

# Reach the Other Nine In 2009

By The Rev. John L. Witwer, Publisher -- Scripture from NKJV



In a meeting with Pastor Ken Cooper of Mountainview Church in Westminster, I made the following statement: "Out of every ten families in the Denver Metro Area, only one family regularly attends and supports a local church." His response was, "John, that's on a good day." Virtually every pastor I've talked with over the past few years agrees with that statement. So, on a good day, our local churches minister to less than 10% of the local population. But **what about the other nine**, out of every ten families in this area? **Shouldn't we find ways to reach them too?** What does the Lord want us to do? I believe we currently have one of the greatest opportunities to spread the gospel; 90% of our population does not attend a local church regularly, yet there is a rapidly growing number of urgent, unmet human needs in our community. People flocked to church after 9/11, and in our current situation I think we are ready to do it again.

**Is it possible that eight out of every ten families would regularly attend and support the local church again?** Yes, indeed, based on past history in Denver and elsewhere in the country. A pastor who has lived in the Denver area a long time told me that several decades ago in his area of town, 80% of the people attended a local church. In the Territory of Hawaii in the 1820s, according to history books in the Hawaii Public Libraries, 80% of the people attended church. That move of God in Hawaii was triggered by the work of only three dozen missionaries. In another move of God in Hawaii in the 1970s and 80s, I was involved in a statewide ministry which brought almost 10,000 new converts into the Body of Christ. In my experience it can be done. If such a move of God were to happen again in Denver Metro, it would mean that every church in our area would have to multiply three times. Most churches could easily multiply their attendance. In Acts 9:31, we see **"the churches ... were multiplied."** I frequently urge pastors and other ministry leaders to **set a vision and plan to multiply in 2009.** Just imagine the impact on the Kingdom of God. The benefits would include boosting church finances, increasing ministry outreach, and getting needed help.

There are many urgent needs in our community and these are causing people to search for help and reach out more to God: (1) I heard that 100 million people in America have chronic illnesses. Think of that. One out of every three people needs healing. (2) 47,000,000 people lack adequate health care coverage and health care and drug costs are bankrupting some people. (3) Because of the current economic turmoil, people are living in fear and anger over the decline of their savings and retirement resources. When the church provides ministries in these vital areas, I believe people will again come to church as they are commanded to do. Recently, Father Charles Reeder, Pastor of Holy Spirit Church, told me that he plans to use a DVD series entitled **"Living Up In A Down Economy"** in his Life Groups, in the first quarter of 2009. This timely and vital teaching series should have broad appeal in the community and could help to grow ministries in those home-based Life Groups.

Does the Lord want His people to assemble together regularly in synagogues, churches, and other meeting places? Scriptures are very clear about that. In Paul's letter to the Hebrews 10:24-25 we read, **"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."** A pastor asked me recently for some fresh new ideas to encourage new people to attend church. I responded, "Why don't you try getting outside the box?" Some of the biggest Christian meetings that I have ever attended over the past several decades took place in hotel ballrooms, stadiums, symphony halls and arenas; and they focused on healing and evangelism. Let's try new approaches and start inviting people to come to places where new people will come. Then minister to their needs, as Jesus did! Great multitudes followed Him and **He healed them all.**

Those meetings were especially successful when numerous churches came together in combined outreach ministries, when we focused on inviting people with needs, and we ministered to them in every area of the Great Commission, as Jesus commanded His disciples. The Great Commission is found in the following Scriptures: Matt 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-18, Luke 24:36-49, John 20:19-23, and Acts 1:6-8. In Mark 16:15-18 Jesus said to them **"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."** Salvation, empowerment by the Holy Spirit, deliverance, and healing should be manifesting in our churches and special outreach ministries, on a regular basis. In Matt 28:18-20 Jesus told His disciples to go in the authority He gave them, to make disciples, to baptize them, and to teach them to observe what He commanded. Then Jesus said, **"I am with you always, even to the end of the age."** Let's continue to minister like Jesus, in His companionship!

In the Parable of the Great Banquet we see the kinds of people that Jesus said should be invited and how to invite them (Luke 14:16-23). 16 Then He said to him, **"A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, 18 But they all with one accord began to make excuses. 21 So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' 22 And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' 23 Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.'" Jesus wants His house full! And, consistent with the Great Commission, **He wants His disciples to minister to the needy.** Those who make excuses and have other priorities will simply miss the banquet and its benefits. It is even very appropriate to be**

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**bold when inviting and bringing people. The righteous are bold as a lion** according to Proverbs 28:1. Bringing the poor and those who need healing is the primary focus of Jesus, and it should be our focus as well. Always follow the example of Jesus!

