

THE
House
CHURCH



MOVEMENT



eBook Series:
Issues Facing the Churches

David Cloud

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Table of Contents

Introduction	4
The Many Faces of the House Church Movement	5
Motivations for the House Church Movement	11
The Challenge of the House Church Movement	13
The Agenda of the House Church Movement	44
The Heretical Jungle of the House Church Movement	53
Scriptures Misused by the House Church Movement	102
The Legalism of the House Church Movement	108
The Doctrine of Apostasy: A Glaring Omission in House Church Writings.....	115
Frank Viola and the Organic Church.....	196
The Integrated Church and Vision Forum	233
Powerful Publications for These Times.....	248

Introduction

The house church movement is large and is growing rapidly.

It is also called simple church, open church, integrated church, micro church, and organic church.

According to Barna research, there are 11 million people involved in the house church movement in the United States, with 70 million having experimented with it.

A Church in a House vs. the House Church Movement

There is nothing unscriptural about a church that meets in a house. Churches have met in homes since the first century, and if that were the essence of the house church movement we would have nothing negative to say about it.

A scriptural church can meet in a house, a barn, a storefront, a cave, a forest, or its own building. Where a church meets is irrelevant. The important issue is whether or not the church is established along scriptural lines.

As we will see, the house church movement is not merely about churches meeting in houses.

The Many Faces of the House Church Movement

In one sense it is difficult to speak in generalities about the “house church movement” since it has many faces, but we have made an earnest effort to understand it “from the horse’s mouth.” For this report I read over 25 books, including the following, in addition to internet research:

- *An Army of Ordinary People* by Felicity Dale
- *House Church* edited by Steve Atkerson
- *House to House* by Larry Kreider
- *Organic Church* by Neil Cole
- *The Church in the House* by Robert Fitts
- *Starting a House Church* by Larry Kreider and Floyd McClung
- *Waking the Dead* by John Eldredge
- *The House Church Book* by Wolfgang Simson
- *Jesus Manifesto* by Leonard Sweet and Frank Viola
- *Grace Walk* by Steve McVey
- *52 Lies Heard in Church Every Sunday* by Steve McVey
- *Reimagining Church* by Frank Viola
- *Pagan Christianity* by Frank Viola and George Barna
- *The Rabbit and the Elephant* by Tony and Felicity Dale
- *Planting Churches That Reproduce* by Joel Comiskey

The “house church” presented in these books is not one thing. It is a multiplicity of things and represents a multiplicity of doctrine. It is a jungle of heresies and legalism under the guise of a new “liberty” and a new “wineskin.”

The following are four major categories of house churches, though there are many overlaps.

Please understand that if what I am describing does not fit your particular “house church,” then I am not talking about you! I realize that there are biblical churches that meet in houses and that are not guilty of these errors.

1. The no-pastor house church

A large number of house churches are organized around the principle of being opposed to pastoral authority. The rejection of pastoral authority runs the gamut from Frank Viola’s denunciation of every type of pastor/elder to Steve Atkerson’s allowance for a teaching pastor but not a ruling pastor to Wolfgang Simson’s non-authoritative “elder” that is under the direction of apostles and prophets.

“Although all house churches are different, and they decide individually how they want to do things, in general there are no ‘pastors.’ At least there doesn’t need to be. We believe that the Holy Spirit can use any believer to teach or encourage the group. In a house church, everyone is expected to participate and be looking for ways to use the gifts the Holy Spirit provides (see 1 Cor. 14:26). Certainly there is usually a facilitator of the group (although it doesn’t need to be the same person that facilitates from meeting to meeting). We believe that even a new believer could start a church in their home without feeling like they need a trained professional to come and lead it, or needing money to support such a person. We find that the lack of a specified pastor encourages every person in the group to look for answers by searching the Scriptures and looking to the Holy Spirit, rather than depending on the pastor to interpret” (“Does a House Church Need a Leader or Pastor?” HouseToHouse.com).

In connection with the rejection of authoritative church leadership, many house churches promote “open participation” services and despise traditional preaching/teaching. House2House says, “1 Corinthians 14:26 is the basis for what we do when we get together. The key is ‘each one has...’ Everybody should be able to take part. ... [Bible study is to be] interactive.”

These types of house churches emphasize the necessity of keeping the church small. House2House says, “The experts claim that 15-20 adults is the maximum number that you should let a house church grow to” (House2House FAQ).

