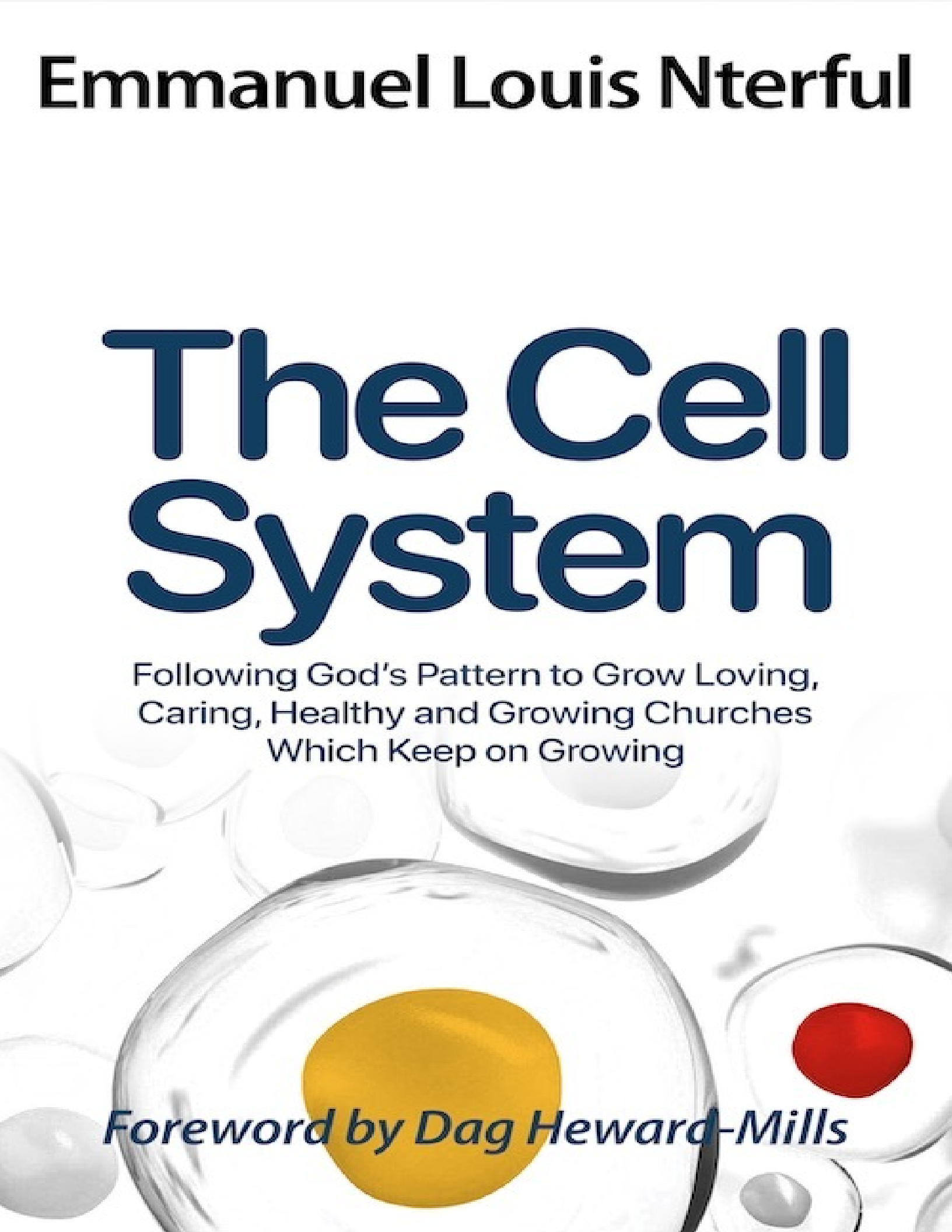


Emmanuel Louis Nterful

The Cell System

Following God's Pattern to Grow Loving,
Caring, Healthy and Growing Churches
Which Keep on Growing

Foreword by Dag Heward-Mills

The background of the cover features a microscopic view of several cells. The cells are depicted with clear, rounded membranes. One cell in the lower center has a prominent yellow nucleus, while another cell to its right has a red nucleus. Other cells with lighter, less distinct nuclei are visible in the background, creating a sense of depth and biological complexity.

Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the
King James Version of the Bible

THE CELL SYSTEM

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Table of Contents

[Dedication](#)

[Foreword](#)

[Chapter 1: You Must Follow God's Pattern](#)

[Chapter 2: The Underground Church](#)

[Chapter 3: How I Came To Discover The Cell System](#)

[Chapter 4: What Are Cells?](#)

[Chapter 5: Biblical Basis For Cells](#)

[Chapter 6: Thirteen Key Facts About Cells](#)

[Chapter 7: Benefits Of Cells](#)

[Chapter 8: Benefits Of Cells To The Church Members](#)

[Chapter 9: More Benefits Of Cells To Church Members](#)

[Chapter 10: Benefits Of Cells To The Local Pastor](#)

[Chapter 11: How To Convert From A Traditionally Run Church To A Cell Based Church](#)

[Chapter 12: How To Start A Cell](#)

[Chapter 13: What Do We Do At A Cell Meeting?](#)

[Chapter 14: Characteristics Of A Healthy And Successful Cell](#)

[Chapter 15: Duties And Responsibilities Of A Cell Leader](#)

[Chapter 16: Strategies For Evangelism In The Cells](#)

[Chapter 17: Bus Mobilization and The Cell System](#)

[Chapter 18: Challenges Associated With The Cell System](#)

[Chapter 19: What Spells Doom For Cells \(Cell Killer Blows\)](#)

[Chapter 20: Monitoring, Analysing And Evaluating The Cells](#)

[SECTION 2](#)

[THE CELL SYSTEM LOG BOOK](#)

[PREFACE](#)

[APPENDIX A: Cell Leaders Log Book](#)

[APPENDIX B: Weekly and Monthly Cell Activity Report Template](#)

[APPENDIX C: Cell Pastors ' Weekly Activity Form](#)

Dedication

I dedicate this book to Dr David Yonggi Cho, who God used to inspire this very important church growth principle - the CELL SYSTEM.

I have been privileged to be invited several times over the last decade, by my pastor, Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, who serves on Dr Cho's Church Growth International (CGI) Board , to Korea , to see the amazing example of church growth at the Yoido Full Gospel Church. The church has grown from a five member congregation to the largest church recorded in the Guinness Book of Records.

The CELL SYSTEM has been the veritable bedrock of this church growth example.

Thank you Dr Cho.

Foreword

God is not confused or clueless about what He wants done. God is not a victim of circumstances. God always has a plan. When Jesus was leaving the earth, He gave us a plan for how to get new disciples: “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to all nations!”

In Exodus 25:40, God told Moses, “And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.” Indeed “the church in the wilderness” has Moses as their pastor and serves as a pattern for church development .

In line with patterns, God teaches us about meeting as a church in small groups. This is the cell system! Just as the human body is made up of cells which cause it to grow, so the cells (small groups) in the church serve as the vehicle of growth in the church.

A cell group can be as small as two or three members. The Bible tells us that when two or three are gathered in God’s name, it is a church because God is present (Matthew 18:20). Also, on the day of Pentecost there was a cell meeting going on in a house when the Holy Spirit descended on them with the evidence of speaking in tongues. “When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting” (Acts 2:1-2).

In this book by Bishop Emmanuel Louis Nterful, he painstakingly teaches us the importance of the cell system, the benefits of the cell system, how to start a cell and what to do at cell meetings. You will find this a very useful handbook for starting and growing small groups in a church.

I recommend this book to everyone who believes in obeying the Great Commission and growing the church of God. “Cell System” will be a useful tool for you!

Bishop Dag Heward-Mills

Chapter 1

You Must Follow God's Pattern

If we are going to succeed in any aspect of the ministry that God has given us, it is of utmost importance for us to learn to follow the patterns God provides (the lay outs, the direct instructions and specific designs) because God is a God of patterns!

So then, what is a pattern? The dictionary definitions of pattern include among others the following

1. A distinctive style, model, or form.
2. An original or model considered for or deserving of imitation.
3. Anything fashioned or designed to serve as a model or guide for something to be made
4. A pattern is the repeated or regular way in which something happens or is done.

A pattern can also be defined as a plan, original, guide, instruction and template.

Dear pastor, please remember that when it comes to building His church, God is not confused and disoriented at all. God has:

- A distinctive style
- A model
- A form
- A plan
- An original
- A guide
- An instruction
- A template.

Be careful therefore to always follow the pattern He has given you. That's the key to success in the ministry and life in general.

And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt **hearken diligently** unto the voice of the Lord thy God, **to observe and to do all** his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all

nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

Deuteronomy 28:1-2

I will instruct thee and teach thee **in the way which thou shalt go**: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Psalms 32:8

Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.

Proverbs 22:28

Watch the Pattern Rev. Moses!

We see in the Old Testament that God instructed Moses and others to abide by the patterns He gave them. If it applied to Moses, a servant of God, then it applies to all of His servants today. The following are a few of the patterns God established and demanded nothing but full compliance.

1. The pattern of the **anointing oil**.
2. The pattern of the **tabernacle**.
3. The pattern **of the priesthood installation**.
4. The pattern **for carrying the ark** of the Lord.

The Pattern of the Anointing Oil

The Lord gave Moses specifications for making the Holy anointing oil.

The LORD said to Moses, “Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh 500 shekels, and of sweet-smelling cinnamon half as much, that is, 250, and 250 of aromatic cane, and 500 of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil. And you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil. With it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony, and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils and the basin and its stand. You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy. Whatever touches them will become holy. You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests.

Exodus 30:22-30 ESV

Notice that the Lord was very specific and detailed in His instruction to Moses. The components were defined. Their quantities were spelt out. Also Moses was instructed clearly on two things.

1. Who this Holy anointing oil was meant for. Those **going to be consecrated into the office of the priest**. Nobody else!
2. Ordinary people could not under any circumstances **prepare a similar kind of oil for themselves. It would lead to death!**

Read it for yourself!

And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations. Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you. Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people.

Exodus 30:31-33

God is dead serious about patterns!

The Pattern of the Tabernacle

The tabernacle was the residence God asked Moses and the children of Israel to build for Him during their sojourning in the wilderness on their way to the Promised land. It was the place of His abode amongst His chosen people.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

Exodus 25:1-8

Notice once again that He gave a particular pattern, guide, plan, for the tabernacle, and warned that, that pattern be strictly followed!

According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the

pattern of all the instruments thereof, **even so shall ye make it.**

Exodus 25:9

You shall construct it **in accordance with everything that I am going to show you**, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture.

Exodus 25:9 AMP

Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings **exactly like the pattern** I will show you.

Exodus 25:9 NIV

You are to construct it **following the plans I've given you, the design** for The Dwelling and the design for all its furnishings.

Exodus 25:9 MSG

So you see that not only did the Lord want a dwelling place for Himself, He also wanted it done according to a particular, specific design. This is very important if God was to approve and bless what He has asked Moses to do. Moses was obedient to this instruction to the letter! Notice the following expressions during the setting up of the tabernacle and learn a useful lesson as you walk with the Lord.

And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars. And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; **as the Lord commanded Moses.**

Exodus 40:18-19

And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark: And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the vail of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony; **as the Lord commanded Moses.**

Exodus 40:20-21

And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle northward, without the vail. And he set the bread in order upon it before the LORD; **as the Lord had commanded Moses.**

Exodus 40:22-23

And he put the candlestick in the tent of the congregation, over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle southward. And he lighted the lamps

before the LORD; **as the Lord commanded Moses.**

Exodus 40:24-25

And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation before the veil:
And he burnt sweet incense thereon; **as the Lord commanded Moses.**

Exodus 40:26-27

And he set up the hanging at the door of the tabernacle. And he put the altar of burnt offering by the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt offering and the meat offering; **as the Lord commanded Moses.**

Exodus 40:28-29

And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to wash withal. And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat: When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; **as the Lord commanded Moses.**

Exodus 40:30-32

And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. **So Moses finished the work.**

Exodus 40:33

This is the point I'm trying to show you, my dear church worker, church planter, pastor. Moses did everything "**as the Lord commanded Moses**". Finally, he finished setting up the tabernacle. But how did he finish? Yes, your guess is as good as mine!

Thus did Moses: according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he.

Exodus 40:16

Moses followed the pattern God described to him. He did not stray away from it. He did not modify it, he did not attempt to modernize the 'archaic' plan of his Lord. He implemented the design to the last instruction. That is why God blessed what Moses had done. He manifested His awesome presence and glory as a clear sign of approval for the work Moses had done.

Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent

of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Exodus 40:34-35

God's presence filled the place! Could this be the reason many of our churches and ministries are dry, devoid of the anointing, power and presence of the Holy Spirit? Because we are not doing the ministry according to the pattern the Lord has dictated? It is very possible!

The Pattern of the Priesthood Installation in the Old Testament

Once again, God had a guide or pattern on how this ought to be done.

1. Only people from the line of Aaron could become priests.

And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.

Exodus 28:1-2

And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that *they* may minister unto me in the priest's office.

Exodus 30:30

Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for every thing of the altar, and within the vail; and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office *unto you* as a service of gift: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death

Numbers 18:7

2. Their ceremonial regalia was defined.
3. The consecration ceremony into the office to minister to the Lord was clearly stated.

Exodus chapters 28-29 deal with the last two. And God was emphatic! Keep to the pattern.

And thus shalt thou do unto Aaron, and to his sons, *according to all things which I have commanded thee*: seven days shalt thou consecrate them.

Exodus 29:35

Who Made You My Priest?

Several bible characters paid the heaviest price for venturing into the office of the priest uninvited! God's priests were required to carry out certain functions. It was nobody's business trying to help them or replace them, no matter the circumstances. If you were not part of the priesthood you had to stay out. That was the pattern.

1. Korah and his aggrieved friends agitated for the office of the priest and were killed by God.

Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face: And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even tomorrow the Lord will shew who are his, and who is holy; **and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.** This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company; And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD tomorrow: and it shall be that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also? For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?

Numbers 16:1-11

And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the

men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.

Numbers 16:31-33

2. King Saul tried to help Prophet Samuel carry out some sacrifices to the Lord when the latter delayed. Saul lost his kingdom for that attempt.

And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering to me, and peace offerings. And he offered the burnt offering. And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him. And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, **THOU HAST DONE FOOLISHLY:** thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.

1 Samuel 13:8-14

3. For trying to stabilize the Ark of God which contained the presence of God from embarrassingly falling before the people of Israel, Uzzah, the son of Abinadab, was slain by the Lord.

And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there FOR HIS ERROR; and there he died by the ark of God.

2 Samuel 6:6-7

Notice that "...and God smote him there for his error...".

What error did Uzzah commit? After all, was he not a Levite? He was a Levite

alright but the Levites were not supposed to touch the ark. That was not part of the job description. There was a threat of death when they did that! Read it for yourself:

And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation. And to the office of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest pertaineth the oil for the light, and the sweet incense, and the daily meat offering, and the anointing oil, and the oversight of all the tabernacle, and of all that therein is, in the sanctuary, and in the vessels thereof. And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites: But thus do unto them, that they may live, and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in, and appoint them every one to his service and to his burden: But they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die.

Numbers 4:15-20

So you see, there was a pattern to follow and not paying attention to it brought instant death! Your ministry can come to a sudden end and destruction if you do not learn to carefully and obediently follow the guides, plans and master plans the Lord has laid up before you.

The Cell System - God's Pattern for building His Church

I have shown you some of the patterns in the Bible to draw your attention to this very important church growth pattern- the cell system. When the Holy Spirit birthed the church, He gave the apostles this wisdom to grow His church. They had not built churches before. In fact, they had no idea what to do but the Holy Spirit guided them. He had the master plan to develop, build and grow the church of Jesus Christ. Remember you cannot build the church. Jesus Himself is building His church.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.....

Matthew 16:18

What was this pattern that the Holy Spirit gave to the early church founders

and workers? Very simple yet powerful. Have church in the public places and also in the homes of people.

Lord we have too many church members.....

What a problem to have! Too many members. And yes, this is what happened with the early church. Under the mighty influence of the Holy Spirit literally multitudes were saved and added to the church.

Notice these scriptures.

One hundred and twenty members in the upper room:

And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

Acts 1:15

Three thousand added.....

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Acts 2:41

Five thousand members added.....

Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

Acts 4:4

Multitudes of members added...

And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.

Acts 5:14

And the list of phenomenal growth goes on.

This massive growth of the church brought up a serious problem. How were the apostles going to care for these people? Where could they all gather to fellowship, pray and worship? Where were they going to get increasing numbers of church leaders to care for the increasing numbers of converts?

