

# What Does the Bible Say About Church Growth?

## 1 Corinthians 3:1-6



- \* Although the Bible does not specifically address church growth, the \_\_\_\_\_ of church growth is the understanding that Jesus said, *“I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it”* (Matt. 16:18).
- \* Paul confirmed that the church has its \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11). Jesus Christ is also the head of the church (Eph. 1:18-23) and the church’s life (John 10:10). Having said that, it should be remembered that “\_\_\_\_\_” can be a relative term. There are different kinds of growth, some of which have nothing to do with numbers.
- \* A church can be alive and growing even though the number of members/attendees is not changing. If those in the church are growing in the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord Jesus, submitting to His will for their lives, both individually and corporately, that is a church that is experiencing true growth. At the same time, a church can be adding to its rolls weekly, have huge numbers, and still be spiritually stagnant.
- \* Growth of any kind follows a typical \_\_\_\_\_. As with a growing organism, the local church has those who \_\_\_\_\_ the seed (evangelists), those who \_\_\_\_\_ the seed (pastor/teachers), and others who use their spiritual gifts for the \_\_\_\_\_ of those in the local church. But note that it is God who gives the \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor. 3:7). Those who plant and those who water will each receive their own \_\_\_\_\_ according to their labor (1 Cor. 3:8).
- \* There has to be a \_\_\_\_\_ between planting and watering for a local church to grow, which means that in a healthy church each person must know what his/her spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ is so that he/she can best function within the body of Christ.
- \* If the planting and watering get out of balance, the church will not prosper as God intended. Of course, there has to be daily \_\_\_\_\_ upon and \_\_\_\_\_ to the Holy Spirit so His power can be released in those who plant and water in order for God’s increase to come.
- \* Finally, the description of a living and growing church is found in Acts 2:42-47. When these things are present, the church will experience \_\_\_\_\_ growth, whether or not there is \_\_\_\_\_ increase.