These types of house churches tend to be composed more of disgruntled members from various churches than converts won directly by the house church itself. They criticize the “traditional” churches, but they aren’t making a major contribution to the fulfillment of the Great Commission themselves.

2. The evangelistic house church

Another segment of house churches are devoted to evangelism. All of the house churches believe in evangelism to some extent, but some have a major passion to keep the church informal and simple in order to multiply it more widely and reach more people for Christ. Some of these types of house churches do believe in pastors.

For example, Larry Kreider and Floyd McClung, in *Starting a House Church*, and Joel Comiskey in *Planting Churches that Reproduce*, support the concept of biblical pastor/elders who provide real leadership (though in typical emerging “facing both ways” fashion they weaken and even contradict this position by associating with proponents of house churches that don’t have such leaders).

3. The latter rain apostolic revival house churches.

Many of the house churches are associated with the leaders of the Pentecostal-Charismatic latter rain apostolic revival movement. They expect the return of Christ to be preceded

by a miracle-driven revival that will surpass even that of the first century. Churches will be unified; prophets and apostles will operate in sign wonders; there will be a great ingathering of souls; the kingdom of God will be established through many segments of society. This is called dominionist or kingdom now theology.

House church proponents who hold this theology include Larry Kreider, Chuck Pierce, Rick Joyner, Wolfgang Simson, and C. Peter Wagner.

Pierce describes their vision in his foreword to Larry Kreider's 2008 book *House to House*:

"The time has come again for a great new move of God to sweep the earth. Several years ago, the Lord asked me to help realign His Body to create a new order in preparation for this move to begin. He had revealed to me that we were entering a new war season, and in the midst of the season, there had to be a new alignment, a new method of gathering and 'doing church.' ... The Kingdom of God is moving forward! To accomplish this requires all the ascension gifts to be aligned: apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, and pastors. A plan of dominion for 'this age' has been released" (Chuck Pierce, foreword to *House to House*, p. 14).

We say more about this in the chapter "The Heretical Jungle of the House Church Movement."

4. The integrated family church

Another group of house churches is devoted to a strong emphasis on the family and an "integrated" philosophy, though not all integrated churches are house churches.

The Integrated Church Movement (ICM), also called the Family Integrated Church, is defined as follows:

"The family-integrated model jettisons all age-graded ministries. Those who adhere to this model view each family

unit (single or married, with or without children) as one 'block' that comprises the local church. That is, they view the church as a family of families. They view the church's purpose as equipping the parents, primarily the fathers, to evangelize and disciple their children" (Terry Delany, "Three Perspectives on Family Ministry," March 18, 2009).

This is not an organization but a philosophy, and there are many varieties of and networks of Family Integrated churches.

Many fundamentalist home schoolers are involved in the integrated family church concept. We deal more with this in the chapter "The Integrated Church and Vision Forum."

In conclusion to this section on the many faces of the house church movement, we would hasten to add that there is a tremendous amount of overlap and interconnection. It must be remembered that the vast majority of the leaders of the house church movement are not separatists. Most are ecumenical to some degree. They believe in affiliation, not separatism. They might disagree with one another, but generally they don't reprove one another or separate from one another. Most of them are associated together in a variety of ways. House2House and SimpleChurch.com, for example, are forums or umbrellas for a wide variety of house church proponents. Within these forums men as diverse as Frank Viola and Leonard Sweet and Neil Cole and Steve Atkerson associate. The house church leaders quote one another and recommend one another's books and blogs.

And they love to network. There are countless house church networks, regional, national, and international, such as Sojourners HC Network, Worldwide Awakening Ministries, Oasis Ministries, Narrow Gate, Solomon's Porch, Cities on Hilltops, Breathing Space Ministries, Harvest-Net, Lancaster Micro-Church Network, Association of Home Churches, the

Underground, Gates of Praise, All Nations, DOVE Christian Fellowship International, and Church Multiplication Associates (CMA). There are networks of networks.

This facilitates the spread of doctrinal error. All of the heresies that we document in the book *Biblical Separatism and Its Collapse* are found in the house church movement. The book is available for free in ePUB, PDF, and Kindle formats at the Free eBooks section of the Way of Life web site -- www.wayoflife.org

SAMPLE

Motivations for the House Church Movement

There are many reasons why the house church movement is growing.