The Holy Spirit had the answer. Have church at the public places (example in the Temple, synagogues). But also have church in the homes of people. Let some of the converts who showed some degree of leadership lead these meetings in

the homes. That way you can sustain the growth, care for the flock and keep on growing! The apostles accepted and followed this pattern of “doing church” and we all know the results- a constantly growing, caring, loving church.

Dear pastor, do you want to see this in your church? Then go back to the pattern! Church in the public place (your church building or where you normally meet) and church in the homes of your members! That was the New Testament pattern! That was the wisdom the Holy Spirit gave to the apostles to build His Church.

And they, CONTINUING DAILY WITH ONE ACCORD IN THE TEMPLE, AND BREAKING BREAD FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

Acts 2:46

And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

Acts 5:42

As for Saul, HE MADE HAVOCK OF THE CHURCH, ENTERING INTO EVERY HOUSE, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

Acts 8:3

Paul knew that if you can't find the saints in the temple, you will find them in the homes. You see that? Even the enemies of the church knew what was going on.

And when he had considered the thing, HE CAME TO THE HOUSE OF MARY THE MOTHER OF JOHN, whose surname was Mark; WHERE MANY WERE GATHERED TOGETHER PRAYING.

Acts 12:12

And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

Acts 16:40

And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from HOUSE TO HOUSE.

Acts 20:20

Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the CHURCH THAT IS IN THEIR HOUSE. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

Romans 16:3-5

The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, WITH THE CHURCH THAT IS IN THEIR HOUSE.

1 Corinthians 16:19

Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

Colossians 4:15

And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:

Philemon 1:2

So the early church did not have church meetings only in the temple, synagogues or big places but they were also meeting in houses or homes.

THIS IS THE PATTERN THAT ANY PASTOR WHO WANTS THEIR CHURCH TO GROW MUST FOLLOW! This is the pattern you need to deploy to build a loving, caring and a mega-church, that will continue to grow!

This pattern is what this book attempts to teach about. How does it work? How can it be implemented? What are the benefits you can expect to reap from the Cell System? And many more... Let's get going.

I see you receiving and flowing in the wisdom and pattern of God to grow your church!

Chapter 2

The Underground Church

I believe that through this book, the Lord is about to unveil to you one of the most powerful keys that He has given to His church to help evangelism, the successful building of His church and proper discipleship of the church members - CELLS. One thing we must understand is that Jesus did not send us to make converts but to make disciples.

Jesus said **“Go and make disciples of all nations...”**

Matthew 28:19 NIV

A disciple is an obedient follower. We are not just called to make converts but to make disciples. The converts must be turned into followers. A disciple is a learner, a follower, an adherent of the doctrines of another. The problem we are facing in the church today and the reason why the church is not growing as we wish, is because many of the people that we are bringing into the church remain very shallow, not deep in their knowledge and commitment in their walk with the Lord. Many of our church members do not even know the importance of owning a personal Bible, and even if they have one, they cannot even open to the different books of the bible. It's no surprise that many fall away as quickly as they got converted.

And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

Mark 4:16-17

A lot of them have become miracle admirers, prophecy seekers, cheer leaders, supporters, and dancers with no meaning. That is why they cannot follow for a long time. Converts leave the church at the least provocation, problem or temptation. Because of this, we must begin to understand that we need to apply the principles of the Word of God that will help us transform the converts into true followers of Jesus Christ. There is therefore the need to help the sheep to gain more understanding of their new found life in Christ Jesus. This will stabilize them in the Lord.

We may think that our communities are saved, but that is a lie. There are thousands of people who are not saved right where our churches are; we need to

move into all these communities around us with the gospel. We also need to have fellowship with one another. All these are made possible through the cell system. This is an idea the Holy Spirit brought to the church right from the onset of the church, and I believe that it is a blessing to our ministries and churches.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, CONTINUING DAILY WITH ONE ACCORD IN THE TEMPLE, and breaking bread from HOUSE TO HOUSE, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Acts 2:41–47

It is clear from the above scripture that the early church gathered to worship in two places - the temple, which was the public place of worship, and also and in homes. This is an important principle we should understand.

The Mistake of the Modern Church

Dr. David Yonggi Cho is the man God used to build the largest single church in the world using the cell strategy. He says that, the mistake that the modern church has made and that has prevented the church from seeing growth, increase and establishment in a substantial manner, is that ministers of the gospel, especially pastors and church planters have gone away from the Holy Spirit inspired way of building a church; which is, gathering in the temple and also in homes.

It is clear that the early New Testament Church, under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit, met in the temple, and also from house to house.

So why did the Holy Spirit lead them in that way?

1. In those days, they did not have very large meeting places similar to what the modern church has today.
2. The early church grew dramatically from one hundred and twenty people in

the upper room to three thousand (Acts 2:41), then five thousand (Acts 4:4), then multitudes (Acts 5:12-13), and even the multiplication of disciples (Acts 6:1).

3. The problem that arose was how the few apostles were going to take care of this massive growth. Already in Acts 6, there was a problem of complaints from the Grecian converts concerning how their women were badly treated and neglected.
4. Another problem the apostles had to deal with as a result of the rapid growth of the church was the dilemma concerning giving themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word, rather than undertaking endless administrative duties.

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

Acts 6:1-4

The apostles were confronted with challenges and these challenges obviously overwhelmed them. So the Holy Spirit who was helping and guiding them, revealed this amazing solution to them- let the multitudes be preached to, pastored and cared for both in the public places (temple, synagogues) and also in their houses. This way, the Holy Spirit granted them insight into how to run the church in such a way that more people will be evangelized and saved, and properly looked after. This revelation caused the apostles and disciples to hold church meetings both in the large public places and the homes of the ever increasing multitudes.

And they, continuing daily with one accord IN THE TEMPLE, AND BREAKING BREAD FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

Acts 2:46

The term “from house to house” is now known in the modern church as the house churches or home cells or simply cells.

If we are going to be able to build large, caring and loving churches which keep on growing, then we will need to go back to the pattern that the Holy Spirit gave to the early church. This is why I'm writing this book. This book will help you to understand and know how the early church operated.

Currently, we have restricted church to only the temple worship, but there is a need for us to also extend the church to the homes of people just as the early church did. The churches in the homes were described as "house churches". In some other parts of the world, there are churches that cannot worship publicly in the open; they are all 'underground', and these churches actually meet in the houses or homes of people or members of the church.

House Churches in Communist Russia

During the 70 years of communist rule in Russia, churches were taken over and destroyed. The persecution of the Russian believers was unimaginable, brutal and relentless. From being exposed to the severe cold weather in Siberia during winter, to forced psychiatric treatments, Christians endured the most heinous persecutions. So the churches went "underground" to avoid the wrath and fury of the communists. While I was studying in the Soviet Union in the early 1980s as a young Christian, I found out that the churches were meeting underground; worshipping in homes and in secret. At the time, meeting in the large church buildings and public places was illegal and Christians caught doing so faced harsh sanctions, hence the need to go "underground". The church had to survive all these persecutions and the only way it could do so was to employ the cell system.

This way, thousand upon thousands of believers kept the faith in Christ until communism was ditched by the late 1980s.

The Underground Church in Communist China

Since its inception and till date, the Communists in China, just like their Russian counterparts have persecuted Christian believers. And yet the church has soldiered on, and has multitudes because of the house churches. It is believed that millions of Christians gather to pray, worship and serve the Lord in these 'illegal' house churches. The strategy the Holy Spirit gave to the early church many years ago is what is sustaining Christianity in communist China today.

These two examples I have narrated demonstrate the effectiveness of the house

churches or cells, in building, growing and sustaining the kingdom of God. It also emphasizes why we must not abandon this wonderful pattern the Holy Spirit has given to His church.

The church gathering outside the temple is referred to by various names in different parts of the world. They include among others, cells, bacentas, busells, area fellowships, covenant groups, life groups etc. There is the need for ministers and especially pastors to make a major and significant midstream correction regarding how to build the church of God, and the correction is that we should not restrict the church only to the temple meeting!

The strategy that has helped the early Christian church, and even some modern day churches to withstand adverse persecutions, and has afforded them dramatic exponential growth is what I want to share with you in this book.

The Cell Church is the Underground Church

Many years ago, Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, my pastor and the Founder of the United Denominations Originating from the Lighthouse Group of Churches (UD-OLGC) taught about the ‘underground’ church. He said; “it is the church that you cannot see; the fellowships, the ministries, the small groups, outside the main church”.

The cells in a local church constitute the underground church. I prefer to call them area fellowships (the very early designation Bishop Dag gave to these groups) because that designation brings into focus the entirety of what the cells do and stand for. It is a fellowship in an area and through that, even if the ‘super’ church (large public place of worship) is not in existence, it can still thrive.

I pastored a church in the early 2000s in a suburb of Accra called, Korlegonno, not less than ninety percent of our members were in area fellowships (cells). What it meant was that, if something happened in the future, such as curfews, epidemics, pandemics or state of emergencies and we could not gather in our cathedral, the church could still continue in these fellowships. Many years ago, we had discussions on how to keep serving the Lord as a church family through the underground church in the event of any such bad news or development in our city or country.

Covid-19 and the Cell Church

The situation I mentioned above became a reality in the year 2020. There was an outbreak of a viral disease which quickly spread to most countries. Because

the covid-19 spread from one person to another through close contacts, the main measure to reduce the spread was SOCIAL DISTANCING. This measure was adopted by all governments worldwide, and its practical implication meant that people were not allowed to gather in large groups. One of such groups that was not allowed to gather was the church of Jesus Christ.

During that terrible situation the Church was divided into two clearly distinguishable groups. The first group were the churches that run homes cells. They just continued all church meetings, programs and activities in their cells. Using various modern technology and social media platforms including Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, Twitter and the like, preaching and teaching notes were distributed to the church members. Sunday services and other church activities, were transmitted live on Facebook to the church members, who gathered in these small cell groups to enjoy them. Care of the members, prayer meetings, church offerings and tithes were all made possible through the cell groups.

Indeed, these churches who had adopted and implemented the pattern of God earlier, saw very little difficulties during that period of social distancing.

The story was entirely different for those churches which were not running cells. The pastors were confused and perplexed. They simply did not know what to do. Only eternity will reveal the damage done to the kingdom of God! I still remember that frantic call a famous man of God made to me asking me “bishop what is the way out for my church?”

Dear pastor, please learn to have a great respect for the counsel and wisdom of God.

.....but wisdom is profitable to direct.

Ecclesiastes 10:10

Chapter 3

How I Came To Discover The Cell System

My very earliest encounter with the cell system was in the early 1990s, when we used to run Area Outreach and Follow-up Ministry in the Lighthouse Chapel International during its formative years. It was a great move by my pastor Bishop Dag Heward-Mills. It brought much fruit to our burgeoning ministry. However, I must admit that my understanding then was very small. In October 2005, I had the privilege to be invited by Bishop Dag to accompany him to Seoul, Korea, to attend the Church Growth Conference hosted by Dr. Yonggi Cho. At that conference, one of the strategies for church growth that we were taught and experienced was the cell system. This really affected and impacted me dramatically. Because to think that a church that had eight hundred thousand people could be built through small, small groups was an amazing revelation. During the Church Growth Conference, on one of the days we were all assigned to cell groups, to attend and to observe. And when we arrived, we saw between seven to ten Koreans (mostly women) attending these cell meetings; it is these small groups that when Dr. Cho gathers together makes up the eight hundred thousand membership of his church.

I left that cell meeting with great excitement in my heart.

On one of the days, during the Church Growth Conference, Dr Cho gathered about 150,000 of his cell leaders and members in a stadium for a prayer meeting. This was just mind blowing! I came back from that conference very inspired by the cell system and I decided to study it more intently.

I read Dr. Cho's book, *Successful Cell Groups* and listened to his messages on the cell system as well. I then decided to start cells in my church. I was then in the Lighthouse Chapel International, Sakumono Satellite church. At the time, our attendance was just about one hundred and fifty people in 2005.

Within a couple of months, the church attendance more than doubled from the few cells that we started. Towards the end of 2007, I was transferred to Korlegonno satellite church. When I landed in Korlegonno in April 2008, I knew what I was supposed to do. We had a congregation of about two hundred and fifty people and my first series that I preached was on *Tell Them* –a soul winning series. I did that for about two months. After a while, I started teaching the church about cells because I knew that was the key to growing the church. So I taught the church about the cell system, and trained the shepherds (that is how

we call our church workers,) in preparation towards the cell strategy. However, something unfortunate happened after I completed teaching the whole congregation and actually training the initial cell leaders. I still cannot pinpoint what exactly happened. Somehow I did not launch the cell system in my new church as planned. I still cannot understand why I delayed. In those days, the main strategies we deployed to build and run the church was fellowships and ministries like Ushers, Fellowship for Christian Businessmen and Professionals International, Choir, welcome teams, evangelistic teams and the like.

Now, as the months went by, in 2008, I realized that the church was reducing in attendance. I would go to the Korle Gonno Cathedral on Thursdays to oversee fellowship and ministry meetings and I was always saddened by what I saw. I would come across ministries like the choir and prayer with some five or ten people in attendance at that huge cathedral. I was so depressed and discouraged during those months.

By September of 2008, the church had reduced from about two hundred and fifty members to around one hundred and fifty. Our congregation was just on a downward spiral and we could not find the answers to arrest the decline and to grow the church.

Go back to the cells!

I started praying and asking the Lord for guidance to know what to do. Pastor, your key for revelation and breakthrough in the ministry is prayer. Any pastor who does not, cannot, and will not pray, will not have a successful ministry. Prayer is the first apostolic instruction.

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

1 Timothy 2:1

Paul said to Timothy, first and foremost, let there be prayer and supplication. In his powerful book, *Transform Your Pastoral Ministry*, Bishop Dag says a pastor has many things to do but his first duty is to pray. I remember sitting in my prayer chair in my study on a particular day praying and telling the Lord, that the church was finishing. Do not be afraid to let the Lord know how you are really feeling about the issues of the ministry and life in general. Remember that God is a FATHER, and we are His beloved sons and daughters! “What should I do?”, I asked the Lord? I prayed passionately and earnestly from my heart. I was a desperate pastor. I was praying and studying the scriptures at the same time. I

was reading Revelation Chapter 3 to be exact. I felt the Holy Spirit drawing me to this portion of Revelation chapter 3:

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. REMEMBER THEREFORE HOW THOU HAST RECEIVED AND HEARD, AND HOLD FAST, AND REPENT. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

Revelation 3:1-3

There are many of us who have a name that we have a church but these churches are dead! God says you have a name that you are alive but you are dead! Indeed my church was dying! No it was dead!!!

...Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.

Revelation 3:2

So even what you have is about to die.

This portion of the verse caught my attention: **“Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast...”**.

As I meditated on this scripture, (revelation comes through meditation on the scriptures), I realized that, God was telling me that I had received something but had not held it fast and had forgotten it. I had let something He had showed me sometime back slip out of my hands. I had forgotten about it! I had not paid attention to some wisdom key the Lord had graciously given to me about how to build and grow His church. And the Lord was saying to me “remember how you have received and heard, hold fast and repent”.

Reflecting on this scripture, I began to ask myself “questions”. What was it that I had heard and the Lord had taught me over the last few years to do? What was it that in my last couple of months in one of the satellite churches that I pastored, the Lord taught me to do that brought tremendous and dramatic growth to the Church? As I sat down, the revelation just dropped in my Spirit. Like relentless tidal waves it all began to rush back to my quickened mind. The Lord was taking me back to the cell system. He was saying I showed you the cell

system but you have abandoned it and chosen your own ideas. You have abandoned the wisdom that I gave to you! That's why your church is dying! That's why your church is not growing!

Dear pastor, does that sound familiar to you? How often you have suffered and been frustrated in the ministry because you put aside the counsel of God? That is what had happened to me! And it was a really big deal. I was truly struggling. But thank God for His abundant mercies. Oh praise the Lord.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psalms 107:1

Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

Psalms 107:8

That reminder from the Holy Spirit about where I had gone astray came to me with the speed of light. I picked my phone and called one of my senior most lay (volunteer) pastors, Pastor Richard. I said to him, "Pastor Richard, we are going back to the cell system." This was around November 2008 and from that point, I started re-organising again. I preached about the cells and trained the shepherds once again.

In April 2009, we re-organized the whole church into cells and launched out. We started with about thirty cells. Before we launched the cell system in our church, we used to have just a couple of people come to the altar to give their lives to Christ during salvation altar calls; many times nobody responded! But when we started the cells groups, we started getting tens, and even hundreds, of people come to give their lives to Christ, the church started galloping. The one hundred and fifty member church started galloping. Soon we started increasing in leaps and bounds.

