

A scenic beach at sunset with footprints in the sand and waves crashing on the shore.

The Church That Follows Jesus

*Five Principles for a
Healthy and Dynamic Ministry*

FOLLOW ME

Matthew 9: 35-38

A photograph of a sandy beach at sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with wispy, orange and blue clouds. In the lower-left foreground, a series of dark footprints lead from the bottom left towards the ocean. The ocean waves are visible on the right, and the overall atmosphere is peaceful and inviting.

FOLLOW ME

The Church That Follows Jesus

1. Is outwardly focused and on the move

Verse 35a: “Jesus went through all the towns and villages...”

“Your mandate must be to counteract the “gravity inward ” of Christian fellowship.

Will Mancini



“The church is only the church when it exists for others”

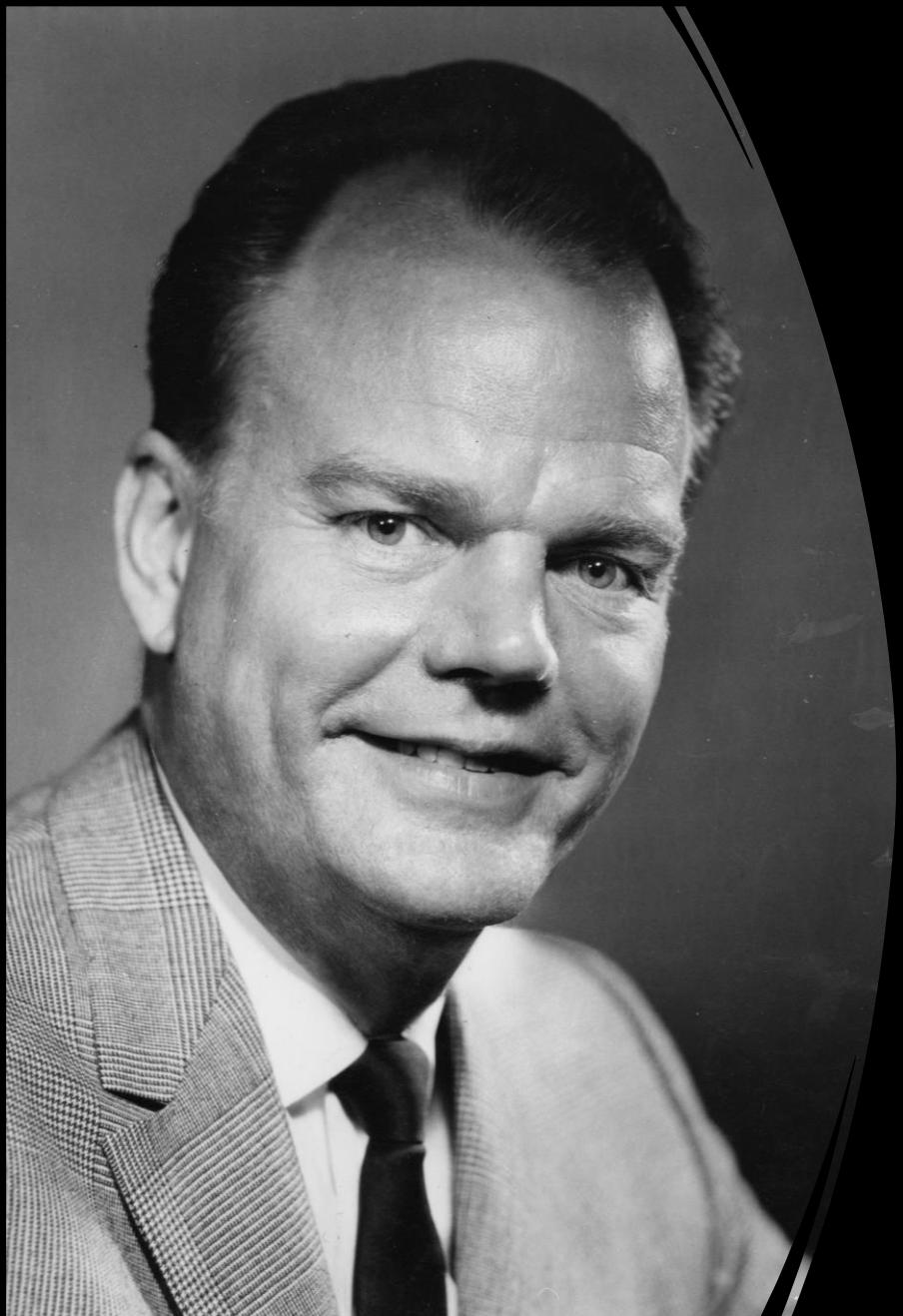
Dietrich Bonhoffer





“The Church is the only institution that exists primarily for the benefit of those who are not its members”

William Temple
(1881-1944)



“We’ve drifted away from being fishers of men to being keepers of the aquarium.”

