

# Growth Points

with Gary L. McIntosh, Ph.D.

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## Investing in Evangelism

The amount dedicated for evangelism and outreach usually represents the lowest percentage of a church's budget allocation. This is unfortunate since money invested in this category is the most likely to bring new people to Christ and the church; to say nothing of additional giving units added to the church.

Investing the financial resources of the church calls for good stewardship. The goal of your financial investing should

“One dollar of every ten in your church budget (10%) should be used for outreach and evangelism.”

be to make the greatest number of disciples. Of course, like the different servants in the parable of Matthew 25, different churches have been given differing amounts of resources. The object is not so much to bring back the most, as it is to bring to the Master commensurately more than what we have been given.

To help insure fruitful evangelism, one dollar of every ten in your church budget (10%) should be used in outreach and evangelism in your immediate community. Using this ratio, a small church with a budget of \$100,000 would invest \$10,000 in local outreach. A larger church with a budget of \$1,000,000 would invest \$100,000 in reaching out to its surrounding community.

This is not money invested in missions abroad, but for the purpose of reaching people in your church's immediate ministry area, that is, within a reasonable driving distance of your church. The money is used to communicate *who* the church

is...*what* it is...*where* it is...so people outside of Christ and the church are given the opportunity to learn of the church...to become disciples and responsible church members.

It might have occurred to you, that 10% is also the amount that churches have long taught their members as a tithe. It is not inappropriate to consider the idea of your church also tithing back to God. What better way to invest God's money than in the reproduction of new disciples reached for Christ's Church?

Begin by determining the amount, as well as the percentage of last year's church budget that was spent on local community outreach/evangelism.

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# Use evangelism activities to create relationships.

## How much money is your church investing in outreach?

If you are like most churches, you will be surprised to learn that it makes up less than 1%. With that percentage, it is easy to see why most churches are not growing through conversion growth.

Determine whether it is possible to designate 10% of your total budget next year for outreach? From what other parts of the budget might the money come? If it is impossible to jump that much in one year, begin with 2%, then the following year 3%. Keep increasing the evangelism budget by 1-2% each year until you get to 10%.

How would you spend a 10% tithe of your church's budget to reach your community? Here are a few ideas...

o *Entry Events* (such as a community Halloween festival, Easter egg hunt, Memorial Day service, Cinco de Mayo festival, special topic seminar, etc.). Be sure to obtain participants' names and contact information for subsequent follow-up and invitations to future events.

o *Entry Paths* (such as a single-parent support group, walking club, after-school homework club, etc.). These are smaller groups that should last from 6 - 10 weeks and encourage closer relationships between member and non-member participants.

o *Staff* (such as recreation director, evangelism or assimilation coordinator, visitor follow-up director, etc.). This person should be evaluated on his/her success in nurturing new relationships between church members and non-members.

o *Facilities* (such as skateboard park, softball field, family life center, etc.). The activities should, again, be used for creating relationships, not just for participants to independently come and go.

o *Publicity* (such as flyers for your upcoming events, postage, design artist, website, etc.). Publicity is best distributed to friends and acquaintances, not mailed haphazardly to a phonebook list of names.

Does 10% of your total budget seem too large? Most growing churches invest at least that in local evangelism and outreach. Such an investment produces results, both in people coming to Christ and into the church. If you are spending that much money and not seeing results, your expenditures should be reviewed and changed. Then, as new people are added to the church family, they bring additional funds into the church as new giving units...which means your 10% next year will be more than your 10% last year.

How much is your church investing in outreach?



Gary L. McIntosh and Charles Arn. For more ideas see *What Every Pastor Should Know* (Baker Books, 2013).

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## **Creating Community: Deeper Fellowship Through Small Group Ministry**

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Dr. McIntosh's and Martin's book, *Creating Community: Deeper Fellowship Through Small Group Ministry*, offers straight talk about planning, promoting, and nurturing small groups.

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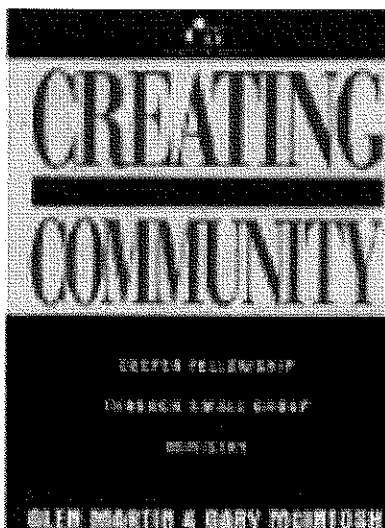
They also present ways to use prayer in a small group, proven models for starting small groups, key skills of successful small group leaders and reasons small groups fail.

Dr. Glen S. Martin is the pastor of Journey of Faith Church, Manhattan Beach, CA, and is a national speaker for numerous Christian organizations. He is an adjunct professor at several seminaries and a noted writer, author, and speaker.

Dr. Gary L. McIntosh is President of the McIntosh Church Growth Network and Professor of Christian Ministry and Leadership at Talbot School of Theology, La Mirada, CA.

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