Within seven years of dedicating ourselves to the cell ministry in that church, the Lord brought us amazing Church Growth. The one hundred and fifty member church blossomed into thousands. Truly we became a mega church! Our Young peoples' Church alone grew to more than a thousand in Sunday attendance. We started having five adult services on a Sunday. I remember starting a new early morning service at (6:30am), in May of a particular year, which within a few months crossed 900 members in attendance.

But it was not only growth in numbers. Through the cells, the members experienced much love, care, security, and better pastoral care.

This is why I am happy to talk to you about Church Growth through cells. I believe that anybody who will take these teachings seriously, will practically experience the growth that has eluded him or her in the last couple of years.

In my days at the Korle Gonno Cathedral (I've since been transferred from that church to start a new work), every Sunday, not less than one hundred people on the average gave their lives to Christ and that was the minimum. In fact when we had one hundred converts on a Sunday morning, we knew we had not done well on that day. We knew we had not worked hard during the week. We could actually have two hundred to three hundred and fifty new converts coming from our cells in the communities during the Sunday services. When we had four hundred cells groups, our policy was that every cell should win and bring at least one soul to church every Sunday. So it meant that the four hundred cells were expected to generate four hundred new converts every Sunday! One thousand six hundred converts each month! This is what led to the massive church growth we experienced. And you can experience the same! The same formula works everywhere! Oh praise the Lord for this amazing church growth strategy!

Chapter 4 What Are Cells?

The first statement I want to make and I don't want you to ever forget is that, I personally do not know of and cannot think of any other greater, better and a more powerful and potent church growth strategy that God has given us than the strategy of cells. God wants His church to grow. God wants filled up churches.

Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the Lord.

Ezekiel 36:37-38

And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

Luke 14:23

So, every pastor or church worker must have the vision to have a large church and keep growing it. That is the heart of God. The heart of God is that many will be saved into the Kingdom.

Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:4

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

For the church to grow, many things will have to work together. We are looking at one of the most important things we will have to do to have growth in our churches – cells. And for me, it is the greatest church growth key!

Cells as they are widely and commonly known all over the world, also have many different other names. For instance, Dr. David Yonggi Cho, the founder of the largest single church worldwide prefers to call it the cell system. Some call it the house or home churches, the area fellowships, community groups and the life groups.

In the Lighthouse Chapel International denomination worldwide, over the years different names have been used for the cell groups including the terms bussells (bus and cells), AOFMS and currently bacentas. As I said earlier, I prefer A.O.F.M, which is Area Outreach and Fellowship Ministry. The reason is that, it explains clearly what this is about.

Definition of a Cell

A cell is a small group meeting made up of members of a particular church (the mother church). The aim of the area fellowship is to create an environment for fellowship amongst the members, bible studies, expression of love and care amongst the members, and evangelism.

We can also define a cell/area fellowship as a small group meeting of members of the same church which takes place during the week in a house for the purposes of fellowship, bible study, prayer, evangelism, and the showing of love and care for one another. It is important to take note of the descriptions given in the definition. These are what makes the cell groups significantly different from other small groups. **A cell is a small group, but not all small groups are cells.**

A cell is simply a church in a house or home.

Characteristics of Cells

1. It usually has a membership of between 6 and 15 people.

A cell usually must have a membership of between 6 and 15 people for better and effective care by the cell leader. It also helps the cell leader to know them well, pray for them, and counsel them. Since most cell leaders are workers and lay or volunteers for that matter, the small membership will help so that the fellowship does not become a burden to them.

When your church grows to twelve members, you can start cells. Divide them into two groups of six or divide them into three groups of four. If you are a pastor who has just started a church, you can run them yourself. You can run these initial cells by yourself on different days.

So right from the beginning, you the pastor can run two or three cells yourself. On Monday you have one group, Tuesday another group and then on Wednesday the last group.

The Missionary Who Started His Church by Planting Cells

I know of a missionary who used to be with me at my Cathedral, and learnt

about the cell system. When he was sent on missions in another country, for about six months, he couldn't find any meeting place to plant his church. So this is what he did. He started outreaching and starting different cell groups in different locations of the city. During the week he moved around and held cell meetings in several places.

After about six months, he finally got a meeting place for his new church. On the first day they met as a church, he had sixty people in attendance. He simply gathered his cell groups together to launch his new church. That was already a mega church! What a blessing!

2. The initial members are members of the particular church, that is, the mother church and through soul winning, people are added to the cells.

When starting cells, it is your initial members from your mother church that you divide and then you launch out. Through evangelism and soul winning, others are won and added to the cells and subsequently to the church.

3. A cell is NOT a generalized Christian fellowship.

What do I mean by that? When you are asked to start a cell, you have not been asked to go and start a general Christian fellowship in your area. A general Christian fellowship is a group of Christians who gather for the purposes of fellowshiping and studying the bible. This is another reason why people who say they have cells don't succeed. I hear many pastors say I have cells but it is not working. The church is not growing. It is because of such mistakes. One of such mistake is that when you send your shepherds or workers to go and start cells, they go and start a general Christian fellowship.

Instead of doing the hard-work of soul winning, fasting and praying as a shepherd and organizing his people (members) to go and win lost souls, he uses short cuts. For instance, the cell leader instead of doing soul winning and evangelism to grow his/her fellowship, rather goes round inviting other Christians who already belong to churches to join his new cell.

What is the aim of the cell? To win souls so that our churches will grow, but many shepherds who have been sent to start cells don't want to pay the price of doing real soul winning and reaching out to lost people. Rather than focusing on the multitudes of lost people, you see such cell leaders and shepherds cutting corners and inviting their friends and people who go to other churches. So evangelism does not take place in the cells because of this lackluster attitude. A

cell is not the same as a generalized Christian fellowship. It is a ministry of the mother church!

4. The cell meetings are held on a particular day of the week as decided upon by the Pastor of the Church.

It is important for there to be uniformity so that cell members are clear in their minds when the cell meetings are held. When I started cells in my church, the meetings used to be held on Thursdays, but after two or three years, we changed it to Saturdays. We realized that because Thursday is a weekday, there was so much vehicular traffic in the city, and also most of the cell leaders and members who were supposed to attend the cell meetings were also workers; thus the cell meetings were not well attended and generally ineffective. Sometimes, cell meetings that must start at 6pm, ended up starting at 8pm or does not even happen at all because often the cell leader was not able to make it.

We realized that Saturdays was better because most people do not work on Saturdays. Furthermore, outreaches and other evangelistic activities could also be done more easily, before the cell meetings were held. New souls won on Saturdays could immediately be invited to join the cell meetings that same day. Then again it was easier to remind the converts about Sunday service as compared to Thursday. But there can be exceptions. In fact it is important for the pastor to be flexible with the cell meeting days to allow all the different categories of members to participate. Rigidity has the tendency of cutting off many among the sheepfold from the blessedness of the cell meetings.

For example, if a cell leader's work is such that he/she is not available on Saturdays, the cell meeting can happen on another day. The key principle is this: if ever there has to be a change, it must be authorized by the Pastor. A cell leader does not have the right to change the meeting day. If for some reason, the cell meeting does not happen on a particular day of the same week, it must happen on the next available day.

In other words, we must not cancel the cell meetings. For instance, if it rains heavily and because where you have your cell meeting has no roof, or when it rains, the place gets flooded, you can postpone the meeting to another day. The cell meeting must however, be held on the next available day after the rains have stopped. But what happens usually is that, cell leaders would cancel the meeting until the following week. These are some of the reasons why your cells do not work. Anything that is not regular and repetitive does work nor flourish.

5. The cell is a ministry of the mother Church and not an individual church on its own.

The cell is an offshoot of the mother church. Starting a cell is not an opportunity for the cell leader to start his/her own satellite Church. The cell is a small group that belongs to the mother church. So if you are sent from the parent church to start a cell in an area, that cell is part of the mother church. It is not an individual church.

6. The cell meets in homes that are provided either by the members themselves or by people in the communities.

Where are we going to have the cell meetings? In the homes of members and people in the community. When you are sent to start a cell somewhere, you have to first of all look for a venue or meeting place. One of the amazing things is that God blesses His work. What I have noticed is that, even most converts that are won in the course of starting the cells, are usually very happy to open their homes for the cell meetings. It is amazing how the Holy Spirit touches the hearts of even new converts to help with the work of God. We see an example of this in the early New Testament Cell church.

And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

Acts 16:14-15

Immediately after her conversion to the Lord, Lydia invited the apostles to her home. Later her home became a venue for cell meetings.

So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

Acts 16:40

During person-to-person evangelism, cell leaders can ask for the opportunity to start cell meetings in the homes of new converts. Many of these converts will gladly open their homes for the cell meeting. God always blesses His work. Sometimes, where the cell leader has been sent to start a cell, there may not be church members living there. So either people in the communities or even the

converts from the cell leader's evangelistic activities will open up their homes for the cell meeting.

7. The cell meetings are regular.

For anything to be successful, one of the key underlining principles is that it has to be done on regular bases. For example, for prayer to work, you have to pray all the time. For the word of God to work in your life, you must study it all the time. Yes! That is why the scriptures tell us to pray without ceasing. So do not allow the meetings to be erratic, they must always happen. If for any good reason the cell meeting does not take place it must be done on the following day, and not a week later. Cancelling meetings kills the cell. Cell meetings must be regular. The reason why some cells do not work is because the cell meetings are not regular. Sometimes cell leaders, would not even inform their supervisors about such cancellations until they called for assessment meetings and then you realize that a particular cell has not met for a while.

Chapter 5

Biblical Basis For Cells

Is the cell system biblical and are there examples of cell meetings in the bible? The answer is an emphatic yes! Anything we are involved in which is not scriptural; will not work and may not last. We must be convinced that the cell system is grounded in the scriptures. I am going to show you so many scriptures that talk about this idea.

Rev Moses Please Create Small Groups To Pastor These Multitudes!

The first time we see the cell system is actually in the Old Testament. The concept of small groups can be gleaned from Moses' encounter with his father-in-law in Exodus chapter 18.

Biblical scholars believe that there were some two million Israelites that left Egypt to the promise land. Jethro advised Moses that instead of ministering to the needs (both spiritual and physical) of these millions of people all on his own on a daily basis, Moses should reduce that burden by appointing rulers of thousands, fifties and tens to help him.

Both Moses and the church in the wilderness were about to struggle and wear themselves out until the small groups were put in place. Moses oversaw two million people through three thousand leaders instead of all alone. It sustained and preserved the people. It also kept Moses and his people going. Moses was relieved of doing all the work in the wilderness alone. The burden was shared!!!

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God: When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws. And Moses' father in law said unto him, **THE THING THAT THOU DOEST IS NOT GOOD. THOU WILT SURELY WEAR AWAY, BOTH THOU, AND THIS PEOPLE THAT IS WITH THEE: FOR THIS THING IS TOO HEAVY FOR THEE; THOU ART NOT ABLE TO PERFORM IT THYSELF ALONE.**

Exodus 18:13-18

Jethro then advised the creation of small groups, cells, to look after these great multitudes of people. That was the principle of the cell system.

Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. **Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.** If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

Exodus 18:19-26

Moses, being the leader of the Israelites, had to deal with all the problems of two million people on a daily basis. Dr. Yonngi Cho says that the burden for church growth must not lie only on the shoulders of the pastor. He calls these pastors who carry the burden of the ministry all by themselves as supermen pastors. These pastors want to do everything so that they can be seen to be great or they simply feel insecure to involve others. The pastor must share the burden of evangelism, care, and guidance, counseling and church growth with the ordinary church members and get everybody onboard.

The Cell System Is God's Idea

The cell strategy is not the idea of man, but the commandment of God. Jethro made it clear to Moses that the small groups idea that he was proposing was God's command, His instruction, His method.

If thou shalt do this thing and God command thee so...

Exodus 18:23

- i. The concept of small groups can be found in Exodus 18:13-15.
- ii. Small groups or cell meetings in homes are abundantly clear in the New Testament. The New Testament church was broken into cells under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. How did twelve disciples and seven deacons take care of the large congregation? The Holy Spirit Himself gave them the wisdom to meet in homes, when they were not gathering in the temple or other public places for worship where the disciples took care of them. Then on the Sabbath day's they will gather in the big places such as the temple for worship. Many times, we do not do well because we do not have time for the Holy Spirit to teach and show us how to do His work. The Holy Spirit is the one who does the work through us. So we need to depend on him.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Psalms 32:8

Dr. Yonggi Cho says this, "look at the early church; there were two distinct ministries; house to house ministry and the temple ministry". On the day of Pentecost, three thousand people gave their hearts to the Lord Jesus. The next time, five thousand and then, multitudes came to him. There were only twelve apostles and seven deacons but there were multitudes of Christians, tens of thousands of Christians. These small groups of leaders could never take care of such a large flock of sheep. And also there were no large gathering places. Christians could meet at specific places using home cell groups.

The Bible says;

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

Acts 2:42, 46

Therefore, the early church consisted of home cell groups. Through home cell groups, the leaders of the early church went from house to house for ministry then on Sundays; the early Christians brought converts to the temple to experience the thrill and excitement of worshipping God together. On weekdays,

they were cared for, and loved by each other as well as sharing in all good things.

Dr Cho continues, “These two types of ministry help to build the body of Christ. Nowadays, the church has forgotten house to house ministry, the most important ministry. Only the temple ministry is being stressed. Some people feel that the church should only be operated by the clergy or pastors, and that people should only come to church to meet the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the reason the church cannot reach sinners. Most sinners will not come to church by themselves. They feel intimidated and insecure in the church. They are afraid of coming to church. The home cell groups can reach the sinners when they respond to friendship. Invite all your neighbors and tell them about Jesus Christ and the good of salvation over a cup of tea or coffee. The reason most churches are dying is that they are not using house to house ministry, the basic ministry of the body of Jesus Christ”. (From a sermon CHURCH GROWTH AND THE CELL SYSTEM)

Bishop Oyedepo, the Founder of the Winners Chapel International Church, a mega-church headquartered in Nigeria, says that based on the scriptures from the Old and New Testament, if you do not practice cells or house to house ministry, you are not modeling your church after the biblical pattern.

I fully agree with the assertions from these ministry giants.

The New Testament Cell Church

The idea of cells or church taking place in small groups or in houses is abundantly clear in the New Testament. Let us look at some New Testament scriptures that show us clear examples of cells. What is a cell? It is a church in the house. What is a church? Where two or three have gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Matthew 18:20

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all THE HOUSE where they were sitting.

Acts 2:1-2

And when they were come in, they went up into an UPPER ROOM, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

Acts 1:13-14

So you can see right there that the Church started in the upper room, which was a house.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the TEMPLE, and breaking bread from HOUSE TO HOUSE, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

Acts 2:46

The early church was meeting in the temple and from house to house.

And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the TEMPLE; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the TEMPLE asked an alms.

Acts 3:2-3

We can see that the early Christians used to worship both in temples and also from house to house. So every pastor must have two places where his church takes place - Sundays in your big church, temple, cathedral or auditorium and within the week divide your members into the cells and let them continue to hold church.

That is how God ordained a church to be and if you do not do that you cannot expect the blessing of Church Growth. When Lighthouse Chapel International started, it grew very fast in the early 1990s because of cells or area fellowships. Bishop Dag Heward-Mills introduced these same principles. We had cells littered all over the city of Accra and that was what brought growth to the Church.

This is something that the Lighthouse Chapel International denomination has been doing over the years. The first satellite churches of our ministry were formed by clustering together these cells. One day, when Accra woke up from sleep, Lighthouse had about fifty branches in the city and its environs.

AND DAILY IN THE TEMPLE, AND IN EVERY HOUSE, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

Acts 5:42

Preaching and teaching not only occurred in the temple but also in the homes of members. The mistake of many contemporary pastors is that, they have reduced the ministry work only to Sundays. You see, when your sheep or members are only cared for and taught on Sundays, it means you leave them to the perils of wolves, jackals and the hyenas during the week. By the time they return the following week, everything you taught them would have been forgotten. That is if they even end up coming back at all.

And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, ENTERING INTO EVERY HOUSE, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

Acts 8:1-3

But Saul tried to destroy the church; going from house to house, he dragged out the believers, both men and women, and threw them into jail.

Acts 8:3 GNT

Saul tried to destroy the church. He dragged men and women out of one home after another and threw them into prison.