In the 1980s I was involved in one of the most rewarding and productive outreach ministries ever. The Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship Int'l in Hawaii, which I directed for almost two decades, teamed up with Evangelists Charles and Frances Hunter. For a year we trained about 1,000 believers **How to Heal the Sick**. People drove long distances to be trained and to receive healing in these seminars across Hawaii. At least 200 sets of training materials were provided to churches and other ministries. Over 50 churches took part in the healing crusade, the culmination of this year-long project, at a three-day **Healing Explosion** in the Waikiki Shell in Honolulu. About 5,000 people attended this incredible community outreach. Ministry results were awesome, as God moved in a mighty way. Prostitutes walked in off the streets and were saved. A young Army soldier was healed of AIDS. People walked away from their wheel chairs and hundreds were saved and healed. We have since used other training resources and continue to **be focused on ministering in every area of the Great Commission**. After studying and teaching all of Paul's missionary journeys, I conclude that Paul was the most successful church planter of all time, because he obeyed Jesus too.

The challenge to reach new people in the Denver Metro Area is huge and growing. Over the past sixteen years, about 70,000 new families have bought homes, townhomes, and condominiums annually. There are about 1,000 churches in the Denver Area, so that means each church on average should prepare to reach at least 60 to 80 new home owners each year. In addition, there are thousands upon thousands of apartments, hotel rooms, businesses, assisted living facilities, etc., **so each church should prepare to reach hundreds of new families annually**, if we are to accomplish the Great Commission as Jesus commanded. The task is so large, that we must make full use of all available techniques to reach these people. Print media, direct mail, Internet, and direct contact methods must all be employed. The Internet has the advantage of reaching those who are shut in, incarcerated, or outside your immediate area, in addition to communicating regularly with your current church members. Only with the Internet is it practical for a small church to literally reach into all the world with their message of the Gospel. There are now more Internet teaching ministries than churches in America.

Direct mail can be targeted very precisely and makes it very economical to reach new families who just moved into zip code areas around the church. I'd like to share a few exciting testimonials. Valley View Christian Church mailed 10,000 pieces three consecutive months and succeeded in bringing 720 first time visitors to their new church facility (that's a 2.4% response). Last year Calvary Temple mailed 5,000 pieces to announce their popular annual Singing Christmas Tree event and 90% of those in attendance in one evening performance were first time visitors. At economical printing quantities, if the church has a non-profit mailing permit, the very popular 8 x 5 automated mailers can be printed, addressed and mailed (including postage) for less than the cost of a first class postage stamp. We can also furnish new home owner mailing lists monthly to churches, to help in follow-up mailings and build up home groups.

The **Church & Christian Business Guide** went **ONLINE one year ago to multiply the distribution of church advertising and other publishing**. For the last twenty years we have printed and distributed about 50,000 Guides annually. As one of the most experienced Christian print media publishers in the Denver Metro area, we have delivered over a million copies of our Guide. **As we sought the Lord for His help to multiply our services**, He led us to further develop our publishing so the entire printed Guide would be distributed **ONLINE**. In the past year, we've published the last two Guide issues **ONLINE**. With just two clicks you can now display and print any page of the printed Guide, with the aid of Adobe Reader. Our Guides are available virtually anywhere that an Internet terminal is available across Colorado and America (in homes, apartments, libraries, hotel rooms, businesses, chambers of commerce, assisted living properties, prisons, and even other countries). The Lord has also graciously helped us multiply the number of pickup points in the community, where **FREE** Guides are made available in racks inside the front door of many supermarkets. Pick up a **FREE** Guide in your local King Soopers, Albertsons, Block Busters, Media Play, etc. With God's help we've gone from 150 to 350 pickup points.

***Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.***

We can overcome current threats and intimidation with prayer, greater boldness, and the Power of God! When threats came against the Apostles, they gathered with their companions and reported the events that caused the threats, and then they raised their voices in one accord to God in prayer. After acknowledging God's role in the events of history, they prayed for even greater boldness to be able to continue to speak God's Word, in spite of being commanded not to do so. Their prayers were answered as seen in Acts 4:29-31: 29 ***"Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."*** 31 *And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.*" The Hand of God, accompanied by signs and wonders and healings, made an awesome impact and supported apostolic ministries!

The **Church & Christian Business Guide** is helping pastors become **"Patriot Pastors"** once again and to explode church information distribution. In colonial times in America, pastors had great influence in community affairs. **We want to help restore the impact and influence of pastors once again**, by providing affordable advertising and public relations article space in the Guide. In the last edition we had a dozen articles and public relations pieces for churches. We help pastors to articulate their visions and strategies and communicate them broadly throughout the community. We have made it possible for people in the congregation to explode church information distribution throughout the community via the Internet. With only two clicks, church, ministry and business advertising can be displayed and printed on any Internet terminal. Visit **www.churchguide.com** and **reach the other nine families in 2009**.