One is apostasy and compromise. It is not wrong to reject human tradition and spiritual lifelessness and church growth techniques that have transformed churches into well-oiled machines in which the individual is a near meaningless cog, but the typical house church approach is not the answer to these problems.

A second reason why the house church concept is growing is the abuse of pastoral authority. Some churches are not merely pastor-led; they are man-venerating cults. We have often warned about this error which exists far too commonly among fundamental Baptist churches. (See “The Pastor’s Authority and the Church Member’s Responsibility” and “Unquestioning Loyalty to Pastoral Leadership the Mark of a Cult” at the Way of Life web site.)

Another reason for the rapid growth of the house church is the “me” generation’s rebellion toward authority, which is prophesied in Scripture:

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...” (2 Timothy 3:1-2).

A more positive reason for the growth of the house church movement is the desire to see more people saved. As we have seen, some of the house churches simply want to keep the church simple because they are convinced this is the best plan for evangelism. In itself this is a noble thing, though

these house churches are all too often associated with the heresies described in the chapter “The Heretical Jungle of the House Church Movement.”

SAMPLE

The Challenge of the House Church Movement

The Bible teaches us to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thess. 5:21), and some things about the house church movement could be a challenge to any New Testament congregation.

A Challenge to “One Another” Ministry

The house church movement could be a challenge in its emphasis on the “one-another” ministry which should characterize every New Testament church.

- “admonish one another” (Rom. 15:14)
- “by love serve one another” (Gal. 5:13)
- “bear one another’s burdens” (Gal. 6:2)
- “forbearing one another in love” (Eph. 4:2)
- “forgiving one another” (Eph. 4:32)
- “comfort one another” (1 Th. 4:18)
- “edify one another” (1 Th. 5:11)
- “exhort one another” (Heb. 10:24)

The church is not just a head; it is a body and each member is a necessary member. The New Testament church is a temple, and each member is a spiritual stone (1 Cor. 12:12; 1 Peter 2:5).

Ministry-gifted men--pastors, preachers, teachers, evangelists--are given to the churches to prepare the members for the work of the ministry and to protect them from the winds of false doctrine (Ephesians 4:11-16).

A godly pastor is not in the church to hinder the Spirit's working through the body of believers by exercising an oppressive type of "pastoring" that cripples godly vision and initiative on the part of members in the body. His role in the church is rather to build up the body so that it prospers spiritually and all of the various gifts are functioning within biblical boundaries and Christ can be Lord throughout the entire body to freely accomplish His work. The objective is to present every individual perfect in Christ Jesus (Col. 1:28).

Godly pastors have the goal of maturing the flock so that they can participate in the work of the Lord to the fullest extent possible. They do not want to tie the saints down unnecessarily but to liberate them to their greatest potential in Christ. Pastoral authority is "to edification, and not to destruction" (2 Cor. 13:10).

Many pastors are so jealous of their authority that they hinder and cripple the work of God by turning the ministry of the Lord into a near "one man show," and the people rise only to the level of being the servants to his vision and never mature to the true liberty in Christ that we see in Scripture. Brethren, these things ought not to be. (See "The Pastor's Authority and the Church Member's Responsibility," which is available from the Way of Life web site -- www.wayoflife.org.)

Pastors exist to oversee and lead and protect and feed, and this essential ministry should produce a church in which the members capably minister one to another to "the edifying of the body" (Eph. 4:12).

A Challenge to Refuse to Follow Tradition for Tradition's Sake

The house church movement can also be a challenge to a church to re-examine itself in light of Scripture and to refuse to follow any tradition merely for tradition's sake.

We do need to “think outside of the box” in this sense. I am not talking about adapting contemporary programs and philosophies that are contrary to Scripture. We must definitely remain within the “box” of Scripture. The box I am referring to is the box of human tradition.

It is so easy to mistake tradition for Scripture and to get into a rut. We Baptists say, “The Bible is the sole authority for faith and practice,” but all too often we fight for things that are mere human traditions (e.g., soul winning techniques, youth ministries, Sunday School programs, Vacation Bible School, Bible Colleges, Mission Boards) as fiercely as or even more fiercely than we fight for faith and practice based on solid Scripture.

The fact is that much of what we do in church is a matter of soul liberty and a matter of practicality rather than Scripture-based law.