Acts 8:3 GW

During the persecution of the church, the early Christians were scattered. Paul knew that if he went to the homes (cells or area fellowships), he would find the Christians there. Do you know that if for some reason something happens and we cannot go to church, church can continue through the cells? And even now it is easier because of the advent of technology. We can hold church services without necessarily gathering in the church or temples. The pastor can send teaching manuals with points and examples, and offerings can be taken and banked.

When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own

accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. And when he had considered the thing, HE CAME TO THE HOUSE OF MARY THE MOTHER OF JOHN, WHOSE SURNAME WAS MARK; WHERE MANY WERE GATHERED TOGETHER PRAYING.

Acts 12:10-12

The cell meeting was happening right there in the house of Mary the mother of John Mark. There was a cell meeting right in the house of John Mark's mother.

And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us. And they went out of the prison, and ENTERED INTO THE HOUSE OF LYDIA: AND WHEN THEY HAD SEEN THE BRETHREN, THEY COMFORTED THEM, and departed.

Acts 16:12-15, 40

Do you remember Lydia the convert? Why were the brethren in her house? Church was happening there! It shows that since Lydia was converted, her house had become a meeting place for the believers.

And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have TAUGHT YOU PUBLICLY, AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE.

Acts 20:20

The teaching of the word of God not only happened in the church but from house to house through cells. Here, apostle Paul was clearly reminding the believers about the place where he had taught them the things of God- publicly

and in houses of people.

I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the CHURCH THAT IS IN THEIR HOUSE. Salute my well beloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

Romans 16:1-5

Right there in the scripture above, we see cell meetings happening in the house of Priscilla and Aquila. So the point I am trying to make is that, one of the mistakes that you have made in your Church in the last couple of years is that, your Church only happens in the main auditorium or church hall; you have departed from the pattern that God gave. But thank God it is not too late to go back! Someone once said, “what’s the use of a mind that cannot change?”. I see you making a major U-turn to embrace the wisdom of cells in your church and ministry.

The Lord will bless you mightily!

The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

1 Corinthians 16:19

Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

Colossians 4:15

And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to THE CHURCH IN THY HOUSE.

Philemon 1:2

I’m sure by now, you have agreed with me that the early church did not have church meetings only in the temple, synagogues or big places, but they also met in houses or homes. God’s word as shown in the numerous scriptures I have cited makes this abundantly clear. There should be no more argument about this.

As a result of the meeting in the temple and also meeting from house to house

and serving and fellowshiping together, an atmosphere was created that led to growth of the church. Many kept on joining under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. When we combine worshipping in the visible or big church with the underground church which is the cell, it will lead to church growth. Church Growth will be possible through these cells.

Chapter 6

Thirteen Key Facts About Cells

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:16

The human body is made up of cells which cause it to grow. The cells multiply and replicate. Likewise, the cells are the smallest unit in the church. The cells serve as the agent of multiplication and growth in the church. Cells in the church can be compared to cells in the human body. Every human being can be dissected until we get the smallest unit of the individual which is a cell. Every organ in the human body, such as kidneys, heart, and the brain, is built from very small units called cells. Your brain has brain cells. Your muscles have muscle cells and your liver have their own cells. It is when we put these small units together that we get a bigger organ. That is the mission of the cells, to serve as the agent of multiplication and growth. That is why if you don't have and operate cells, your church does not grow; because the agent of growth is non-existent.

For instance, if you cut off part of the thumb of a baby, after sometime, it will grow again because the cells of children are multiplying all the time. As we grow older, the cells do not multiply anymore, they actually begin to die. That is why if we cut part of your thumb as an adult, it will not grow again.

So in many of our churches, we have become like adults whose cells do not exist and grow anymore. We must create "children's cells" in our churches, and like the cells in children; they will multiply and bring growth.

God is waiting to give us more sheep only if we will do the things that He requires of us.

"...maketh increase of the body..."

Ephesians 4:16

Thirteen Key Facts About Cells

- 1. The Cell System is not a new church program. It is God's model for His church.**

It is not a new idea that modern day pastors have found through some experiments and research.

This is not a new phenomenon that has been realized by modern day pastors who think that if you pattern your church after this model, you will be successful. It has always been in existence. There is nothing new; we are only going back to what we have neglected.

The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

Ecclesiastes 1:9-10

2. The Cell System has no substitute for any growing church.

For a growing and a large church, you will need to have cells or area fellowships. It is required for your church to be healthy, your members to be cared for, as well as for continuous growth. There is no substitute!

If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

Exodus 18:23

3. The Cell System is the Founder's strategy.

The cell system is God's own strategy inspired by the Holy Spirit. The early church was born and by the inspiration of the Holy they began to meet in the temple and from house to house.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

Acts 2:46

4. The Cell System is the strategy for church growth.

Cells ensure ever-increasing church growth. Churches that have cell meetings or area fellowships continue to grow. Do you know why? People will always leave the church for various reasons, and if you have been a pastor for a while, you will realize that this happens all the time. For you to make profit in any business venture, your income must exceed your expenses. Many of our churches are in 'bad business' because the number of people coming in

("Income") is less than the number of people either remaining or leaving ("expenditure").

For your church to grow, there must be a system that ensures that a lot of people come in so that if some leave, you will always have a surplus and as you have surpluses all the time, your church will keep on growing. That is what the cells ensure. It is the master key for the growth of the church. It ensures that souls are being won all the time. It also ensures the establishment of these souls.

5. The Cell System is not a church strategy but a strategy of the Holy Spirit, who is the Lord of the harvest.

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Matthew 9:37-38

6. The Cell System ensures a healthy, loving, caring church.

Why is it so? You can bring forth children into the world and not look after them. Is it not the case that in many countries, communities and families, people just give birth to children and do not care of them? They are just not interested in the welfare of these people. They just abandon them. The cell strategy prevents this situation. The early cell Church was a healthy, caring and loving church. Take note of what went on in that church.

And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Acts 2:45-47

Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Acts 4:34-35

7. God commanded the cells system to be introduced.

If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be

able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

Exodus 18:23

8. Every outstanding, resourceful church growth story is a product of cells.

The successful church growth stories in great mega-churches such as the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul Korea, is an attestation of the potency of the cell system with regards to church growth. I encourage you to carry out a little research; you will find out that most of the mega-churches in the world are cell based churches. You will find this assertion to be true in Africa, Asia, North and South America, and even in Europe.

9. The Cell System is not a choice, it is necessary for every church which seeks massive church growth.

10. Until the leader or head of the church drives the cells, it will not work.

The senior pastor of the church must be in the driver's seat if the cell system is going to be successful. Without that kind of passionate, all-involving leadership, the cells will not work in the local church. The cells will not flourish! They will simply not advance. Everything depends on leadership! This applies also with the cell ministry.

11. It is God's pattern, it cannot be ignored.

It is the outreach or evangelism force of the church. The cells become the centre of multiplication of the church. Look, let's be honest. Your choir ministry has not been successful in bringing anybody to church for a long time. When was the last time your choristers brought ten people to church? Turn your church into cells or area fellowships if you want to grow your church. Ministries like the choir, ushers and prayer are not used to grow the Church. They are used only on Sundays, after that they do not really function again until the next Sunday. All the members of these various ministries should be made to join a cell so that they are made to work in contributing to the growth of the church.

12. The cell system in the local church allows a lot of leaders and church workers to be trained to be released to help with the work of the ministry.

The massive churning out of new converts makes a lot of "raw materials" available for training.

Dr Yonggi Cho has concluded that it is impossible to cross certain barriers of church growth without implementing the strategy of cells in a church. Since he is

a great apostle of God, I choose to believe his observation. The church is built on the foundations of apostles and prophets.

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

Ephesians 2:20

13.The Cell System is the pattern God had given to his ministers to build mega-churches full of love and care, which make them keep growing. So accept this strategy, believe in it, and what has happened around the world will happen too in your church!

I see you becoming a great cell church pastor in Jesus name! Your days of not seeing church growth will end soon. Church Growth, It Is Possible... through the cell system.

Contemporary examples of Cell based churches

Research shows that many modern day mega churches and denominations are cell or home based churches. Dr. Yonggi Cho's church, Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, Korea is not the only large Korean church. Korean Churches are usually huge. A Methodist church in Korea can have fifty thousand members or more.

By 2008, Dr. Yonggi Cho himself had about eight hundred thousand members, and many of his satellite church pastors have churches of tens of thousands. All of them operate the cell system.

In 2008, he retired as the senior pastor of the Church. So do you know what he did? He divided the church and gave four hundred thousand members to his successor who is now leading the main church. He then distributed the rest of the four hundred thousand to several other pastors. Over the last few years Dr. Lee, the current pastor of the church has already added more than one hundred thousand new members to the four hundred thousand he was given. He has not shifted from the cell system one bit! He has 'flowed' in it and continues to 'flow' in it.

Sometimes on Sundays after preaching, I sit on stage to interact with people. Many times, I ask them how long they have been in our church and I get responses like: "I have been here for four, five or seven years". But amazingly, that is my first time of seeing these people. I get really embarrassed and feel that I'm a bad shepherd! Mercy upon my poor soul Lord! But you see, when your

sheep becomes a lot that is what will happen to you. You have been a pastor of a 15 member congregation for the past two years and you seem to know every one of them. Although knowing your sheep by their names is good, you must desire to have a lot of sheep.

Often when you go to church you get angry because you see the same faces, but the story is changing from now in Jesus name! You are becoming a Mega Church pastor In Jesus name!

Bishop David Oyedepo and the Winners' Chapel Example

Dr. David Oyedepo's Church, Winners Chapel International, when they first came to Ghana, did not have satellite churches, and still had ten thousand members in one church. They used to bus people from many communities far and near to the church. They operated cells. Once I was listening to Bishop Oyedepo and he said, "This year we are going to start two thousand cells" (in his headquarters church in Lagos). The Winners Church is alleged to have the biggest church auditorium in the whole world, with a capacity of fifty thousand inside, and another fifty thousand in the overflows. Through the cell system, more than four hundred thousand people attend the Sunday services. That is church growth! They are currently building a new auditorium with a much bigger capacity than the old one to accommodate the ever increasing numbers of believers being saved and added to the flock of God in that church. They have so many buses coming from everywhere, about twenty-six thousand buses on every Sunday, carrying the members to church. All this has been made easy and possible through cells.

The Examples of Pastors Mario Verga, Bishop Mosa Sono, Joel Osteen

There is a pastor in Central America called Mario Verga of the Elim Church in a small country called El-Salvador. You will be amazed when you see his church. His church grew until there was no space so they decided to move to the Stadium and soon the stadium was also full. Then they moved to another stadium and it also became full. His church grew to the point that they were using five stadiums and they were all full. He is a regular guest at the Church Growth Conference in Seoul, Korea who teaches mostly on cells. All that this mega Church Pastor does in El-Salvador is cells.

Bishop Mosa Sono's church, the Grace Bible Church, located in the famous Soweto suburb of Johannesburg, South Africa, is a huge church, with more than twelve thousand in attendance on Sundays. They do not have a weekday service

in the main church auditorium. Their weekday service is only cells.

Joel Osteen's church has about forty thousand members and this has also been made possible through the cells system.

When I visited Bethany World Prayer Centre in Columbus, Ohio, sometime ago, I asked one of the Pastors; "how do you people grow your church"? He didn't even blink or think twice, he said, cells, and also through their TV outreaches.

My own denomination, the Lighthouse Chapel International now referred to as the United Denomination is also an example of a cell-based church. Currently we are even running an online cell ministry.

Dr. Mensa Otabil's church, the International Central Gospel Church, one of the largest churches in Ghana has been able to achieve this feat through cells.

If most mega church pastors have grown their churches through cells, why are you sitting down thinking of how to grow your church? There is nothing new under the sun. What has worked for other people is what will work for you so you had better start running quickly.

Why do you want to do something different? Join what is biblical and working! Begin to experience phenomenal growth by initiating the cell system in your church now!

For example, if you start three cells in your Church and every Sunday each cell brings a soul that is three new additions. In a month, that is twelve more members. Let me ask you a question. When was the last time in the last several months that you added twelve people to your church? Now look back at the last couple of years or so. Have you added twelve people to your Church? How about if you have ten cells and each of them in a month wins and establishes one soul, it means in ten months, you can add one hundred people to your membership. So if you have forty people today, in the next ten months, you can expect to have one hundred and forty people in your Church. That is how it works. It works like magic! Soon you're going to have a "nice" problem in your church. Space, and also how to retain the great influx of new converts. Oh praise the Lord for such a good problem! Lord please give us this problem in our struggling and empty churches in Jesus name!

In our church, our fight has been how to maintain the people. That is where the fight is. Not the people coming but how to keep the people. We are always

strategizing how to retain the people so that we can keep growing. Church growth through the cell system - it is possible!

Chapter 7 **Benefits Of Cells**

The cell in a local church has a lot of benefits to the kingdom of God, the members and the pastors. There are three categories of benefits of cell groups: benefits to the kingdom of God, benefits to the members of the church and benefits to the pastor.

The cells in the church do not only benefit the church members but it also promotes, expands, and establishes the kingdom of God.

Benefits of Cells to the Kingdom of God

1. The cell meetings make it possible for continuous prayers to be made to affect the spiritual atmosphere of the various communities. The power of Satan is gradually broken, making it easier for the kingdom of God to flourish in the immediate communities.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against PRINCIPALITIES, AGAINST POWERS, AGAINST THE RULERS OF THE DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD, AGAINST SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES.

Ephesians 6:12

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (FOR THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE ARE NOT CARNAL, BUT MIGHTY THROUGH GOD TO THE PULLING DOWN OF STRONG HOLDS; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Through the prayers carried out during the cell meetings, and also by the members on other occasions, with time the spiritual atmospheres of the communities where the cells are located are changed. What does it mean? Everywhere we find ourselves, the atmosphere is affected by demonic powers. It is demons that hinder people from entering into the kingdom of God. The scriptures teach that the devil blinds unbelievers from the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

In whom the god of this world hath BLINDED THE MINDS OF THEM WHICH BELIEVE NOT, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ,

who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2 Corinthians 4:4

One of the most powerful tools we can employ to expand the kingdom of God is prayer. When we pray, we change the prevailing spiritual atmosphere of where we are. Through the prayers offered we bind evil spirits and drive them away, we destroy the works of Satan in the hearts of people who do not know the Lord, and that makes it easier for the word of God to be preached and accepted by sinners. Evangelism becomes more fruitful. It makes it easier for people to receive God's word and to be affected by it. Whole communities can be transformed through such persistent prayers.

Among them the god of this world [Satan] has blinded the minds of the unbelieving to prevent them from seeing the illuminating light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

2 Corinthians 4:4 AMP

Through the prayers of the cell members the spiritual atmospheres in different locations are being changed all the time. And that makes it possible for the Kingdom of God to come in those areas. Through the cells, prayers are offered and the strongholds and imaginations of the devil are destroyed. The cell meetings make the expansion of the kingdom effective and possible through the prayers we offer in the communities.

Juju Man Serves A Warning Notice!

Prayer in the cells has powerful effects on the immediate communities. Those who have been bound and kept in captivity by Satan are set free. They begin to see the light! This scenario played out before our eyes, when we began to plant cells in my current church. One of my young pastors who had started cells in a particular community, which was heavily infested with idol worship, started experiencing much breakthrough. Suddenly so many of the community members got saved by the power of the blood of Jesus, and became members of his cell groups. Soon a good number of them joined our new church. As this went on, the principality in the area, a juju man became threatened and offended, as he saw droves of his idol worshippers going to church. He had apparently taken notice of this young Pastor's activities amongst those he was actively deceiving and leading to eternal death, in hell.

One day, upon chancing on this pastor ministering in the area, the juju man

confronted him and warned him “do not come here again, otherwise I will deal with you”. So you see that, those who control sinners and keep them in darkness, know the power of prayer. Of course we just brushed his threats aside and continued to spread the word of God there, accompanied by much prayer. Today, we have a lot of people coming to our church through these cell groups in that community, serving the Lord with gladness.

The kingdom of God has benefited greatly from the cell work in this particular community. That is the point I’m trying to explain to you.

2. Cell groups serve as a powerful tool in the hands of the Holy Spirit to win the immediate community. The cells serve as a powerful tool in the hands of the Holy Spirit to win the immediate community and by doing so, the kingdom of God comes to that community. There are two ways of catching fishes in the sea. The first one is to use the hook, line and sinker. The second way is by casting a big net into the sea. We have been sent as fishers of men.

And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

Matthew 4:19

When we create cells, what we have done is that we have thrown a large soul winning net over the communities. When you create cells, you are harvesting the souls of men all the time through the many evangelistic activities. Through cells, we cast a big evangelistic net and we are able to drag more souls into the kingdom of God over a short period of time, through the mighty power of the Holy Spirit. The results of our outreach ministries this way far outweighs what we get when we evangelize with “hook, line and sinker”. If we do not have souls won in a particular area, it means we have not gone there to throw our strong and powerful evangelistic nets through the creation of effective cells.

