word of God),
- 2) Had consistent fellowship with other believers,
- 3) Took communion together (breaking of bread) on a regular basis with other believers, and
- 4) Had a strong and committed prayer life

Here we see that having fellowship with both God and other believers was a key feature of the early church

In this week's study guide I have outlined many of the characteristics of the early church which can be implemented in our church fellowships to help see our churches making a greater impact in our communities

As I put this teaching together I have looked at many things which we will be adopting here in Blacktown as we see our new church beginning to grow. I have also looked at some of the features of the successful churches here in Sydney such as Hillsong.

However every church is different and we must allow the Lord to unfold His plan and strategies for our churches. (Psalm 127:1)

My prayer is that as you go through this study guide the Lord may speak to you in relation to some keys that may help your church to grow more fruitful and that may help your church to make a greater impact in your community.

We must always depend on the Holy Spirit to draw people to our churches as we allow God's plan for our fellowships to unfold. The Lord said to Zerubbabel when he was rebuilding the temple, "... 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of Hosts." (Zechariah 4:6)

There are two teachings for this week:

- 1) Study Guide Number 10: Attributes of a healthy church / Experiencing God's Power in our meetings (12 pages) and
- 2) Core Values for church of Hope (in Melbourne) - 4 Pages

My prayer is that this week's topic will be a blessing for your church and ministry and that you may gain some fresh God given ideas to help your church become even more effective in your community.

Well here goes. May you enjoy the readings for this week.

God Bless

Conrad