The Bible says nothing one way or the other about Sunday School or VBS or a children's ministry or a youth ministry or a seniors' ministry or a college & career ministry.

What the Bible does say is that the churches are to preach the gospel to every creature, to teach God's people “to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you,” and to train faithful men (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:20; 2 Tim. 2:2).

This is a big job and it is up to each church to determine how to get this job done in the context in which it finds itself and within the boundaries of Scripture (*not* within the boundaries of the Scripture's *silence*).

Sunday School is neither scriptural nor unscriptural. It is simply a program that can be used to accomplish the Lord's Great Commission or it is a program that can be a waste of time, depending on whether it is Spirit-empowered and Bible-based and taught by the right people or whether it is a lifeless religious ritual that bores people to tears. I have seen Sunday Schools that are operated both ways. The same is true for Vacation Bible School and youth ministries and other sorts of "programs."

Many "home church" or "family church" or "integrated church" people who have rejected Sunday Schools and youth ministries are as tradition-bound as those who use these ministries. They avoid these ministries "out of conviction," claiming that it is only the job of families to teach children and youth; but there is absolutely nothing in Scripture that forbids churches from teaching them.

In fact, the churches have a commission from Christ to teach everyone. Christ put no limitation on the Great Commission as far as the age of those who are to be taught the gospel and disciplined in the "all things" that Christ has delivered to us in the canon of the New Testament faith. Thus, it is not only the job of parents to teach children and youth; it is also the job of the churches, and if they decide to do this through a Sunday School or a biblically-operated youth ministry of some sort, no one can take the Bible and say this is wrong and no one can therefore rightly condemn it.

While it is wrong to have a worldly, entertainment-oriented youth ministry, because such a thing has no authority in Scripture and in fact is condemned in Scripture (e.g., “be not conformed to this world,” Romans 12:2), it is not wrong to have a “youth ministry” as such if it is properly designed and geared toward the fulfillment of such commandments as Mark 16:16 and Matthew 28:19-20.

I have attended several “family integrated home churches,” and I have been impressed with the following two thoughts:

First, these people are doing something good and right with their own families, something that many churches are *not* doing. To “focus on the family” in the sense of building godly homes and strong marital relationships and raising children as disciples of Christ is a wonderful, godly, scriptural thing. It is very important.

But the second thought I have typically been impressed with is that these families aren’t fulfilling the Great Commission very aggressively and their “integrated” philosophy has bound them in a legalistic trap which actually hinders the fulfillment of the Commission.

It is important that each Christian family train and disciple its own children, but children need Bible truth taught at their own level of understanding and from their unique perspective, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with a church operating a Sunday School or whatever to do this.

And what about all of the children and youth in the community that don’t have the advantage of living in a godly home? What is that “family house church” or the “integrated church” doing for them?

What about the needs of children even within the membership of the church? Are they all being properly taught at home? Is every one of the families attending the “home church” really doing an effective job of discipling its own children? Probably not. Invariably, there are some families that have their “stuff together,” while there are others attracted to the “integrated church” that are weak and that aren’t really getting the job done even with their own kids.

I think about our church plants in South Asia, where we have been missionaries since 1979. Take our youngest church. There are about 60 adult and teen members. Many of the families are broken. There are men whose Hindu wives left them to raise the children. There are women whose husbands are unsaved. There are teens whose parents are unsaved. There are unmarried young people. The church does everything it can to disciple the various groups of people who exist in these imperfect situations. We don’t get young people together to play soccer; we get them together to learn God’s Word and to show them how to find God’s will, and we have authority from Christ to do this.

There are children from Hindu families who live near the church and who attend the services. If the church didn’t provide Sunday School or children’s Bible classes of some sort, who would teach those children? They would get very little from the preaching and the poor little undisciplined things don’t know how to sit still so that they don’t distract others.

Someone might say that the church families could teach them. Sure, they can if they have a desire to do so, and more power to them if they want to do this type of thing. But the

church can also teach them! In fact, in light of Christ's Commission, the church *must* teach them.

Returning to the theme of soul liberty (meaning things not specifically forbidden in Scripture) and to the issue of practicality, most of the things we do in church services fall into this realm.

We are told to do all things decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40), but we are not given a specific "order of service."