When are you going to win hundred souls with your ushers? Rather create an ‘evangelistic net so that you can win more souls. Stop using rods! When we run the cell groups well, we are likely to face a problem: we will have many new converts coming to church every Sunday than we can possibly handle. Like I said earlier this is a good problem to have!

3. The cell groups bring the Kingdom of God to people’s doorsteps. The mistake we often make is that we expect sinners to come to the church themselves. But in reality sinners and non-church goers prefer to go everywhere else except come near a church!

Dr. David Cho says that “sinners are afraid of church”. Many people do not want to come to church. Listen to me, dear Pastor friend. If you think that on Sunday by wearing your nice suit and arranging your chairs and equipment, unbelievers will come to your church, you are making a big mistake. A nice church building does not bring sinners to the church. A nice choir does not. I’m not saying these are not important. No, not at all. I’m saying that, we may have all these wonderful things in our churches, and yet the church will be empty. We are expecting a passive influx of sinners into our churches. No sir! It simply will not happen that way. And yet that is the mistake many of us commit all the time. Mercy! This is why you have been seating only a handful of people all these years. Because you always have the expectation that unbelievers will decide to come to church by themselves. They will not come, you have to go for them!

I Will Never Go To A Church!

I once heard the testimony of a young man who was passionately serving the Lord as a pastor. He spoke of the time he made a decision never to darken the doorway of a church! He said, “I was determined never to go to any church. Not even for a family event like weddings or funerals”. So you see, there are people who have made such determination in their lives. His story ended on a very good note. He was persistently pursued by some cell members in his school, until he eventually found himself in church. Those students were running cells in that school. You see the potency of the cell system? Bringing the gospel message right to the door steps of hardened unbelievers.

The people who like to come to church are believers who love the Lord and the fellowship of the brethren. Sinners do not have the natural instincts to wake up and go to church. That is why Jesus said, go and make disciples of the world. So, if we want to make disciples of this world, we must go and preach the gospel to them. People do not want to go to church, so we have to take the church right where they are. Are the products of tobacco, alcohol and other companies not forced on us through shameless, relentless and persistent advertisements on our TV sets, and other such channels? You do not need go to the bar and pubs. Right in your homes are you not told that beer is good and gives you power?

Jesus was very clear - go everywhere and bring people to my salvation dinner!

And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may

be filled.

Luke 14:22-23

If on Sundays we clean up the church, arrange the chairs and equipment and wait for sinners to come to church, we will forever be disappointed. We must go into the communities, encourage and mobilize them and carry them if possible to church.

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN SUFFERETH VIOLENCE, AND THE VIOLENT TAKE IT BY FORCE.

Matthew 11:12

Satan is taking people by force and we cannot afford to be sitting down aloof. Many people are happy to come for the cell meetings but what they do not know is that, they are going to be hooked on to Christ through His amazing word and love.

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

John 6:68-69

Just as people get hooked up on drugs like cocaine, marijuana and heroin; after the first shot, sniff or puff, new converts will desire to experience that feeling again of being in the midst of a Christ-like, loving, caring family of believers. Let's get people filled with the Holy Spirit and the word of God as we gather in homes!

My First and Last Experience with Cigarettes

I thank God for a miracle He did in my life one day during vacation from high school- deliverance from smoking cigarettes! A high school friend of mine who has passed on (oh praise the Lord that he got saved!), took me to a night club. While we were dancing, he suddenly took me out, reached into his pocket, brought out a stick of cigarettes and asked me to try it out. I had not smoked before but I decided to give it a go to show my friend that I was all out with him. However, out of greed, and sheer ignorance, I took a long puff. After the puff, the smoke entered my eyes, nose and ears. Not long after, I began to jump around coughing and looking for water to drink. It was a scary experience. I decided that was my last time! You see I could have gone on to be a smoker,

maybe even a chain smoker, with the possibility of graduating to higher substance abuse. Satan wanted to hook me up! But thank God that the baptism didn't work! This is exactly what we are trying to do by starting cells in the communities and inviting people to join.

The aim of the cell meeting is not for us just to end up with a cell in the area. It is a way of bringing people to the church. So if you have a nice cell but have not succeeded in bringing the people to church, you have not succeeded with the actual aim of the cell meeting. You must continue to fight that battle until you are able to bring the people. Because when they come to the big church, they will experience better worship, greater anointed messages and they will meet with the pastor. They will feel a part of a bigger family.

Currently, my church is able to bring about seventy percent of all the people we have in our cells to attend the Sunday worship services. Our target is to work towards bringing all of them. The more people you can bring from the area fellowships to your church, the faster your church will grow. There are people who love to attend the cell meetings but not attend the Sunday services. But if you work on them, they will come eventually.

Through the cells, we are taking the kingdom of God from door to door. You do not want to come but we have brought it to you. You are hooked on! The Holy Spirit will 'arrest' these people into the church. That is why the cell meeting is beneficial to the kingdom of God.

The time has come for us to take the kingdom of God by force. We cannot play games any longer. Satan is too sophisticated and complicated. On Sundays, church is not part of the agenda of most people. So we must take the church to their doorstep. Even the people in the world are using this strategy. Online shopping, goods delivered to our homes, and other such methods, are forcing us to buy what we sometimes do not really want to buy or have. We must be smarter than the world. We must avoid fulfilling this scripture:

And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

Luke 16:8

If we do not take the Kingdom of God to the people, they will be taken over by other powers like alcoholism, smoking, lesbianism, homosexuality, drugs, arm robbery and the rest.

4. The cell groups ensure the healthy growth of God's church. The church must not just grow numerically, but it must be healthy. When the members develop spiritually, they are healthy. A healthy church is made possible when it becomes a cell based church. If a church is large and it does not have small group meetings, the members are not cared for. Where the people are loved, visited, cared for, supported and taught the word of God, that church is healthier. This was found in the early church.
5. The cell groups become the care unit of the church. Through the cells or area fellowships, the members are cared for properly.
6. The cell groups become the leadership development platform of the church. It allows more potential leaders to be recruited, trained and released. The more leaders there are, the less the burden for the pastor, which allows him to focus on his core duty, which is prayer and ministry of the word (Acts 6:4). The more shepherds there are, the more the work is spread and everyone does something. This distribution of the ministry work, ensures it is done more easily resulting in more productivity. One of the duties of the cell leader is to look out for leadership potential in the cell members and bring them up. When a lot of people come into the church, through the activities of the cells, then you have to train more people to do the work of God. Thus the cells become the leadership training avenue for the local church. In our church, we have created a strategy of industrialization. We have created a spiritual factory in my church where we produce cell leaders as well as other leaders using the principle of industrialization. Specifically, I call it the "THE CONVEYOR BELT STRATEGY". There is always a *cycle or a production line* for training ordinary church members, usually new converts, who are equipped to start new cells and work as cell leaders. This conveyor belt strategy goes on all the time. We do not joke with our new converts at all. If you can create a spiritual conveyor belt in your church, you will never lack leaders and workers. Every Sunday, we have several schools that equip our church members. They include *the new converts or new believers, fruitful believers, matured believers, shepherds training, and cell leaders training schools. Others are school of the word, school of apologetics, school of solid foundation, evangelism and victorious living.* There are pop-up stands at different sections of our cathedral where the members gather after the services to be trained and developed as shepherds. In most churches, many of the new converts and first timers, who come in cannot be found after a few weeks because the pastors have not

industrialized. You have to create a 'factory' that produces cell leaders and other leaders in your church all the time.

Jesus said more labourers are needed because the kingdom harvest is too much (Matthew 9:37). Therefore the cell system in the local church ensures that more labourers are produced to help reap many souls into the kingdom of heaven.

7. The cell groups facilitate the fulfillment of the Great Commission. The more the groups go into different communities preaching the gospel, the more likely the Great Commission is being fulfilled.

Chapter 8

Benefits Of Cells To The Church Members

Cells bring a lot of blessings to church members. And that is why a church that is cell based is a healthy church. Cell based churches are not only growing churches but also healthy churches because of the many benefits that accrue to the church members.

People Are Selfish

One day, Bishop E.A.T. Sackey, a senior associate to Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, while preaching in my church, said something that I will never forget. He said, “people are selfish and they will always ask before they join a group, what benefits they stand to gain from joining a group”. Once they see that the group will benefit them, they will be happy to join it.

Let us explore some of these benefits.

Benefits of Cells to the Local Church Members

1. Through the cells a church member becomes a known identity and not just a statistical number in the church.

Without cells, as the church grows, you will not be able to know all your church members. It is very important not only for us to have people in our churches, but also to know them. As the church grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to look after the people. The sheep is not properly cared for and they do not become healthy and hence they do not become a known entities but just statistical figures. Pastors love to say things like “500 people attended the first service, and 700 people attended the second service”. But dear friend, who are these 500 who attended? Do you know them? If your answers to these questions are No, then you have a lot of pastoral care work to do!

The greatest pastor who ever lived, Jesus, the good shepherd knew His sheep.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee

from him: for they know not the voice of strangers...I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD, AND *KNOW MY SHEEP*, AND AM KNOWN OF MINE.

John 10:1-5,14

Not only must we have sheep and a lot of them for that matter, they must also be known. If the sheep are not known, they just become part of the statistics. That is the danger of large churches. Large churches without proper care can be likened to people who have gathered at stadiums or convention centres. Just a bunch of people with no real benefits. But in a cell based church, the benefit to the members is that, no matter how large the church is, they are known, someone will relate with them and know them by all means.

This is something the Lord specifically spoke to me about some years ago. He told me not to treat the members as just figures and statistics, but to know and care deeply for them. You see, often we are just happy and eager to mention with glee the number of members that attend our services. But that is not enough shepherding. We must strive to be more acquainted with the sheep; know their names, marital status, state of employment, homes, jobs, worries, family and much more. This kind of information about the sheep, helps us to pastor them more effectively, and that means a lot to the sheep. The cell system makes knowing the sheep adequately possible.

As the church grows, the Pastor finds it difficult to know the church members by name and their problems. But when the church is divided into smaller groups, this problem is either eliminated or reduced. God has blessed us with a large church and we endeavor to know every single member. This demands careful organization. In our church, every member is known by at least four levels of shepherds- the cell leader, the senior cell leader (the one who oversees this cell leader), the cell pastor in charge of the area where this member is, and finally myself (the members are brought in small groups to me in my office for closer fellowship and interaction during which I get the opportunity to know them quite well, I also visit them to get to know them). There are many churches where the members do not even have access to the pastor. They have never spoken to the pastor before although they have been in the church for years. That is not a church, that is a crowd. Jesus said, I know my sheep and I am known of mine.

This situation does not exist in a real, well run cell church. Because there are only a few people in the cell group, the members know themselves very well. As the member is walking amongst a sea of people in the large church, by all means

somebody knows him, where he works, his troubles and marriage. Somebody knows almost everything about that particular member. So that is a benefit of the cell to the members.

In fact, in my church these days, the problem that we are facing is that, the area cell pastors themselves have so many sheep that, they are struggling to cope with knowing their people. This has called for more innovative and frequent ways of interactions. We must not just gather the people, we must know them. When we know them, the sheep are also very happy.

Bishop Knows My Name!

I have been involved in training hundreds of bible students from different nations and backgrounds over the years. I realized that the real training begins with knowing the students very well. Jesus did that.

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

John 1:47-49

There is something about knowing and remembering the names of people that makes them happy and makes them feel loved and special. Many times in the Bible School, I will line up the students and ask their names and nationalities. I do this intentionally and regularly until I am able to remember their names and nationalities. When I am able to correctly mention their names, they become happy and excited because the shepherd knows them. Often I hear them saying “bishop knows my name”!

Jesus said; **“I am the good shepherd, and KNOW my sheep, and am known of mine”.**

John 10:14

The cells will help the pastor and his leaders to achieve this and this greatly benefits the flock.

2. The cell becomes the avenue or place for fellowship for the members.

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship,

and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:42

Through the cells, members have the opportunity to fellowship with each other. In a large church, many of the people are lonely. You can go to a large church and nobody may speak to you. What happens is that, as the church grows, people form groups of friends, relatives and department alliances. So who talks to the new people? Through the cells, members are able to fellowship among themselves. Fellowship simply means fellows in a ship!

My Greatest Disappointment...

Many years ago, when I was studying medicine in Russia, I went to London for the first time for summer vacation. I did not know anybody in that huge city. It was my very first visit. I was just about 22 years; I found a hostel where Ghanaian students lived. At the time, you had to pay £17 a week to rent a room. I did not have a job and money at the time. You could however speak to somebody who had a room and the person would allow you to sleep on the floor for a fee of £1 every day. That is what I did. As a “percher”, you had no rights.

One day, I met a student from Ivory Coast (a country in West Africa) who took me to a large Pentecostal church. When I entered the church, I mused “Oh Lord You are so good and today all my problems will be solved”; because the church was full mostly of people with color. God answered my prayer because at the end of the service, it was announced that all first timers should come stand to be greeted specially and acknowledged, and before the pastor could finish, I was on my feet. I was hungry and had nowhere to sleep so at the end of the service I stood at a strategic place where everybody seemed to be passing. You cannot imagine what happened! A church with hundreds of people, and yet nobody really paid attention to me. You see, I was expecting somebody to ask “what’s your name?”, “where do you live?” “Is everything okay with you?”. That was my expectation, but alas everyone seemed to be in a hurry. I went home very sad, and disappointed. No one really spoke deeply with me, nobody fellowshiped with me, no one was really bothered. This is what happens in a large church but since there are fewer people in a cell, fellowshiping becomes natural.

3. Friendships and companionships are developed through the cells.

People get to know themselves and become friends through the cells. People

get to know themselves and become companions. Total strangers who would never have met each other, develop godly friendships and relationships at the cell level, because it is a small group. It is a group of five, seven or ten people. So, I may not have friends in the mother church but at the area cell level I will find friends and companions more easily.

In fact in our church, if you are not in a cell, you will not be happy. Everything is done in a cell. The small group, the cell, makes it possible for people to find friends and companions.

4. The church member is not lost in the sea of the masses of people.

There can be five thousand people but because he or she belongs to a smaller group, a member is not lost. Church members come to church and are just lost sitting in a corner but through the cell, we will be able to identify them, and get them properly integrated into the big family. They will see us and we will see them.

For instance, in our church when converts and visitors are invited to the front, at the end of the service, they are taken into a room where Pastors and cell leaders of the various areas speak to them immediately. These converts and visitors are distributed depending on the area where they come from to loving cell leaders and their pastors.

The Pastors and shepherds will identify which cell is closest and hand them over to the respective cell leaders. So right after church, these converts know where they are going to be in terms of the cells. How can you get lost? The church must be large enough to include many, but small enough to have everyone well catered for. When you build your church that way, it stays healthy when it grows.

5. The church members become family members who know themselves.

The people at the cell level, eat together, attend cell meetings together and do evangelism together. They love and care for each other. A family atmosphere is created within the larger loose family. In the temple we are all there to worship but it is a loose family, while at the area cell level, the family ties are stronger. So they form a family within the big family that exists in the mother church.

6. The church members have people to share their problems and the deep concerns of their heart with.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Romans 12:15

As the church grows, without the cells, members do not have people to talk to. They have no one to share their worries and problems with. Do you know why people stay in the church? There are two reasons why people stay in the church.

The first one is because of the pastor. His preaching and teaching abilities, sermons and charisma attract people. The second reason is the friendships that they have or develop in the church. When people enter our churches, after one or two weeks, if they do not have anybody to talk to or relate with, they leave. Things are different through the cell meetings; firstly many new people come to the church through the cells. They are won through the cell meetings and brought to church from there. So already, they have people they relate with at the cell level, soon they gain the trust of the cell leaders and some of the members, and are able to share intimately with them about real situations that bother them. This is a real blessing to the cell members, especially in today's world where most people have no time to care about others.

The scriptures teach us to think about others- their needs, problems, worries, difficulties, marital lives, financial challenges, and spiritual shortcomings and so on and so forth. But alas, even in the church, there is much selfishness, self-centeredness and self-preservation.

Consider these scriptures.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of OTHERS.

Philippians 2:4

But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who WILL NATURALLY CARE FOR YOUR STATE. FOR ALL SEEK THEIR OWN, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

Philippians 2:19-21

Jesus thought about OTHERS!

Let this mind be in you, WHICH WAS ALSO IN CHRIST JESUS:

Philippians 2:5

The cell groups make this mindset play out quite beautifully.

