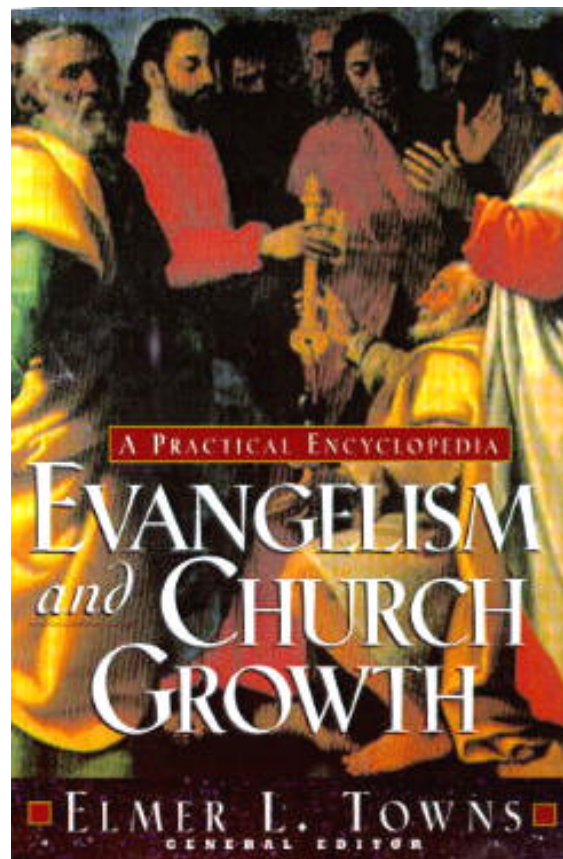




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## ***A Practical Encyclopedia Of Evangelism And Church Growth***

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My prayer for this volume is that God would use it to win people to Christ and carry out the Great Commission. Therefore, to that end I trust this will be a *practical* encyclopedia that will help pastors, ministers of outreach, youth workers, children's directors, and lay evangelists plus those who are in the professional work of crusade evangelism, directing denominational evangelism, and any other person who is working to carry out the Great Commission. This volume also targets serious students; therefore, definitions, research, and background are included to help those who need reference and resources on evangelism and church growth.

First, note that in the title, the word *evangelism* comes before the word *church growth*. Some may question why? Technically, as the articles will explain, these two words reflect two sides of the salvation door of entry into Christ and the church. Dr. Donald McGavran, missionary to India and modern father of church growth, coined the phrase "church growth" in the fifties while he was looking for a new term for evangelism. McGavran felt the term evangelism had lost its meaning because many being evangelized in India were learning the catechism or submitting to Christian water baptism. The people of India were converting to outward Christianity but not necessarily acquiring faith in the living Lord Jesus Christ. McGavran said to a banquet of the North American Society for Church Growth, "The term evangelism had picked up so much luggage, that it no longer meant what the New Testament meant." McGavran explained that evangelism was an input word meaning "the church evangelizes people to get them saved." But, McGavran was disillusioned with the output of evangelism, i.e., outward profession. He reasoned, that when people are won to Jesus Christ, followed-up into the local churches, the result is church growth. Therefore, McGavran explained, "Why not use an output term, i.e. church growth, rather than the traditional term of input, i.e., evangelism."

During the early nineties, there are several voices being raised against church growth. Some see church growth as marketing, hence they have attacked church growth as filled with novelties, non-Christian methods, or advertisement, i.e., "selling Jesus." Others have become disillusioned with the field of church growth thinking that when they learn church growth and apply it, their church would naturally grow. When that didn't happen, they turned their criticism on church growth.

No matter what the reason, this encyclopedia takes the position that while both terms "evangelism" and "church growth" are biblical, when we return to the priority of evangelism (preaching the Lord Jesus Christ) the results of church growth will naturally take care of themselves. Hence the term evangelism appears first in the title.

This encyclopedia does not include articles about evangelistic (commercial) products and programs. Also this volume does not include a notation on the thousands of non-profit organizations that carry out all types of evangelism. This encyclopedia will not carry them unless they are trans-temporal and trans-cultural. This means to be included, a program, method, or organization must have endured the test of time and been accepted world-wide.

