

A Heart for the House

God wants the Church of Jesus Christ to thrive. That will happen when we as individuals fulfill our potential in life. When God's people flourish they instinctively build His Church.

Psalm 92:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ Those who are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. ¹⁴ They shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing,

Psalm 1:3 (NLT)

³ They are like trees **planted** along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they **prosper in all they do.**

Psalm 104:16–17 (NLT)

¹⁶ The trees of the LORD are well cared for— the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. ¹⁷ There the birds make their nests, and the storks make their homes in the cypresses.

- They produced **aromatic** and durable wood
- So superior Solomon had them imported for the temple and other buildings
- God says we can stand tall and strong above the rest
 - Firmly established and resilient
 - Thriving, Kingdom-minded people
 - Understanding our purpose is far greater than ourselves
 - Committed to resource the work of God
 - Time – Treasure – Talent

5 Things

What am I Building?

What do I love?

What am I adding to?

What am I confronting? – don't allow complacency

What am I supplying?

Acts 2:46–47 (The Message)

They followed a daily discipline of worship in the Temple followed by meals at home, every meal a celebration, exuberant and joyful, as they praised God. People in general liked what they saw. Every day their number grew as God added those who were saved.

How You Can I Help My Church Thrive

Exodus 1:7 (NKJV)

⁷ But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them.

- Human nature will be prone to settle down and become comfortable
- The biggest enemy to you and I flourishing spiritually is complacency
- Every one of us needs to have a commitment to maintain and empower momentum
- Complacency makes the Christian life dull and mediocre

5 things that help us grow

Your Testimony

You and I are living epistles

2 Corinthians 3:3 (NKJV)

³ clearly *you are* an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart.

- When your life is flourishing in God others will be inspired by your testimony and example

Your Attention

Don't allow yourself to just go through the motions
Stay receptive and actively involved in the teachings and messages

Hebrews 13:17 (NLT)

¹⁷ Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.

- Am I applying the principals being taught?
- Yes, the teacher has a reasonability but so does the student
- Am I a Fan or a Follower?
- Jesus said – Follow me

Your presence

2 Corinthians 2:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

- You are a fragrance of Christ
- You make a difference in the Church Services
- You contribute to the atmosphere

Acts 2:1 (NLT)

On the day of Pentecost* all the believers were meeting together in one place.

- There is a cooperate anointing
- When we gather together the Spirit of God moves
- Suddenly!

Your Gifts and Talents

Ephesians 4:16 (NLT)

¹⁶ He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

- God uses our individual strengths and talents
- You have unique gifts that can help build the Church
- We are either helping or hindering

You Health (Spirit, Soul and Body)

2 Peter 1:5–8 (NLT)

⁵ In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. ⁸ The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Your spiritual health and growth matters
- When a core of people is spiritually healthy the whole body thrives
- Believe for God to bless you with a healthy spirit, mind and body so you can serve unhindered

How to Thrive in the Church

3 John 2 (NKJV)

² Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

- It is Gods desire for you and me to thrive and prosper in every area of our lives
- Being planted in the Church is a key to prosperity
- Those who share the load constitute the healthy soul of the Church
- Our commitment and contribution cause the local church to flourish

1 Timothy 6:17–19 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

- In this passage we see 4 levels of Christian growth and maturity that will help us to thrive

Enjoyment

Servanthood

Giving

Sharing the Load

Enjoyment

1 Timothy 6:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ ... nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

- The issue is not so much about riches as it is one of trust
- God doesn't mind if we have nice things
- He doesn't want things to have us!
- He wants us to enjoy life
- We should be the most magnetic, fun loving people around
- Are you living with an excitement of what God has in store for your life?
- Enjoyment is not the only thing God has for our life but it sure is better to enjoy church than endure it

Servanthood

1 Timothy 6:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Let them do good, that they be rich in good works

- It will add to your enjoyment of the church when you make a commitment to serve in God's House
- Ushers, greeters, youth and children's church volunteers who serve others with a willing heart make a valuable contribution to the body

Psalm 100:2 (NKJV)

² Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.

- Don't serve grudgingly but with a spirit of gladness

Giving

1 Timothy 6:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ ready to give, willing to share,

- When we become actively involved in serving in God's House you gain a revelation of what the spirit of giving is all about
- Some people are happy to serve but less enthusiastic when challenged to give
- You limit your own life
- It is better to give than to receive

Acts 20:35 (NKJV)

And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' ”

Thriving Financially

People mistakenly believe that Jesus taught against money, but the real issue is our attitude about money. Part of the covenant God made with Abraham, the covenant Jesus grafted us into, was to prosper him.

Genesis 12:2 (NLT)

²I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.

“Over the centuries, there has been a lot of upside-down thinking about wealth and finance that has limited the effectiveness of the Church. For too long God's people have been discouraged from flourishing financially and the result has been that they have been limited in their ability to make a huge impact in blessing others.”

– Brian Houston – How to maximize your life

Don't resist the topic of giving or finance

- We will always rise to defend what we love
- The truth is 'the love of money' keeps many from advancing in the purposes of God
- When it is time to give tithes and offerings in church, what is your response?
- Do you come prepared to give?
- Do you act in defiance or annoyance?

Luke 12:34 (NKJV)

³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Psalm 92:14 (NLT)

¹⁴ Even in old age they will still produce fruit; they will remain vital and green.

- Fruit is not meant to stay on the tree
- Apple trees don't eat apples
- Our fruit is for others
- If we are not prospering, we cannot bear fruit for others
- God's purpose is to bless us for the sake of others
- When we live well beyond ourselves we bless others

Sharing the Load

1 Timothy 6:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ willing to share

If there were a malnourished orphan standing here most of us would be willing to give generously to help

How many would be prepared to take the orphan home?

Those who share the load are the ones who will do whatever it takes to fulfill the vision

The 5-fold ministry is called to equip the church to do the ministry

Ephesians 4:12–16 (NLT)

¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.

¹⁵ Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶ He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

- Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers are to inspire others
- To bring us to unity through sound teaching
- To the full and complete standard of Christ
- The work of the ministry is the **responsibility** of every believer
 - Be a witness! – only 2% of Christians invite the unchurched
- When you plant yourself in God's House you will begin to thrive and flourish!

Your thinking determines what Thrives in your life

What you allow to flourish in your thinking has a powerful impact on who you are and who you become

When we allow our heart and thinking to line up with the word of God we will begin to become the person he says we are

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV)

⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

- Thoughts that are negative, cynical or defeatist are contrary to the heart of God
- Jesus warned that offenses would come
- There is danger when we allow an offense to dominate our thinking

Hebrews 12:15 (NLT)

¹⁵ Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.

- Quickly take negative thoughts, wrong perceptions or offenses captive before they take root
- The more you think about the offense the stronger it becomes
- Keep your thinking clear and lined up with God's word

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV)

bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Thoughts

- We take captive our thoughts because if we allow them to roam free, it can be a potential threat to the promises of God
- It's easier to pull a weed out while its small

High Things

- A high thing is something that starts to dominate your thoughts
- Constantly preoccupying your mind
- These thoughts will elevate themselves against God's word

Arguments

- Once a thought becomes a high thing it can quickly become an argument
- We justify why we think the way we think
- When we feel we need to defend a way of thinking it's started to make sense to you and already blurred your perspective

Strongholds

- At this stage it is no longer easy to pull out
- We start to think we are right and everybody else is wrong
- Self-deceived – James 1:22
- When this happens, it will choke our potential for a flourishing life