7. The church members are delivered from loneliness.

Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?”

Ecclesiastes 4:11

There are too many lonely people in the world. Nobody cares about them. There are places in our world where neighbours do not even have the time to greet one another. And so when they experience the same situation when they start coming to church, they ask themselves what is the difference? The cells become a game changer in this regard. There is no love in the world! Everybody is selfish. Therefore when people come to church and suddenly they find this small family and are being visited, cared for and supported, it creates an amazing sense of togetherness for them; something they have not known in their worldly lives. So dear Pastor please create cells in your church to allow your members enjoy this great benefit.

8. The church members do not suffer from neglect or they do not feel neglected.

Apart from the pastor himself, there are people who care for them in the cells. The members in the cells are their family members and they care for them. This takes away the sense of neglect.

At a point, we realized that our church was not a friendly church. This was because of several feedbacks we got from some members, especially first timers and new members. This was because immediately after the church service, there is a flurry of activities, training sessions, choir rehearsals and others. There was a nurse who had become a member of our church, who complained that everybody was busily engaged after church. She did not feel she had friends. She felt neglected. Upon a little research we noticed she was not the only one feeling that way. So we analyzed the situation and decided to correct it. One solution we came up with was a strong encouragement for all the members to join a cell. The love, care, fellowship and attention cell members pay to each other eradicates such neglect.

The Fifth Visit

Many years ago, I went on visitation. When I got to the house to visit a particular member, who was quite new, the mother excitedly said to me, “Pastor you are the fifth person who has come to the house today to visit”. She was simply amazed at the attention her child was receiving after he had joined the

church. Why wouldn't the convert feel loved and important?

9. It allows the spiritual gifts and talents of the church members to be developed.

Not a novice...

1 Timothy 3:6

The spiritual gifts of the church members are more difficult to be expressed and developed at the large church gatherings. The best place to learn or develop your talent of singing or ushering is at the cell meeting level. All the things members think they can do, such as singing, ushering and praying, can be practiced at the cell meeting level. Because they may never be able to minister again in the main church if they make a mistake. Make all the mistakes at the cell level so that when you are called upon to use your talent or gift in the main church, you can excel, and avoid being disgraced or embarrassed before a large crowd.

At our cells meetings, we encourage all the cell leaders to involve the members. The cell leader must not do everything alone. He must call on different people to do different things at the cell level. Cell leaders are taught to delegate roles of ushering, singing, praying and reading of the scriptures to the cell members. This way the cell meetings become a powerful platform for the development of the spiritual gifts and talents of the church members, which also prepares them adequately before they can be given the opportunity to use such gifts and talents at the level of the main church service.

10. The church members learn how to win souls for the Lord.

With time they become die-hard and anointed soul winners for the Lord because of their exposure at the cell level. The members of the church become anointed and fervent soul winners because they have been exposed to all kinds of experiences during evangelistic outreaches; for example people will disrespect, sack and insult them, while others will welcome them. They learn how to minister to both young and old people. Soon, members of the cell and by extension the members of the church become people who know how to witness.

When a young member joins the soul winning effort, he or she is afraid and does not understand what is happening. As he or she joins more matured members in the cell to witness for Christ, with time the person learns and becomes more confident and soon is also able carry out personal evangelism.

That is how you get more people helping with evangelism in your church.

11. They receive even deeper understanding of the word of God that the pastor teaches at the main church.

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:42

At the cell meetings, we continue steadfastly in what our pastor has taught us. When the pastor is teaching in the main church, whether you understand it or not, he continues to teach. You cannot ask questions. At the cell meeting, however, there can be discussions, questions and inputs among members. This makes them become deeper and richer in their understanding of the word of God. You are then developing spiritual members who are deep-seated in the word and things of God. Your church members understand what you are teaching very well and therefore they can follow, obey and be transformed by the word of God.

This leads to church growth, since understanding establishes the sheep. Many people who come to our churches also fall away quickly because of their lack of understanding of the word of God. They lack depth!

And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And HAVE NO ROOT IN THEMSELVES, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

Mark 4:16-17

The cell meetings help to overcome this situation because as the members go over their apostle's teachings more understanding is gained.

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

Psalms 119:130

12. At the cell meetings, members are able to ask more questions to receive a deeper understanding of the word of God which cannot be done in the large church.

At the cell level, the shepherd must allow contributions and questions from the

sheep or members. This is something they cannot do in the large church. The shepherds must allow the members to ask more questions and contributions to help the sheep get a better understanding of what is being taught.

And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

Acts 18:24-26

13.Members will receive love and care from one another.

How is love and care demonstrated? Through sharing, fellowshiping and being concerned about each other. In my church, cell members always make little contributions to help pay the bills of their members who are in need. We all need care. Sometimes in life, things become difficult and we pray that God sends somebody into our lives to help. The cell becomes an avenue for that.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. AND ALL THAT BELIEVED WERE TOGETHER, AND HAD ALL THINGS COMMON; AND SOLD THEIR POSSESSIONS AND GOODS, AND PARTED THEM TO ALL MEN, AS EVERY MAN HAD NEED.

Acts 2:41- 45

They cared for themselves, they had love for each other. They helped solve each other's problems. The cell provides security for the members.

Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Acts 4:34-35

Chapter 9

More Benefits Of Cells To Church Members

Let us continue to explore some more benefits of the cells to the members of the the local church.

14. At the cell level, the members will benefit from being looked after by the other members of the cell.

I'm always being told of many benevolent acts done by cell members to other members of their group. It happens all the time. It is a family and they look after themselves. They love themselves. I do not mean engaging in sexual, carnal and lustful acts, but Christian love.

15. It delivers the members from backsliding because the other members of the cell are constantly looking out for each other.

Because the cell has a fairly small membership, if you do not attend meetings or church services, your members will notice immediately. But in a big church where there are no such cells you can easily get lost. You can easily travel and return after six months and nobody will know about it, including the pastor. Some dead members can easily be maintained proudly on church registers as active members! Mercy Lord!

In our church, there is always accountability for the members from the cell leaders. We always know how many members came and those who did not come. The pastor of the area will sit down with the shepherds and they will account for everybody who did not come to church. If you want to have sheep, you have to work really hard. Through this accountability exercise, every pastor in my church at the end of every Sunday knows how many of his people came to church and how many did not come. They know it.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers....

Acts 20:28

We get those records every Sunday. At the end of every Sunday, there is a report that is sent to me and to all my assistants about what happened that day. We know the overall church attendance and the attendance in all the services. We also know how many of the souls gave their lives to Christ. And of the people who came to church, we know the total number that came by buses.

All these measures ensure that cell members cannot easily backslide.

16. The members of cell groups will attend the wedding ceremonies of their cell members.

In 2008, before we adopted the cell system, I noticed an evil thing among our congregation. Weddings were not attended by many of our church members, especially the ladies; apparently, the ladies had formed cliques in the church. Therefore, members of a particular group never attended the marriage ceremony of another group. During weddings, you will only see a few people and the family members. I really taught against this attitude, and the situation changed with the creation of cells. Now, cell members gladly attend such social events of other members. If no one else comes, certainly your cell members will be there.

As the church grows, there are always ceremonies. Church members also have their own lives and you cannot ask everybody to come for all ceremonies all the time. That is where cell groups become beneficial. Because, during social events, the members of the cell will by all means be there. Please do not joke with the social ceremonies of your church members, you can easily lose them, if your members do not attend or participate in them, including yourself.

I Almost Lost My Gold Fish Members

A couple of years ago, I almost lost a very important member in my church, and in fact, I almost lost him and all his relatives who were in the church. He was marrying a lady from another church and during their planning; their date conflicted with another wedding ceremony of a full time associate pastor that I had to officiate. Since I was dealing with the wedding ceremony of a senior full time associate, I gave preference to his dates, and therefore I could not change it to make way for that of this cherished member. My assistant in charge of the wedding ceremonies counseled him to change his wedding dates to one that was convenient for me if they really wanted me to be there. They disagreed and insisted they wanted to marry on their chosen date. He was in a particular group and so the pastor of that group, himself a very senior associate attended the ceremony to represent me together with other pastors. The members of the department he belonged to also attended the ceremony in large numbers. My associate pastor arrived very early at the ceremony to make sure that all was well. In spite of all these efforts, this church member felt that I should have officiated his wedding rather than that of the full time pastor. After officiating the full time pastor's wedding, I even drove to this gentleman's reception, spoke

to his new wife and his parents. He was still not happy and left the church for a couple of weeks. Eventually, they came back, and he came to apologize. What I am saying is that, if you joke with the special social events of your church members you will lose them. That is why the cell meetings are important. The members of your cells will by all means attend these events, if not all, at least a good number of them will be there. The people will be happy. The members will stay in your church, and this will lead to growth.

17. The members of the cell groups will attend the naming ceremony of other members.

If nobody from the church comes, the members of the cell will be there.

The Naming Ceremony I Will Never Forget

There is an experience that I will never forget. It happened when we started having cell meetings in 2009, at the very early stages. There was a lady who had given birth, and we were going to have the baby's naming ceremony in her house. In Ghana, we do the naming ceremony very early in the morning.

On my way to the house, I met a group of people who were members of our church, but were not dressed up for the ceremony. Among some of the ethnic groups in Ghana, a naming ceremony is a big deal, and often people come glamorously clad in traditional costumes. So I said to them, "the program is starting now and how come you are not dressed"? They said to me, "we are the people who set up the place, so we are quickly going to dress up and come". Their cell member was having her baby's naming ceremony and they had woken up early to get the venue prepared for the ceremony! They came much later. How do you think this member felt, as cell members lovingly went out of their way to help her out? Wouldn't you like to be in such a fellowship? I will never forget it. It is one of the most beautiful things that I have seen. I was so touched.

18. The members of the cell will attend the baby dedication ceremonies of other members.

19. The cell serves as a source of security for the members through the love and care that they receive.

Through the love and care that they receive, they know that, if something happens to them they have brothers and sisters who will help them. They also know that if they are in need, they have people who will help them. That is security.

The Old Lady Who Missed the Cell Meeting

Some years back I heard a powerful testimony about the usefulness of cells to church members from Bishop Oyedepo. He narrated that in one of their churches, there was an old lady who was a member of one of their cells. One day, during a cell meeting, the members noticed that the old lady was absent. She was usually quite regular. At the end of the meeting, they went to her house to find out why she did not attend that day. When they got to her house, she was nowhere to be found. Someone decided to check closer, and went to her door, they could hear somebody inside grunting. They forced the door opened and there she lay, dying. Apparently she was seriously unwell and no one was around to attend to her. The cell members took her to the hospital for treatment and she became well. The only reason why she was saved was because she was a member of a little group, a cell, which realized the absence of one their few members. This is a powerful example of security in the cell groups.

A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need.

Proverbs 17:17 NLT

Human beings need security. Human beings need to know that if there is an issue, there will be somebody to help and support. That is the atmosphere the cell creates so the members are happy to be there.

20.The members will visit a sick member who has been hospitalized.

21.Members of the cell will sometimes even contribute to pay all or part of the medical bills of their members.

22.The Cell members will attend the funeral ceremonies of bereaved members.

The whole church may not attend the funeral ceremonies of your lost one. In fact, they may even not know about it. But the members in the cell will be aware. I always hear about my members traveling long distances, accompanying another member who has lost his or her loved one. Wouldn't you be comforted when you see them around at these ceremonies? You will.

23. The church members will experience the blessing of Obededom when they open up their homes for the cell meetings to take place.

When the church members open up their homes for the cell meetings to take place there, they will experience the blessings of Obededom.

Pastor David, Brother Obededom Has Suddenly Become Rich!

Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims. And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart. And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark. And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals. And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God. And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah to this day. And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite. And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obededom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obededom, and all his household. And it was told king David, saying, THE LORD HATH BLESSED THE HOUSE OF OBEDEDOM, AND ALL THAT PERTAINETH UNTO HIM, BECAUSE OF THE ARK OF GOD. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obededom into the city of David with gladness.

2 Samuel 6:1-12

The ark of the Lord represented the presence of the Lord. When people open their homes for the cell meetings to be held there, the Holy Spirit fills their homes. Therefore, their homes begin to flourish. Evil spirits run away from their homes and God begins to bless their homes and they experience a change in their situation.

Obededom and his whole family were blessed because of the presence of the ark of God in his house. I'm sure someone rushed to hint the King "Obededom has become very rich"! And immediately David heard about it, he joyfully went to collect the ark of God from Obededom's house and brought it to his house.

King David rushed for the ark of God he earlier did not want because of fear. He saw the blessings of Obededom! And wanted some of it for himself. You must teach your members to open their homes for the cell meetings to take place there because God will bless them. When the fellowships happen in their homes, they have opened their doors for God to send them a great blessing.

One family that opened their home to Jesus was Mary and Martha. He would go there to fellowship and eat. Mary even honored Him by anointing His feet with her hair.

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

Luke 10:38

Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

John 12:3

It was this family that experienced one of Jesus' greatest miracle: the raising up of Lazarus from the dead after four days!

Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (IT WAS THAT MARY WHICH ANOINTED THE LORD WITH OINTMENT, AND WIPED HIS FEET WITH HER HAIR, WHOSE BROTHER LAZARUS WAS SICK.) Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

John 11:1-3

Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

John 12:1-3

The frustrated barren Shunamite woman had her major breakthrough when she kept receiving the anointed prophet of God in her house.

And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. **And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.** And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there. And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him. And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people. And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old. And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door. And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid. And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.

2 Kings 4:8-17

I see your church members experiencing the blessings of Obededom!

24. Through the cells, church members can easily find fiancées, fiancés, beloveds, wives and husbands.

In a large church, it can be difficult to locate a brother or sister to date or marry. There are just too many around, and too difficult to really know properly. But in the cell groups choosing is relatively easy. Members do almost everything together in a cell; from evangelism, singing, celebrating birthdays to attending church. Thus members in the cell meeting know themselves really well. Spotting of a potential spouse is therefore relatively easy. And that's a real blessing!

25. By having the opportunity to work for God at the cell level, the church members will be preparing the grounds for God to reward them both here

and in heaven.

For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves A GOOD DEGREE, AND GREAT BOLDNESS IN THE FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS.

1 Timothy 3:13

The members will be preparing for great rewards that they are going to receive both here and in heaven. That is why you must tell the members to join the cells so that they can preach, teach, evangelize and visit the sheep. At the cell, they are already working for God and laying the ground for both their earthly and heavenly rewards.

The Fruits of the Dead Young Man

A couple of years ago, I lost one of my members who was just 22 years old. He was a hard working fruitful cell leader who had gone to visit his mother and was continuing on to hold his cell meeting when he was knocked down by a car and died. He was in the church for three years and a product of a cell group. After about one year, he became a leader of a cell. Two years later he enrolled in the bible school, and died during that period, while still attending our church. A couple of Sundays after his burial, I was in my office when his area cell pastor, the senior pastor of the area where this young man held his cell meetings, came with a lot of people to my office. I asked the pastor, “who are these people?” He said, these are the cell members of the young brother who died. You see, he was gone to be with the Lord, but he left behind precious fruits of his labor through running cells. Do you think God will not bless him? He is in heaven receiving his rewards. All his members are still in the church and serving the Lord. He did not graduate from the Bible school to earn his earthly degree, but surely a heavenly one was waiting for him. All this happened because of his ministry in the cell.

Instead of your members sitting in the church, yawning, murmuring and criticizing, they can become fruitful in the cell meeting, and gain valuable heavenly degrees.

26.They will develop humility and their humility will attract the grace and mercy of God upon their lives.

At the cell level, nobody is really anything. Nobody thanks you for the role you play in the cell compared to the larger church service where you receive a

lot of cheers. These roles make you humble and therefore attract the grace and mercy of God upon your life.

But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, GOD RESISTETH THE PROUD, BUT GIVETH GRACE UNTO THE HUMBLE.

James 4:6

27.The faithfulness of the members in the cell ministry evolves into faithfulness for the things of the Lord, which causes God to bring them into abundance.

His lord said unto him, WELL DONE, THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I WILL MAKE THEE RULER OVER MANY THINGS: enter thou into the joy of thy lord... His lord said unto him, WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I WILL MAKE THEE RULER OVER MANY THINGS: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Matthew 25:21, 23

Compared to the efforts needed at the big congregation level, the work in a cell is quite a little ministry. Instead of leading a choir of two hundred or even more, someone in a cell may be leading just three members to sing. A cell usher may be handling just a few people during the cell meetings. However, the Lord does not despise these little efforts. He sees them as faithfulness to His work. That faithfulness will cause God to bless them and bring them into abundance.