This encyclopedia will emphasize principles of evangelism because they are trans-

temporal and cross-cultural, i.e. a principle is eternal. These are seen explicitly or implicitly in Scripture and therefore we must analyze them to understand evangelism. Specifically, a method is defined as the application of a principle to culture. As such, Sunday School is a method while reaching people for Christ and teaching them is the principle used in Sunday School. In the same sense, Vacation Bible School is a method that has reached millions of children and adults for Christ, because it used the eternal principles of evangelism.

The basis of choosing individuals to be described in this volume is their total life influence in the cause of evangelism. Many famous individuals in the history of the church are left out because their primary influence was in education or other ministries of the church. Those included had a great influence on evangelism and church growth. Those associated with evangelism or church growth who are still living are omitted because the total influence of their ministry cannot be measured. However, some who have made an obvious influence, yet are still alive will be included, such as Billy Graham, D. James Kennedy, David Yonggi Cho and Bill Bright.

This volume includes articles on some of the newest areas of evangelism, such as seeker services, evangelizing the Boomers and Busters, and modern church growth terminology such as the homogeneous unit principle and people movements. It also includes material from church history such as the First Awakening and the history of the gospel invitation. But it also includes practical material on using Sunday School enrollment to reach people for Christ and evangelism through small groups.

I want to thank the Editorial Review members for reading and making suggestions to this project. The only biographical sketches included in this volume are those of the Executive Editorial Committee and the four persons to whom this volume is dedicated. It would be humanly impossible to determine and include all of the influential person in all denominations and movements in all the world. Perhaps in a future edition they could be included. Some of the Executive Editorial Committee have contributed articles with their name attached to the articles by their initials. These reflect their strength and their orientation. I have written the unsigned articles and I take all responsibility for their strengths and weaknesses, for the omissions and oversights they do not contain. Yet the articles I have written are not solely my work. Over the years I have worked with researchers who helped locate data and footnotes. No scholar ever stands alone and surely I do not. Even many of the insights are not my own. Over the years at several seminaries and universities I have been the mentor for dissertations and thesis. It has been my privilege to look over the shoulder of graduate students exploring new areas of study. I have grown in my understanding through the research of my students. Of all the students who have helped me, Dr. Doug Porter stands out for continual assistance. He has entered this encyclopedia into the computer and has worked with me in this project. As mentioned before, I give the credit for this volume to others, and assume responsibility for all its weaknesses.

This encyclopedia is dedicated to "reaching the reachable" and "winning the winnable." May God use it greatly, according to its usability.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Elmer L. Towns, General Editor  
Summer 1995

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## Chapter One

### **ACCEPTING CHRIST**

An expression describing the act of becoming a Christian based on the biblical expression "received him" (Luke 8:40; 10:38; 15:27; 19:6; John 1:11, 12; 4:45; 6:21). Some synonymns are converison, "becoming saved," regeration, repented to salvation, etc.

#### **How to Accept Christ as Saviour**

The expression "accepting Christ" is one of those used by evangelical Christians to describe the means by which one becomes a Christian. Many people understand they are sinners and alienated from God. They also know God loves them enough to send Jesus to die for their sins. But just knowing all this is not enough! We must act on what we know and invite Jesus into our life.

Jesus described Himself as being on the outside of our life seeking to come into our life (Rev. 3:20). He pictures Himself as knocking on the door to our life waiting for our response. Although He is capable of doing so, He chooses not to force His way into our life. The only way He can come in is in response to our invitation.

When people knock on our door at home, we can ignore them, tell them to go away, or invite them in. Each of us has the same options when Jesus begins knocking on the door of our life. We can ignore Him, reject His offer of eternal life as a part of His family, or invite Him in. If you have never accepted Christ as your Saviour, you can do so right now. If the following prayer reflects your desire to become a part of God's family, use to express yourself to God.

Dear Lord Jesus, Thank you for loving me enough to die for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and save me as you promised to do. I now receive you as my Lord and Saviour. Come into my life and forgive my sins. Help me to live for you. Amen.