We are told to pray, but we are not told specifically to have a Wednesday evening prayer service. We could have a prayer meeting on Friday or on every day of the week. When we do meet for prayer, we can meet for prayer only or for a combination of prayer and teaching and preaching and whatever. It's not spelled out in Scripture.

Each church makes these decisions before the Lord in light of its particular situation and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and when the church leaders make that determination the members obey because that is what God tells them to do, as long as the activity is not *contrary to* the Bible's teaching (Heb. 13:17). (The Bible's silence on something is not a law against it.)

We are told to preach and teach the Word, but we are not specifically told to have a preaching service on Sunday morning and Sunday evening and Wednesday or Thursday evening. Those are issues of practicality that each church decides before the Lord.

All too often traditions that start out for the right reasons deteriorate into empty lifeless rituals, and we need to guard against this.

For a church to analyze what it is doing in the light of God's Word and by seeking the Lord's guidance is important. Times change. Cultures change. Neighborhoods change. A church's composition changes. We are foolish just to continue doing things because "we have always done it that way." That is a recipe for lukewarmness leading to spiritual death.

At the same time, church traditions are not wrong in themselves as long as they are not contrary to the clear teaching of God's Word.

A Challenge about Starting New Churches

The house church movement can be a challenge to churches to be aggressive in starting new churches.

This is a very important and needed challenge. The Lord's Great Commission teaches us to set out to preach the gospel to every soul throughout the earth, beginning in our own communities (Acts 1:8), and to baptize and disciple those who believe (Mat. 28:18-20), which is done by planting churches, because it is the church which is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). The church is the discipleship center, the preacher/teacher training center, the headquarters for world missions.

So churches must start churches. This is the wonderful pattern for world missions that the Spirit of God gave us in Acts 13-14.

Too many churches are content to exist year after year, decade after decade, without reproducing themselves, and too often they don't reproduce themselves because they simply don't have the vision and objective of doing so.

“The Southern Baptists have said that only 4 percent of the churches in America will plant a daughter church. That means that 96 percent of the conventional churches in America will never give birth. ... We need a new form of church that can be fruitful and multiply” (*Organic Church*, Kindle location 1249).

Those statistics sound right in our own experience, and in a sense we do need a new form of church that can be fruitful and multiply, but it is not a “house church” so to speak; it is a New Testament church that is not complacent, a New Testament church with a burden to reproduce itself and to bear fruit for the glory of Christ (John 15).

It is typical that the older a church gets, the less fruitful it becomes as a body.

“Fuller Theological Seminary did a research study that found that if a church is 10 or more years old, it takes 85 people to lead 1 person to Christ. If the church is between 4 and 7 years old, it takes 7 people to lead 1 person to Christ. If a church is less than 3 years old, it takes only 3 people to lead 1 person to Christ” (Kreider and McClung, *Starting a House Church*, Kindle location 266).

Again, this is probably true in general, and it reminds us that planting new churches is an important and necessary means of reaching more people with the gospel.

Overseas, on the “mission field,” churches typically want to start new churches and are earnestly geared toward that objective, but in the States this is often not the case. But why should the fulfillment of the Great Commission be different in one part of the world than it is from other parts? I know that as a missionary to South Asia, it is our passion to plant churches that reproduce themselves. We are not content to plant one church and merely see it grow numerically. We have a passion to disciple the people so that each member is busy in the Lord’s Harvest according to his individual gifts

and to train preachers and missionaries who can plant new churches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This should be the objective of every church in every place. There are never enough truly Bible-believing churches, and this is truer today than ever, and the house church movement can be a challenge to be purposeful about the matter of planting new churches.

“If you want to see churches planted, then you must set out to plant churches. The same axiom can be taken a step further to say, ‘If you want to see reproducing churches planted, then you must set out to plant reproducing churches’” (David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*).

A Challenge to Be Innovative in Evangelism

The house church movement can also be a challenge to be zealous and innovative in evangelism.

Many of the writings on the house church movement are about evangelism. In some spheres of the movement there is a real zeal to see people come to Christ and there is an innovativeness toward that end that is refreshing, even though not everything they do is biblically legitimate.

Bible-believing churches need to get out of the rut of doing evangelism the same way that it has “always been done” and focusing only on things such as door knocking and VBS. In such matters, I have found that fundamentalist churches are often as tradition bound as Episcopalians. We ought to try to find ways that bring the most fruit instead of being in a rut.