The Church That Follows Jesus

1. Is outwardly focused and on the move
2. Demonstrates a balanced ministry

Verse 35b: “...teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.”

Key Point:

While it's important that the local church provides information, inspiration, and motivation,---What we really need most is TRANSFORMATION—changed lives—healed lives!

Key Point:

Changed lives are the most convincing proof of the truth of the Gospel message—and that comes when the church is preaching widely, teaching deeply, and providing a ministry of healing and wholeness.

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3. Views “the crowds” with compassion
not criticism or condemnation

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Verse 36: “When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

How do WE view those outside the church, outside of the Christian community?

- Do we see non-believers as an obstacle or as an opportunity?
- Are those outside the church seen as problems or possibilities?

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Verse 37: Then Jesus said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few."

“Some men see things as they are and ask, “Why?” Others dream things that never were and ask, “Why not”?



“Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm!”

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2. Demonstrates a balanced ministry
3. Views “the crowds” with compassion
4. Has an optimistic “can do” spirit
5. Will be defined by passionate and strategic prayer.

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Verse 38: Jesus said: Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Paul writes in Romans 10:13-15

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” But How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?

And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?

...and Jesus is giving us the responsibility to pray for workers to be sent (thrust) out into the harvest field!

Key Point:

A top priority for us as individual Christians and collectively as a church body is to be **dedicated to a consistent and intentional routine of prayer.**

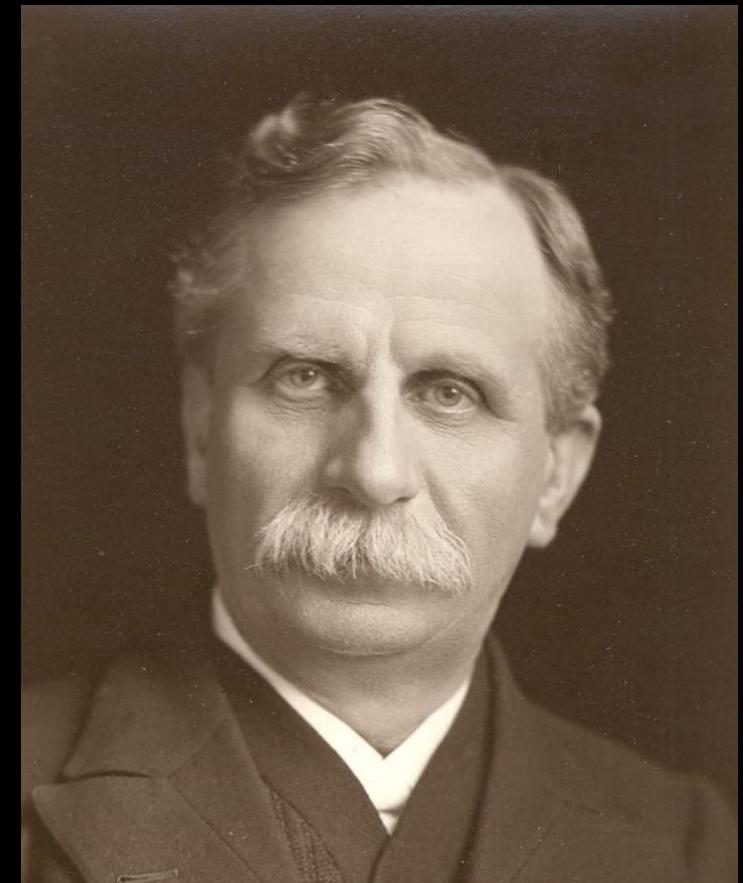
“The condition of the church may be very accurately gauged by its prayer meetings. ...If God be near a church, it must pray. And if he be not there, one of the first tokens of his absence will be a slothfulness in prayer”

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)



“The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray.”

Samuel Chadwick (1860-1932)



- Nearly half-- 43% of all Americans-- who accept Jesus Christ as their savior do so before reaching the age of 13.

Another 21 % make a decision to follow Jesus before their 18th birthday.

Another 13% made their profession of faith while they were 18 to 21 years old.

Key Point:

That means that **nearly 80%** of all those who respond to Jesus do so before they reach their 21st birthday!

Those under the age of 21 are the **most fertile** Harvest Field!

***As WE strive to follow Jesus by Gods grace
and strength may we:***

1. Remain outwardly focused, invest in the lives of others, and stay active
2. Achieve balance in life-- spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, relational
3. Look with compassion on others
4. Have a positive, can do, optimistic spirit
5. Build a life founded on intentional prayer



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