The words one uses to accept Christ are the means by which he or she expresses his or her desire to God. Those who sincerely come to Christ on His terms are accepted by Him as they accept Him.

### **ACCULTURATION**

The process by which a person changes his/her culture and orientation, and, adapts to the new situations, accepts some innovations, and modifies its system through contact with other societies. A person who does not go through acculturation will experience cultural disequilibrium.

### **ADAPTIVE DECEPTIONS**

Deceptive schemes adoped by the Enemy to replace earlier strategies whose beguiling powers have waned. These new deceptions may be viewed either as necessary course corrections or as upgrades to the Adversary's product line. - GOJR

## **ADHERENTS**

The unbaptized members of a declared Christian community in which many individuals are baptized believers - deeply interested in Christianity.

## **ADMINISTRATION, GIFT OF**

One of the task oriented gifts of the Holy Spirit. The supernatural ability to manage human, physical, and financial resources through the management functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling.

In a church or Christian organization, a person with this gift can lead an organization or program of outreach or evangelism in an effective manner because of his/her ability.

The strengths of this gift include (1) the ability to see the overall picture and think of long-range objectives, (2) the ability to delegate tasks to other people, (3) task orientation rather than person or need orientation, (4) the ability to counsel and motivate others regarding the task and (5) tends not to be a perfectionist, but rather judges tasks by objectives. Among the weaknesses of this gift are (1) appears to want to get out of work because he delegates, (2) appears insensitive to people and inflexible in God's work because he is committed to long-range goals and (3) may be perceived as a glorified bureaucrat. The individual with this gift needs to avoid the danger of (1) becoming power-hungry, (2) using people to accomplish goals (manipulation) or (3) lowering standards to use anyone (in spite of character flaws or doctrinal errors) to get a job done.

References: Ted W. Engstrom, *Your Gift of Administration: How to Discover and Use It* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983), Douglas Porter, *How to Develop and Use the Gift of Administration* (Lynchburg, Virginia: Church Growth Institute, 1994).

## **ADULT EVANGELISM**

When God began the human race, he made adults. Although the Bible clearly shows God's interest in children, the great programs center around men and women. A small Samuel answered God's voice in the temple and David defeated Goliath as a shepherd lad. But leadership in both Old and New Testaments rested with adults. Our Lord trained adult leaders who shaped the course of the world. Today, the divine imperative is for men and women, whose lives have been changed by the Lord, to reach lost adults for Christ.

## **ADULT NEEDS**

Relationship with God. Needs demand attention. Some are felt needs; for example, affection, self-respect, peer approval, independence, and commitment. Often adults can be reached through their felt needs. The adult will listen to the claims of Christ when he realizes God is interested in his problems. The acceptance of the gospel makes a difference in man's reaction to pressures. Although man is usually aware of felt needs, underneath is the spiritual need of which he may not be aware.

Adults need Christ and a proper relationship with Him. The adult should be guided into a

meaningful understanding and appreciation of the teachings, life, and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The adult should have an opportunity to accept Christ as Saviour from sin, and the experience of commitment to Christ as Lord. He must also have a knowledge and an experience of the person and work of the Holy Spirit as teacher, guide, and source of power.

Recognition of Failure. Life may have regrets for adults. Certain goals set early in life have not been attained. A feeling of guilt may be present because they have not done the best for their children. Their conscience could be troubled because of wrongs that they have never rectified. Because of these failures, the adult may have an attitude of defeat, bitterness, and even cynicism.

Failures point up human frailty. They provide opportunity to guide men humbly to seek God. God allows some failures in order to reveal that He is faithful and just to forgive both the present and the past (1 John 1:9). Failures ultimately prove God's mercy. No one can relive the past. But God can forgive the past and man can take care of the present and future by settling a transaction with God for salvation.

Strength for the Future. "As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more" (Ps. 103:15, 16). Man knows the brevity of life. He is here to live for a few short years. During these years he is constantly faced with tomorrow. Decisions are made which will affect tomorrow. "Where will my employment take me?" "What will be the result of my latest opportunity of advancement?" "How will my children turn out?" Each of man's problems forces him to think of consequences.