Over the years I have observed with great joy and amazement how God has greatly blessed and lifted several of our cell leaders. Some have gone on to become great pastors. Others have been blessed in their businesses and professional careers. From nothing, they have become great!

Jesus taught that it is those who demonstrate faithfulness in small things that are given much!

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much...

Luke 16:10

People often desire great ministries and instant promotion. They want to abound in much. They desire great increase and growth. They want more of everything! God watches what they do with the little things He commits to them. Jesus emphasized that, those who are faithful with little will always be rewarded

with more. God normally blesses you based on how you treat the little that you have, or the small things you have been charged with. Do you want God to give you more sheep? Then look after the few that you now have very well. Do you want a great business from God? Then be faithful with the small one you have today.

David Demonstrated Faithfulness with Few

Before David became the great shepherd of all of Israel and Judaea, he was a shepherd of a few sheep. Everyone knew that he had only a few sheep in the wilderness. His elder brother even insinuated rather negatively about David's insignificant ministry.

And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left THOSE FEW SHEEP in the wilderness?...

1 Samuel 17:28

But David looked after those few sheep with all his life. He fought and killed predatory lions and bears which attempted to feed off his precious sheep. You see, the few sheep were precious to him.

And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

1 Samuel 17:34-36

Notice that when he was sent by his father to send supplies to his brothers at the battlefield, he carefully handed over his few sheep to someone to tend them whilst he was away.

And David rose up early in the morning, AND LEFT THE SHEEP WITH A KEEPER, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.

1 Samuel 17:20

And David was up at the crack of dawn and, **HAVING ARRANGED FOR SOME TO TEND HIS FLOCK**, took the food and was on his way just as Jesse had directed him...

1 Samuel 17:20 MSG

That is faithfulness with a few things! I believe this faithfulness is one of the virtues which moved God to give David a great ministry- king over his people.

And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah...

2 Samuel 2:4

Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel. So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord: and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah...

2 Samuel 5:1-6

28. They will be blessed greatly as they work for the Lord in the cells.

And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, LACKED YE ANY THING? AND THEY SAID, NOTHING.

Luke 22:35

29. As they learn to make use of their spiritual gifts and talents at the cell level, the members will make all their mistakes at the cell level instead of being disgraced in the big church.

At the cell meetings we all really do not know much. Our mistakes are either not noticed or overlooked. Cell members therefore can, without much embarrassment, develop their gifts and callings.

30. In the cell, the members will learn to teach the word of God and visit other church members.

31. In the cell, the members learn how to pray.

Because they have prayer meetings during the cell meetings, members and new converts gradually learn how to pray.

32. In the cell meetings, they will learn to prophesy and make all the mistakes that come with it.

The demonstration of the gifts of the Spirit by ordinary Christians has largely vanished from the church. Where is the word of knowledge? Where is the word of wisdom? Where is the interpretation of diverse kinds of tongues? Where are the gifts of prophecies? Where are they? I believe that one of the reasons we do not see these gifts being manifested is the fear of making a mistake in the midst of a lot of people. Church members are just afraid to use the gifts. You see, these gifts are operated by faith. You have to operate by faith.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; ...

1 Corinthians 13:12

If the Lord is moving you, you just have to believe and operate by faith. So you do not have to worry about making mistakes. As you keep on exercising the gift, it becomes perfect. You become bolder and confident. That is how you learn how to flow in the Spirit. And the cell meetings are a perfect setting to develop these spiritual gifts and talents.

A Significant Personal Experience

Many years ago, I was preaching somewhere in a big church. As I was preaching and flowing in the gifts of the Spirit, the Lord spoke through me “There is a married man here, you have been committing adultery. There is an evil spirit around you which is disturbing you and the Lord has asked me to pray for you to be delivered. Come out from the crowd”. There was what seemed at the time to be an eternal silence. Then suddenly, a man stood up and walked to the front to be prayed for. The “eternal silence” was very uncomfortable. But you see, I needed boldness and faith to make such prophetic utterances. The road of exercising the gifts of the spirit has not been an easy one. It is still not easy, but I have realized that I have come to greater levels of boldness and faith after many years of practicing the gift in small group meetings.

33. It is an opportunity for your members to do something for God which will give them fulfillment in life.

34. The self-worth of your church members will be enhanced. They will feel

useful and great.

As they find themselves working and serving the Lord in the cells, their self-worth will be enhanced. They will feel needed and useful. Many of our church members sit in church and wonder what they are really doing in the church. Sometimes they feel nobody likes them and that they are not useful. As a matter of fact, many young Christians want to do something in the house of the Lord, but they are often not given the opportunity. They therefore feel so happy when they are asked to undertake some roles in the cells. Nobody has chosen them to do anything before but now they have been chosen. They feel blessed, great and important.

35. The cells allow them to develop their leadership skills.

Through the cells, your church members will develop their leadership skills. They will know how to lead people. Our cell leaders themselves mostly emerge from the cells. When training members, we attach them to cell leaders and they assist them in counseling, visitation and evangelism. Through these, their leadership skills are developed. Some of them are even surprised that they are cell leaders or shepherds. They did not think they could do it. Through the cell, the potentials of your members are enhanced, developed and released.

**36. Through the cells, the members remain active members of the church.
This leads to church growth.**

37. Through the cells, the members are on their way to becoming part of the workforce of the church.

38. Through the cells, members will experience spiritual growth and the tendency of the members to backslide will be greatly reduced.

39. It is the beginning of the church members entering into their spiritual destiny.

40. Through their participation in the cells, your members will be having the early apostolic church experience.

Dear pastor friend, it is time for you to transform your church into a cell based one, so that your members can enjoy all these forty and more blessings!

Chapter 10

Benefits Of Cells To The Local Pastor

We have looked at the benefits of the cell ministry to the kingdom of God, and also to the church members. Now, let us examine how the cells benefit the pastor of the church. The cells have great benefits for the local Pastor.

- 1. The burden of the pastor in carrying out the ministry to the church members is shared.**

And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, AND THEY SHALL BEAR THE BURDEN WITH THEE.

Exodus 18:22

Ministry is burdensome. Dr. Cho says that if you want to see him, then you have to book an appointment three months in advance. To pastor, visit and counsel eight hundred thousand members will break the back of any normal person. Counseling, praying and visiting the people is a lot of work. So pastor, you need a lot of people to help you in the work. Through cells, you can raise up so many people to help you do the work. So the benefit of the cells to the pastor is that, it makes a lot of people available to help him and therefore his burden in carrying the ministry is shared.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; AND THEY SHALL BEAR THE BURDEN OF THE PEOPLE WITH THEE, THAT THOU BEAR IT NOT THYSELF ALONE.

Numbers 11:16 -17

Pastors do not bear the burden alone! When you read the first chapter of *Lay People and the Ministry* (now known as *What It Means To Become a Shepherd*) by Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, he explains why some pastors carry the burden alone. According to him, they feel that the ministry and the call of God is a

special preserve for them. They want to do almost everything and solve all the problems, because they are the only ones who are called! Pastor, you will die very soon with such a mindset. You will simply wear yourself out and break down. This is exactly what Jethro, pastor Moses's father-in law cautioned him about. Read it for yourself.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God: When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws. And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

Exodus 18:13-17

You must train the people and equip them. That is one of my greatest blessings in the ministry. Do you want to know one of my secrets in ministry? Many years ago the Lord showed me the importance of training and working with people. I have many levels of shepherds or leaders. I have my three like Jesus had; Peter, James and John. Those are my very close associates.

I also have my twelve and they are called the *dodeka*. *Dodeka* is a Greek word meaning twelve. These are my twelve most effective leaders who are my pastors in the church. Then, I have the seventy; I even have my one hundred and twenty leaders. They all have different levels, of leadership skills. Some are already great, others still developing. But all of them are helping me to be effective at building a mega church.

The work is burdensome. There are a lot of people to be visited, prayed for and cared for. One of the greatest wisdom keys the Lord gave Bishop Dag Heward-Mills, my pastor, from the very onset of our ministry, the Lighthouse Chapel International, is the training of shepherds. He has held countless number of camp meetings, retreats, conferences, and small group interactions over the years. The result is that in a typical Lighthouse church, there is always an army of trained members to assist the pastors. We famously refer to them as shepherds. What a blessing it has been! One of the amazing things people find when they come to

our church is that, they can quickly be equipped to do something for the Lord.

The Surprised Young Man

I have a young man who joined my church a couple of years ago. He used to attend another big church in the city. He was surprised when we told him he can be involved in the ministry by doing something for God. All these years, he has been sitting down in the church doing nothing. Today he is happily pastoring one of our satellite churches. He has never stopped expressing his shock at what has happened to him. He is very grateful we afforded him that opportunity. It does not matter who you are, whether a businessman, minister of state, banker or carpenter; we believe that you are called and you can do something for God.

Dear pastor friend, remember that under the new covenant, many, and not few, are called to both salvation and the service of God.

So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Matthew 20:16

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 1:5-6

From Longstanding Critics to Grateful Trainees

Many years ago, we were invited by another church to help train their members to work as lay or volunteer pastors. They were being prepared to share the burden of evangelism, church planting, pastoring and so on. Most of these people were elite and respected people. They were doctors, lawyers, bankers, business people and high level professionals. One of the things they kept saying during the training period was: “Wow, what a blessing. We have sat in this church for years never doing anything, but just criticizing our Pastor. We did not know we could do something for the Lord”. Many of these people have seen the importance of being involved and are doing well now.

Dear Pastor, do not be proud. Train and teach people to do the work. The ministry is not your sole preserve. Pastors, you will not do well if you do not

equip and release people to help you in what the Lord has committed to you. It is too hard for you alone.

THOU WILT SURELY WEAR AWAY, BOTH THOU, AND THIS PEOPLE THAT IS WITH THEE: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

Exodus 18:18

When, as a pastor, you want to do all the work, you are going to hurt yourself and the sheep. You cannot visit all the members all by yourself. It will take too long. You will get tired. You may even fall into a preventable temptation with the opposite sex. Those you do not visit and care for at certain critical times of their lives may become hurt and offended and will leave your church. These are not fiction. They are the realities of pastoral work.

Pastors, I cannot overemphasize this point. One of your main duties is to train people all the time. Most times, the older members become tired and unresponsive. You must recruit new people all the time to prepare them to help with God's work.

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

Ephesians 4:11-12 NIV

You have to train and raise up people but you cannot train and raise people up when you do not have anybody. You do not have people because nobody is coming into the church. The cells make it possible for a lot of people to come into the church all the time.

When you start cells you will have more people to train to help you to do more as a pastor. The more shepherds you have, the more workers you have. And the more workers you have, the bigger the church can be.

2. The pastor has more time to read and study the word of God, which is his core duty.

The pastor is afforded more time to meditate on the word of God to receive deep revelation for himself. The pastor has more time to wait on God, pray and fast. When it comes to the work of counseling, interaction and visitation, he has more people helping him therefore he has more time to pray and wait on God and study the word - which is his main work.

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. BUT WE WILL GIVE OURSELVES CONTINUALLY TO PRAYER, AND TO THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

Acts 6:1-4

What is the work of the Pastor? The work of the pastor is to perfect the saints for the work of the ministry. The core duty of the pastor is to train people. Pastors, we should not allow people to control us. We must rather focus on our core duty of prayer, studying the word and equipping the saints

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; FOR THE PERFECTING OF THE SAINTS, FOR THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY, FOR THE EDIFYING OF THE BODY OF CHRIST:

Ephesians 4:11-12

The pastor is not to do the work of the ministry all by himself, but rather to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. The pastor is the trainer, motivator and encourager. If you do not train people, you will soon have to do all the work of visiting, ushering, counseling, singing, outreaching and even setting up equipment alone. You can easily die.

Let My People Go!

Dr. Yonggi Cho said when he started his ministry in 1953, right from the onset, he wanted to build the largest single church in Korea. He said, he also wanted to be the Billy Graham of Korea. At the time, the largest church was a Presbyterian church with six thousand people. He launched into the church work and was involved with everything in the church. After sometime, he became ill. He said, the Lord told him ‘I will not heal you; you will continue to be ill for the next ten years’. He became weak, could not preach and collapsed a couple of times.

During those times, he asked the Lord “So how can I do the ministry?” God told him, “Let my people go”. He asked, Lord please what do you mean by let

my people go? God said, release my people to work for me.

According to Dr. Cho, he started to meditate on the scriptures while he was on his sick bed. This was made possible because he rarely could move around much to work. He began to look at the early church and saw that indeed there were very few apostles; so how could they be able to look after the thousands of people who were coming to the church. Gradually, the Holy Spirit birthed the idea of the house churches or cell ministry in his heart.

The Holy Spirit showed him that the people were meeting in homes and some of the ordinary disciples were looking after them. “Divide your church into cells”, said the Holy Spirit, “And let ordinary people look after my people”. Delegate the teaching, visitation and care of my people to some of your deacons. That is how he came up with the idea of the cell system.

Read the following account for yourself from Dr Cho’s famous cell book **SUCCESSFUL HOME CELL GROUPS**:

“During the year from 1964 to 1965, I continued to be terribly ill, spending most of my time in bed, but during that time my fellowship with the Holy Spirit began to deepen and take on the characteristics of communion. I finished both of those books (“JESUS CHRIST, THE DIVINE HEALER” AND “THE HOLY SPIRIT”) and they went on to become bestsellers in Korea, and later in Japan. But those studies were only preliminary to the real revelation God wanted to give me. That revelation was to have the most powerful effect on my ministry. Simply stated, the Lord wanted to show me that I needed to delegate responsibility in the church. As I lay there on my bed, wondering how I would ever again be able to manage the congregation of Full Gospel Central Church (let alone an even larger one), I asked the Holy Spirit, “Lord, what can I do?” Suddenly I felt the Spirit speaking to my heart: “Let my people go and grow.” I was stunned and puzzled. What did that mean? He continued, “Let my people go from the kingdom of Yonggi Cho, but let them grow.” “What do you mean, “Let them grow?” I asked. “Help them to stand on their own feet. Help them to carry out ministry.” That made me really begin to search the Scriptures. I came to Paul’s letter to the church at Ephesus, and that gave me courage. In Ephesians 4:11 it said that God “gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up” (NIV). Then I saw it. God’s servants (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) are given to the Church to equip the lay people, so the lay people can carry out ministry,

both inside and outside the Church. Next I read in Acts 2:46-47 that there were two types of meetings in the early church. Not only did the disciples gather regularly at the Temple, but they also met together daily in their homes to break bread and to have fellowship. I knew that in the early days of the Church there were 100,000 Christians in Jerusalem, out of a population of 200,000. Who could have taken care of all those people, since there were only twelve apostles? How could they take care of the house-to-house ministry? There had to be leaders of smaller groups—of house fellowships. Together with the seven deacons (Acts 6), the lay leaders would have had to share the responsibility of carrying out house-to-house ministry. Until then my idea of the church was always a public building; I had never even considered the possibility of turning a house into a church. Yet the Bible clearly and specifically mentioned the church meeting in houses. And I thought to myself, here I have been stressing only a temple ministry. We have no house-to-house ministry. I've just been telling our people to come to church on Sundays and Wednesdays. There is something we have been lacking.

My study carried me on to the sixth chapter of Acts, where the apostles chose seven deacons to minister to the physical needs of the growing congregation, while the apostles limited themselves to prayer and the preaching of the Word. But after the stoning of one of the deacons, Stephen, the church was scattered. Then even the deacons became preachers, as is evident from Philip's evangelism campaign to Samaria in Acts 8. The apostles had delegated not only the authority to minister to physical needs but also the authority to preach. As I surveyed Acts, I saw that in addition to the 3,000 people added to the church on Pentecost, 5,000 more were added the following day. Yet there were only twelve apostles and seven deacons. Therefore, the only way for the believers to be taken care of in the house meetings was for each of those fellowships—or cell groups—to have a leader. The church, then, was well-organized to minister to the needs of a growing congregation. "That's it!" I said to myself. It made sense. How else could the early church have absorbed 3,000 converts on the first day, when the Holy Spirit fell on the believers in the Upper Room on Pentecost? The needs of those people were taken care of in the homes, not in the Temple".

Initially, he sold the idea to the men in his church, but they rejected it. And the Lord said, choose the women, who happily accepted the challenge to lead the home cells. That is how Dr. Cho started the idea of cells and the fruits are there for all of us to see.

Dear pastor, let the people of God go and serve Him!

3. It is a leadership platform for the church because the pastor can train leaders.

4. The cells ensure a greater spiritual impact of the pastor.

- 1) Special ceremonies of the church members are easily undertaken. The pastor does not need to run around everywhere himself.
- 2) The pastor is able to easily and quickly mobilize his members for any program and other events in the church.
- 3) You earn a bad name as a pastor if you do not carry out cells since it allows you to grow your church and care for the members effectively.