I know this is what I do as a fisherman. I am not content to go to the same place every week and use the same bait or lure and the same technique if I am not catching fish. The goal is not merely to fish; the goal is to *catch* fish! I will do

whatever is necessary, including changing fishing holes, changing lures, changing the technique of working the lure, and changing the depth of fishing. I will troll, cast, pop, jig, whatever is necessary short of dynamite!

We should do the same as fishers of men. I am not talking about bar hopping or becoming a bar maid to have an opportunity to rub shoulders with the unsaved, or wearing a bikini to a beach party or prancing around in an immodest ballet uniform, or loving the same raunchy music and R-rated movies as the unsaved so you can commune with them about the latest iTunes offerings or Hollywood garbage.

The emerging element of the house church movement (which is very large) is willing to do all of this and more, but when Paul said, “I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22), he wasn’t talking about doing things that the Word of God forbids, such as being conformed to the world (Rom. 12:2) or dressing immodestly (Prov. 7:10; 1 Tim. 2:9-10) or taking a chance of being deceived by liquor (Prov. 20:1) or having fellowship with the works of darkness (Eph. 5:11). Paul made this very clear in the previous verse. “To them that are without law, as without law, (BEING NOT WITHOUT LAW TO GOD, BUT UNDER THE LAW TO CHRIST,) that I might gain them that are without law” (1 Corinthians 9:21).

The believer is not under the Law of Moses (Galatians 5:25), but he has a new law, which is the law of Christ and the law of the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-18; 6:2). The Spirit seeks to conform the believer to the image of Christ according to the standards of the Christian faith as recorded in the New Testament canon.

Admittedly, it would be “easier” to make friends with the unsaved if it were legitimate to drink and party with them and enjoy the same types of worldly entertainment, and it is probably easier to get them to attend a “cool” church that uses rock & roll and doesn’t preach separation from the world, but we cannot disobey God’s Word in order to do “good.”

That being said, there are still lots of ways that Bible-believing churches can seek to reach the lost within the bounds of Scripture if we make this the priority that it needs to be and start thinking “outside the box” a bit. Churches need to urge each believer to prayerfully think of ways that he or she can make more contacts with unbelievers.

Friendship Evangelism

“Friendship evangelism” has a bad name among some fundamentalists, but the fact is that Jesus was a friend of sinners and Paul was always out among the people.

We are not talking about “lifestyle evangelism” in the sense of trying to win people by our lives without the gospel.

And we are not saying that evangelism can only be done by befriending people. Jesus commanded us to preach the gospel to every person (Mark 16:15) and there is no way that the believers are going to truly befriend every lost sinner. There is a definite place for mass tract distribution and systematically covering a community door to door and gospel radio broadcasts and whatever other methods we can find to get the gospel to the greatest number of people possible.

But the fact remains that friendships are important when it comes to evangelism. We are simply talking about getting to know people so that we can demonstrate Christian grace and neighborliness and communicate the gospel to them.

The way to make contacts is to get out among the unsaved and befriend them. This is where the house church movement often shines, and it should be a challenge to Bible believers.

Some people get saved “cold turkey” through door knocking and tract distribution (which are fine in themselves), but more tend to come to Christ through a relationship with a saved relative, neighbor, friend, or co-worker. So believers need to set out to build more relationships with the lost.

Consider the following statements by house church leaders:

“We spend so much time building nice barns with padded pews, air-conditioned halls, and state-of-the-art sound systems, yet we have neglected the fields. We are as foolish as the farmer who builds a barn and then stands in the doorway calling all the crops to come in and make themselves at home. It is time for the Church to get her hands dirty in the soil of lost people’s lives” (Neil Cole, *Organic Church*, Kindle location 613).

“The great commission is not a ‘take it or leave it’ option for Christians. Many of us live in self-made Christian ghettos, never developing meaningful relationships with unbelievers. We believe that friendship with people in the world will somehow contaminate us. We avoid relationships of any depth with people outside the church and often are so busy with Christian activities that we have no time for others. It gets to the stage where we don’t know how to relate with non-Christians other than inviting them to a meeting” (Felicity Dale, *An Army of Ordinary People*, Kindle location 1026).

By no means do we recommend Neil Cole or Felicity Dale or their writings, but they and their house church friends are right in this matter, at least as a general principle. Bible-