The Bible deals with the past, present, and future. Christ will forgive the past when a person places faith in Him. The Bible provides many specific examples of how to face the present world. The adult must be led into the Bible for his answers. Biblical teaching about the future, its rewards and punishment in connection with life after death, must be clearly taught.

As the Bible is taught, more than factual presentation is needed. Teaching must be for decision, because man's dilemma demands an answer. To the unsaved the emphasis is now. Salvation must be secured now in order to be secure after this life.

## **ADULT WORLD ENVIRONMENT**

Adulthood usually comprises a span of fifty years or more. The cultural environment in which adults live needs to be appraised because it contains both assets and liabilities. The pressure is heavy upon adults. If we are to interest and reach adults, we must understand them and their world.

## **MOBILITY**

Mobility has accelerated recently all over the world. It has become a threat to the stability of the home, the family, and ultimately the church. Mobility results in people living in a community without becoming neighbors, and without getting closely involved. As a result people have fewer personal roots in community life. Since the church often is a

community institution, it suffers.

The impact of expressways has also contributed to the tremendous movements of population. From one perspective, the expressway appears to be a "devisive force rather than a new dimension in church planning."<sup>1</sup> Church members who move a distance away can within a few minutes drive back to their home church. This trend has serious implications for the pastor and the church, for it is difficult for the member to assume leadership and to be regular at church functions. The member is faced with the task of traveling the distance several times a week in order to be in church. The distance and the radius of his parish also presents a significant problem to the pastor who desires an efficient and regular program of visitation among the church members. He is forced to decide between evangelistic visitation in the immediate neighborhood of the church and visitation distant from the church where some of the members live.

Anonymity. Impersonal interdependence seems characteristic everywhere. We depend upon others to help us yet we seldom form deep relationships with these many individuals. Time won't permit it. This condition contributes to the depersonalization of individuals in society. People live lonesomely together.

In many places, the adult has been reduced to a number. As a result the adult loses his name and his identity as a dynamic human being in his relationship with men. Hence, the cry that "adults are more than impersonal function, the need to be elevated [and respected] for who they are as well as what they can do."<sup>2</sup> The depersonalization of people is another reason for the church to be active in reaching people with the gospel. The friendly adult Bible study group can be the advance guard for evangelism in the church.

Spiraling Knowledge. Increased knowledge is both an asset and a liability. It is an asset because the adult knows more today than in the past. It has helped him to advance in all areas of life. It has helped alleviate the ills of humanity. Aspects of knowledge reach from the minutest reaches of the atom to the farthest reaches of the universe. Man is learning, discovering, classifying, and recording new information at a phenomenal rate. As new discoveries are made, discovery of still newer knowledge is facilitated. So the increase of knowledge poses as a threat to the individual adult because he must keep learning if he is to keep up with the world around him. Keeping current with respect to new knowledge both intellectually and skillfully is difficult.

## **REACHING ADULTS IS IMPORTANT**

Increasing Numbers. Throughout the world the number of adults is constantly increasing. Medical advances in science have helped to prolong the life span of adults longer than ever before, and the great youth population soon becomes adult. As a result there is a growing population of adults today.

Strategic Positions. Adults occupy key and strategic functions in homes, business, political, and religious life. For this reason evangelism of adults should be emphasized. More adults should be in Bible study groups.

Church Support. Adults are the principle source of leaders for the local church. The

financial support for the entire church program comes from adults. Where there is good adult support, the church evangelistic program is bound to succeed and, conversely, where there is little adult support the work limps along and often ultimately fails.

Then, too, adults determine the attendance in other divisions of the church. If adults come they will bring their children, whereas, if children come alone only part of the family is reached. Adults also will take responsibility for leadership and financial support. As a result, they become the backbone of the church, not only in number, but in leadership, experience, and potentialities.

## **BARRIERS TO EVANGALISM**

**Formed Habits.** Because many adults have crystallized their habits, it is hard for them to establish new habit patterns. However, human nature is essentially modifiable and adults can learn. Every normal human being is a changing creature. This change continues during the lifetime of the person. Adults adjust to new, different, and even difficult situations. Conversion causes a change within the inner being of the person which results in a change of action, words, and way of life.

**Hardened Hearts.** Adults are not hardened to the call of the gospel. Christ evangelized adults. He won men and women, and their lives were changed. Christ's claim came with force and impact upon mature, intelligent men and women. The Apostle Paul devoted his time in declaring the gospel message to the adult world in Europe and Asia. Adults need God's forgiveness, comfort, and guidance. This is equally true of young and older adults.

Those who are attending when they are establishing their families (25-35 years of age) will probably continue attending through retirement. Therefore, emphasis at the young adult level will pay lasting dividends. Young adults are the least reached group in the church. The young adult has struggled for freedom from his family ties during his teen years and now must form new ties. This struggle in forming new ties represents a lonely and individualistic period of life.

This should challenge each church leader to reach young adults. The message comes loud and clear. Reach them, win them, teach them - they are the church of tomorrow.

Older adults often turn to religion and spiritual things. They have time to reflect on the past and the future. Their interest in material things is replaced by a growing concern for spiritual things. The senior citizen can be reached and will respond to the gospel. "The elderly individual is often more open to the message of the church than he has ever been before."

**Hesitancy to Attend.** Many adults have never attended church and are not familiar with the people, the program, or procedures in the church. Adults fear this new venture because it can cause them embarrassment and a feeling of insecurity. Friendly men and women should greet visitors and help make them a part of the group. Regular attendants must prove themselves friends before they can introduce others to the greatest Friend of all.

Adults must be reached for Christ and can be through the church educational program.

Understanding adults and their unique problems, planning an attractive program for them, and providing good teaching will open many ways to evangelize and make Christ known.

References: 1Lyle E. Schaller, *Planning for Protestantism in Urban America* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 64, 2Gibson Winter, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1962), p. 24, 3Robert M. Gray and David O. Moberg, *The Church and the Older Person* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1962), p. 37.

## **AFRICASIA**

A term developed by Donald McGavran to identify peoples living in Africa, Asia and Latin America, i.e. the Third World. Later changed to LATFRICASIA.

## **AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY**

The age of accountability is that point in the development of a child (physical, mental, social, psychological, and spiritual) where they realize their personal accountability for sin and are able to make a decision for salvation based on their emerging personal responsibility.

Most Christians are assured that babies who die will be in heaven. this conviction is generally based on the belief of David that he would someday go to the place where his dead infant had gone (2 Sam. 2:23). How this is possible is completely open to speculation. Mullins suggests, "infants dying in infancy are changed in so far as they inherit a natural bias toward sin. But how this change is wrought by the Spirit is needless to inquire, since there is no light available on the subject beyond our speculations."<sup>1</sup> One possibility is suggested by Strong,

Since there is no evidence that children dying in infancy are regenerated prior to death, either with or without the use of external means, it seems most probably that the work of regeneration may be performed by the Spirit in connection with the infant soul's first view of Christ in the other world. As the remains of natural depravity in the Christian are eradicated, not by death, but at death, through the sign of Christ and union with Him, so the first moment of consciousness for the infant may be coincident with a view of Christ the Saviour which accomplishes the entire sanctification of its nature.

Christians generally have believed that those who die before the age of accountability are not saved in the same sense of experiencing salvation as Christians do, but they are safe, meaning God has protected and will protect them according to his own nature. This means that God could not condemn, without an opportunity to respond, an unborn baby or child who dies before the age of accountability, because that would be inconsistent with His nature.

References: 1Edgar Young Mullins, *The Christian Religion in Its Doctrinal Expression* (Philadelphia: Roger Williams Press, 1917), p. 383, 2Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology: A Compendium Designed for the Use of Theological Students* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1970), p. 663.

## **AGE-GRADED SUNDAY SCHOOL**

A Sunday School with an average attendance of up to 1,000-1,200, so named because of its organizational structure which adds a department for each age in the school grades and a department of adults with class divisions for each five year span (i.e. ladies ages 25 to 29). The upper limits of an age-graded Sunday School represent the third danger level plateau in a growing Sunday School.

## **AGRICOLA, MARTIN**

Martin Agricola was the primary influence in establishing the Protestant reformation in Finland. Illiteracy was so high in Finland, Agricola had to first teach the Finnish people how to read before they could read his books and those by other reformers. He was, however, successful in his task and by 1520 the Finnish people and their leaders had adopted Lutheranism as their state religion.

## **AIDAN**

Aidan was sent to Northumbria in response to a request for a bishop from Iona by King Oswald. In 634, he became the bishop of Northumbria and established his headquarters on the Island of Lindisfarne. He built a monastery on the "holy island" which became a significant center of evangelism. Aidan himself also traveled widely through the kingdom evangelizing the people, edifying the saints, addressing social concerns, training and ordaining local priests.

## **AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION (1824-1970)**

The American Sunday School Union was the primary agency for the foundation and development of the American Sunday School. Founded in 1824, the ASSU was primarily a lay movement committed to using the Sunday School to teach Americans moral and democratic values. The three-fold purpose of the Union was (1) to organize Sunday School leaders, (2) to publish religious literature for Sunday School and (3) to develop new Sunday Schools in unreached population centers.

As early as 1832, the ASSU organized America's first national Sunday School convention. They published the first widely used Sunday School lessons and a 100 volume Sunday School library for children. Their best known missionary thrust was the Mississippi Valley Enterprise launched in 1830. In time, this thrust led to the establishing of over 3,000 new Sunday Schools.

Following the War between the States, the rise of Sunday School conventions and denominational involvement in Sunday School weakened the influence of the ASSU. The Union continued its ministry, primarily in rural communities, but lacked the successes of its early history. In 1970, the ASSU changed its name to the American Missionary Society to reflect its new focus in working primarily with multi-cultural and ethnic groups to form new churches.

## **ANDREW**

A native of Galilee born in Bethsaida, Andrew holds the distinction of being the first called disciple. Three events recorded in the gospels describe Andrew in the context of bringing people to Jesus (John 1:40-42; 6:8,9; 12:20-22). Early church tradition describes Andrew bringing the gospel to the Synthians north of the Black Sea. Tradition holds he was crucified in Greece by order of the proconsul Aegeates on an X-shaped cross. "St. Andrew's Cross" is featured prominently on the flag of Scotland.

The major contribution of Andrew to the cause of evangelism was his introducing Simon Peter to Christ who became the chief spokesman for the gospel on Pentecost.

Andrew is viewed as the patron saint of Greece, Russia and Scotland by Christians in those countries.

## **ANSGAR See ANSKAR**

### **ANSKAR (801-865)**

A native Saxon from Flanders, Anskar began his mission in 826 at the request of the Danish King Harold and urging of Louis the Pious. He traveled widely throughout Scandinavia with other missionaries and had limited success in evangelism. He began the work bringing Christianity to the Scandinavian nations.

## **AMSTERDAM AFFIRMATIONS**

A document developed and adopted by itinerate evangelists outlining an ethical code for those involved in itinerate evangelistic ministry.

References: Billy Graham, A Biblical Standard for Evangelists.

## **ANIMISM**

The belief that all natural elements - such as mountains, rivers, trees, thunder, fire, stars, animals, and human beings - are endowed with, and likened to, a pervasive and conscious spiritual life force. - GOJR

## **ANOINTED PREACHING**

When a person is filled with the Holy Spirit, it is the source of power and effectiveness in evangelism and is the source of church growth. The characteristics of the filling or fullness of the Holy Spirit include (1) it is experiential in nature, (2) it relates to Christian living and service, (3) it is repeatable, (4) it involves yielding to God, i.e., not getting more of the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit getting more of you, (5) it is a post-conversion experience with God and (6) all believers apparently do not take advantage of it.

Paul commanded the Ephesian Christians, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). God has given men and women the opportunity to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit for effective service. Rather than

allowing alcohol to control the mind of the Christian, it is God's desire that His Holy Spirit be in control. As we establish our fellowship with God through confession of sins (1 John 1:9) and yield to Him (Rom. 6:13), we can be filled with the Holy Spirit as commanded in Scriptures. In the light of Paul's command, no Christian can claim to be in the will of God who is not constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures speak of "the law of the Spirit of life" (Rom. 8:2). Among other things, this suggests there are certain eternal laws or principles which govern the ministry of the Holy Spirit. These are the laws by which He gives power to those who serve Him. When these laws are understood, particularly as they related to the fullness of the Holy Spirit, any and every believer can experience this fullness.

The human responsibility concerning the fullness of the Holy Spirit includes both yieldedness and faith. As one yields his will to the Holy Spirit, he can by faith be filled with the Holy Spirit. Experiences associated with this fullness may vary with various personalities, but the eternal principles are unchanging. As Bill Bright observes,

In like manner, and in different ways, sincere Christians are filled with the Spirit. It should be made clear at this point that to be "filled with the Spirit" does not mean that we receive more of the Holy Spirit, but that we give Him more of ourselves. As we yield our lives to the Holy Spirit and are filled with His presence, He has greater freedom to work in and through our lives to control us in order to better exalt and glorify Christ.

God is too great to be placed in a man-made mold. However, there are certain spiritual laws that are inviolate. Since the Holy Spirit already dwells within every Christian, it is no longer necessary to "wait in Jerusalem" as Jesus instructed the disciples to do, except to make personal preparation for His empowering. The Holy Spirit will fill us with His power the moment we are fully yielded. It is possible for a man to be at a quiet retreat and become filled with the Holy Spirit. It is likewise possible for a man to be filled with the Holy Spirit while walking down a busy street in a great city. . . . It is even possible for a man to be filled with the Holy Spirit and know something wonderful has happened, yet be completely ignorant at the time of what has actually taken place, provided he has a genuine desire to yield his will to the Lord Jesus Christ.

While yielding to God is one aspect of being filled, faith is another. The two are so closely related that it is questionable if one can exist in experience without the other. Some Christian leaders speak of it as "spiritual breathing." In this analogy, yielding to Christ by confessing sin is likened to exhaling, appropriating the fullness of the Holy Spirit by faith is described as inhaling. Receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit involves two expressions of faith, asking and accepting.

Some sincere Christians today seek spectacular signs to accompany the fullness of the Holy Spirit in their life. The Holy Spirit's fullness within us is primarily to produce the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22,23). The evidence in the Book of Acts of the fullness of the Holy Spirit promised by Jesus was power to witness (Acts 1:8). On some occasions (but not every occasion) when Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit sometimes the building shook (Acts 4:31), sometimes they spoke in tongues (Acts 10:44-46), but always the gospel was preached and people were saved. These occasional outward

occurrences were often tools God used at that time to accomplish the main objective of witnessing. These outward signs were similar to the purpose that miracles had in the early church, they were an objective authority for the message of God. But when God provided the full revelation of the Word of God as the authoritative message, the outward signs or authorities passed off the scene.

It is an undeniable fact that some Christian leaders have served God with a greater effectiveness than others which cannot be explained by such factors as knowledge, personality or education. They experience the blessing of God in a unique way and appear to possess the power of God for effective service. Their deeper experience with God is the result of their seeking God and surrendering their will to him. The experience these people have with God is available to some degree to all who are willing to seek His blessing and make themselves available for His service.

To seek God is to hunger and thirst after knowledge, love and fellowship. Those who were seeking after God were, (1) wanting to know God, (2) wanting to know what God wanted them to do in a specific situation, (3) wanting to draw closer to God, or (4) wanting power to do God's will. It is similar to a young man seeking to be with the girl he loves, so he can know her, love her, and be loved in return.

There are many abuses surrounding the doctrine of seeking God. Some monks have prayed in the snow, thinking that physical denial and/or abuse would lead them to know God or be blessed by God. Some have spent years in solitude in a monastery cell, or alone on a pole, as did Simon Styletes.

While the deeper Christian life is described in various terms (the abiding life, the victorious life, etc.), it is ultimately a life characterized by seeking God and walking with Him. It is a life lived in relationship to God and at the heart of this relationship is the believer's seeking God or surrender to God.