Chapter 11

How To Convert From A Traditionally Run Church To A Cell Based Church

In 2009, when we were starting the cell system, our church had about two hundred and fifty adults in Sunday attendance. There were no cells at this point. It was a traditional church.

What is a traditionally run church? Most churches in the world fall under this category. These are churches that are not cell based. They have no cells, or the cells are just one of the many departments or ministries that exist in these churches. Such churches have fellowships or ministries or departments as the mainstay of running them. Examples of such departments include men's fellowship, women's fellowship, children's ministry, evangelism team, counseling department, music departments, teachers and follow up ministry.

What is a Cell-based church? Unlike the traditional church, these churches have the cell system as the mainstay of running them. The cells are not one of the departments, but the only real department in these churches. Every member belongs to a cell, everything in the church runs on cells. In other words these churches are **CELL CHURCHES**.

There are several important steps you must go through if you want to transform your church from a traditional one to a cell-based church. It is critical to go about this very, very carefully. You must be meticulous, there must be no rush. You must give yourself time, you must study and understand the cell strategy yourself very well. Not adhering to the steps discussed below may destroy your stable traditionally run church. You will actually turn your church and members into a great state of confusion. However, the rewards can be amazing if the conversion is done very well.

STEPS FOR CONVERTING FROM A TRADITIONAL CHURCH TO A CELL BASED CHURCH

i. Learn and understand the principles or concepts of cells yourself.

Before you can succeed as a pastor of the cell system, you need to make a great effort to learn and understand what the concept is all about. In my experience, most pastors who struggle with cells do not really understand it themselves and therefore are not able to implement it well in their churches. Often, I tell such pastors who seem to have little knowledge and understanding of the cell system

but want to implement it, to just pause! Because if they do not understand it, they are likely to do the wrong things. I have had instances where cells have been ongoing for years, but I have had to advise such pastors to stop for re-training and relaunching. Those churches later experienced much better results, but they had wasted precious years.

For Ezra had prepared his heart to SEEK THE LAW OF THE LORD, AND TO DO IT, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

Ezra 7:10

This scripture is instructive. Ezra did not just get up to teach the law but rather, he first, studied to get understanding before teaching the statutes of the Lord to the people. The pastor himself must have adequate insights before teaching or embarking on cells in his church. **TO ME, THIS IS THE GREATEST KEY TO SUCCESSFUL CONVERSION!** Usually, I tell pastors to not even attempt the conversion until they have understood the concept themselves. This will prevent a lot of painful mistakes; like I said, you may actually destroy your stable church of many years.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...

Hosea 4:6

We made a lot of mistakes when we started implementing the cell system in our church, and have learnt from them. One such greivous mistake was using our old shepherds to start the cell work without re-training them. You see, the cell ministry is an entirely different ball game from normal departmental work in the church. To start with, it is a lot of hard work; it is demanding and requires specific sets of skills. I did not quite know that at the onset. We took it for granted that because our shepherds had been serving in the ministry for sometime, they could run the cells too. This mistake really affected the smooth take off of our newly established cells. There was a real struggle to breakthrough.

ii. Train cell leaders or shepherds. Avoid this danger – do not automatically use your existing deacons or shepherds to run the cells. Re-train these shepherds because they themselves do not understand this new concept. After you have done vision-casting,(we will discuss this concept later) you need to train or re-train cell leaders. Pastors, avoid this danger of automatically using old shepherds without re-training them! They simply will not be able to carry out the cell ministry.

iii. Cast the vision of cells to your church members, leaders and shepherds.

This process is called vision casting. This is very important. The sheep will do what the shepherd tells them. Remember, Jethro told Moses to teach the people the duties and roles they must perform.

Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: **And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.** Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

Exodus 18:19-22

The concept of cells needs to be cast. What does it mean to cast the vision? Vision casting implies that your whole church, pastors, shepherds, leaders, ordinary church members must be introduced and educated deeply about the cell strategy by the senior pastor from the pulpit so that they can catch the vision, and then they will be one with you in its implementation.

Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

Amos 3:3

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, THAT YE ALL SPEAK THE SAME THING, AND THAT THERE BE NO DIVISIONS AMONG YOU; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1 Corinthians 1:10

Vision casting helps everyone to speak the same thing and have the same judgments in their minds. If the pastor is thinking in one way and the members are thinking in another way, it will not work. Everything can be built if the people have the same mind, the converse is equally true.

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in

the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, BEHOLD, THE PEOPLE IS ONE, AND THEY HAVE ALL ONE LANGUAGE; AND THIS THEY BEGIN TO DO: AND NOW NOTHING WILL BE RESTRAINED FROM THEM, WHICH THEY HAVE IMAGINED TO DO.

Genesis 11:1-6

What the pastor is trying to achieve through vision casting of the cell concept is to get his people to be of the same mind with him. When we all have one mind to do cell meetings, nothing will be able to restrain us. But if you do not do vision-casting or throw it out there for everybody to understand, then you cannot achieve the desired results. Once the whole church understands the vision of cells, more than half of the work is done.

Vision casting is achieved by teaching on the cells. Everything about this new idea you are bringing. This is why it is so important for you yourself as the pastor to have a deep and proper knowledge of the cell strategy. I recommend at least six weeks to eight weeks of meticulous teaching of the subject. Not only will your sheep hear about this new idea, but more importantly, they will believe that it is the best way to build the church of God.

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Romans 10:17

And let me give you a little secret! Include the benefits of cells to the church members in your vision casting to all members. I have come to realize that it is the biggest bait to draw church members into the cell system. The members get really excited about these benefits, it is a major stimulant that pushes them to get involved in this new idea.

iv. Set a clear date for the switch. This date must be known to the whole church at least four clear weeks ahead. So that everybody is clear in their minds. The dynamics of church attendance is such that not everybody comes every Sunday, so you have to keep announcing until everyone understands what is

going to be done.

- v. Lay a foundation of prayer by the whole church.** Every new spiritual venture you are going to engage in must be backed up by prayer for God Himself to support and sustain it. Once everybody has understood the importance and the need for the implementation of the cell system in your church, it is equally important to lead your people into much prayer for the strategy to be birthed.

Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.

Proverbs 16:3

Without the involvement of the Lord Himself, all our efforts will be fruitless.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

John 15:5

Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? FOR AS SOON AS ZION TRAVAILED, SHE BROUGHT FORTH HER CHILDREN.

Isaiah 66:8

There must be a period of travailing before the children can be brought forth. That is why there must be a period of prayer by the whole church for a period of not less than three weeks. Pastors, shepherds and the general congregation must be involved in laying a foundation of prayer.

- vi. Create cells by dividing the existing church or congregation** into major areas where your church members already live and come to church from. Then subdivide these larger areas into even smaller groups according to the popular or known areas in the larger communities. A cell can have between 6-12 people.

- vii. Declare a clear cell meeting day.** The pastor must inform the congregation when the cell meetings should be held. I prefer Saturdays because weekdays are busy days for most people.

- viii. Prepare handouts from your Sunday service sermons** for use at the cell meetings. It must be typed out in points with scriptures. If the preaching is from a book, then tell them the chapter number. If the message is not from a

book, then assign one of your pastors to summarize your sermon. You can also do that yourself if you are not too busy. It is very important for these standardized handouts to be made to avoid the situation where the cell leaders are left on their own to teach whatever they think or like. That is a recipe for disaster!

The Monster Trinity

Dr. Cho says that when he started cells in his church, he did not know how important it was to give teaching guidelines to his cell leaders to teach at the cell meetings. From the onset he allowed the cell leaders to teach whatever they wanted. According to him, “wonderful” and strange messages were being preached. In fact, there was a lady that caused so much confusion at her cell meetings, when she taught cell members about the holy trinity. According to this lady, God has three heads. She turned God into a monster! This created much confusion and disaffection amongst the cell members. As a result of this and other worrying instances, Dr Cho decided to give them teaching outlines.

ix. Continue to pray for your new cell system.

x. Look out for immediate problems and address them vigorously.

xi. THE SENIOR PASTOR MUST INITIATE, DRIVE AND BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED HIMSELF. If the cell strategy is not working, it is because the senior pastor is not driving it. The senior pastor must not only believe in the cell idea, he must drive it because no car can move without a driver. The failure or success of the cell depends entirely on the senior Pastor.

Chapter 12

How To Start A Cell

The principles underlying the starting of a cell is the same principle as starting a church because after all, a cell is a church that meets in a house. The following are useful steps to follow when you want to start new cells.

1. Train cell leaders. Cell leaders do not fall from the heavens.

I often hear Pastors say, I really want to have cells but I do not have cell leaders. Nobody sells cell leaders at the shop. You cannot find them on the streets. A pastor who wants to start the cell system in his church, must recruit and undertake rigorous training for his new converts and interested older members so that there will be hordes of trained leaders to start new cells. New converts can be generated from regular outreaches and other evangelistic programs that are carried out by the members of the church. We have a stage by stage program for training our new converts until they are ready to start and lead cells. These include:

- a. **The New Believers School.** In our church, we have developed a cell leaders training program which starts with the New Believers School. This lasts for six weeks, during which the converts are taught the foundations of Christianity including, salvation through the blood of Jesus, repentance, water and Holy Spirit baptism, hell, heaven, and speaking in tongues. An administrator attached to the school monitors the attendance of the converts to make sure they have gone through the full compliment of the materials, after which they are graduated to the next stage of training.
- b. **Shepherds training school.** All leaders in our church are generally referred to us shepherds. At this stage, the graduates from the New Believers School, are prepared to be able to lead and care for the sheep of God. They are equipped to know how to study the word, pray, evangelize, follow up converts and also visit them. Mostly we teach from the wonderful practical ministry-oriented books of my pastor Bishop Dag Heward-Mills. His books including *Laikos*, *The Megachurch*, *Transform Your Pastoral Ministry*, *How to Pray*, *Catch the Anointing*, *Tell Them*, *How You Can Preach Salvation* and others are very useful for the training of these church workers (visit www.daghewardmills.org for Bishop Dag's books) . This stage lasts for up to twelve weeks.

c. **Cell Leaders Training School.** This is the final part of the training to become cell leaders. I use most of the materials I'm sharing in this book at this stage. Other useful cell ministry books, including *Successful Home Cell Groups* by Dr Yonggi Cho, are used as references.

By the end of this part of the training, the trainees will be able to start, grow and lead cell meetings. It is at this stage that we teach and train cell leaders on the cell work itself. So far, during the other stages, we have been developing their own spiritual maturity and also giving them shepherdorial skills. This stage is also taught for four weeks.

What exactly do we teach at this stage?

- a) The concepts of cells in the bible,
- b) The need to practice both the temple and house worship,
- c) The purpose of the cells,
- d) How to start cells,
- e) What we do at cell meetings,
- f) Benefits of cells to the members and
- g) Finally, the duties and responsibilities of cell leaders.

They are also taught to be loyal or faithful to the vision of the mother or local church for church growth and expansion of the kingdom of God so that when they start the cells, they do not run away with them to start their own ministries. That will defeat the whole aim of growth and expansion of the local church. Jesus taught about the need for faithfulness in service.

And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

Luke 16:12

The Apostles taught that stewards or those to whom the ministry has been committed must be loyal or faithful.

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:2

The cells are integral part of the local church and not a separate entity on its own. These are vital teachings that new cells leaders must be exposed to in order to ensure the stability of the mother church. Since we implemented the cells, we

have not had any incident of the cells being taken away. God has blessed us. Do not forget to give a good dose of the doctrine of Loyalty and Faithfulness to your trainees.

In the process of the actual cell leaders training, you must make sure that your trainees do not idle around. They must be actively involved in the cell work so that they can have hands-on experience by the time they complete their training. This is achieved by attaching the trainees to actual cell leaders to help them have a 'feel' for the cell work.

At the end of their training, we send them in pairs to start new cells, after fulfilling the under listed procedures:

- a. Trainees must be attached to an existing cell during their preparations.
- b. There must be one month of fasting and prayer by the trainees. Trainees are normally given a target of fifty hours to pray within one month.
- c. Trainees should use the last month of their training to find a location for their upcoming new cells.

2. Send your trainees out to actually plant the cells.

New cell leaders must use the following steps to plant a new cell.

- i. **Count the cost.** You must know that running a cell will cost you something. It will cost you your time, energy and money. You must decide whether you are ready to make such a sacrifice. It is a good sacrifice to make as a servant of the Lord. You were created to do certain good works and what better work can you do than to use your life to build a cell for the Lord to both win the lost and tend them.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: BUT IF IT DIE, IT BRINGETH FORTH MUCH FRUIT.

John12:24

If you want to bring forth fruits in the kingdom, you must be ready to pay the price. It will cost you to do something worthwhile for the Lord.

- ii. **Pray and wait on the Lord with fasting.** Jesus prayed before he started his ministry. Your new spiritual baby, the cell, will only come forth after much prayer.

And when he had FASTED forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

Matthew 4:2

Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

Isaiah 66:8

These are some prayer topics you can pray with.

- Pray that God will anoint you for His work.

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Luke 24:49

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Acts 10:38

- Pray for a good location or a meeting place.

Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

Acts 16:6-15

- Pray for pillars (foundational members who help with the work).

And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed TO BE PILLARS, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision

Galatians 2:9

- Pray for the salvation of the people in the area.

THY KINGDOM COME. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven

Matthew 6:10

- Do spiritual warfare (bind the work and influence of demons in that area).

Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first BIND THE STRONG MAN? and then he will spoil his house.

Matthew 12:29

- Pray that the Lord will bless your cell work. If the Lord does not bless the work, it will not work.

And the HAND OF THE LORD WAS WITH THEM: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

Acts 11:21

- Pray that you will be faithful and loyal. We need loyalty to expand.

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found FAITHFUL.

1 Corinthians 4:2

- d. Direct your trainees to plant their new cell within the locality where they live. It must not be too far in order not to necessitate the need for transport, and for them to have easy access to their sheep. This also helps with the regularity of the cell meetings since the element of long travel is taken out.
- e. Start by doing person-to-person or one on one evangelism in your area. Gather the converts to start your cell.
- f. Always pray before going out for outreach. You will be frustrated, disappointed and fruitless if you just get up and go outreaching. It will not work! Satan is not just ready to relinquish his precious souls to you. You need the help of the Holy Spirit. Pray that the Holy Spirit will anoint you and

lead you to the people that He has already prepared. Pray that the Holy Spirit touches the hearts of the sinners to bring conviction of sin. Evangelism without prayer will lead to arguments, frustrations and disappointments.

- g. Follow up your new converts immediately. To achieve this you must take some vital personal information from them. Their names, especially popular or nicknames, location address and cell phones contacts are very useful for effective follow up visits.
- h. Invite them to join your cell. Do this at the earliest next cell meeting. Sometimes you may actually have to go back to their homes to bring them along. Do whatever it takes to get them into the cell, that is the only way they can become established believers. Soon, as they begin to enjoy the numerous benefits we spoke about earlier, they will become willing cell members.

Receive the anointing and the grace to plant multitudes of cells in your city!

Chapter 13

What Do We Do At A Cell Meeting?

There are a host of things a cell leader is expected to do before and during a cell meeting. Among the things done before the cell meeting comes off are: praying towards the meeting, studying the word of God, as well as the handouts of message or sermon prepared from the local Pastor's sermon, and doing outreaches on the day of the meeting.

How A Cell Leader Must Prepare for A Cell Meeting

It is important that a cell leader prepares for the cell meeting. Preparation is key to the success of anything. Therefore, the cell leader is expected to prepare adequately for the cell meeting just as a pastor will do for a church service. Here is what a cell leader is expected to do in preparation towards the cell meeting.

- 1. He must remember that it is cell meeting day.** This is because some cell leaders, due to their busy schedules and other reasons, sometimes forget.
- 2. He must pray towards the meeting.**

Do not just get up and go. Just as a pastor will prepare towards the preaching of the word, the shepherd must also pray before going for the cell meeting so that he can have maximum spiritual impact. I recommend at least one hour of prayer and intercession for the cell meeting. Cell leaders who do not pray towards their cell meetings have empty cell meetings and ineffective cell meetings.

**For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord:
therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.**

Jeremiah 10:21

What must a cell leader pray for?

- i. Pray for the help of the Holy Spirit to gather the members. The gathering of the members for the meeting is done by the Holy Spirit and not by your sweat or efforts.

And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth.

Numbers 11:31

- ii. Pray that the Holy Spirit will anoint you to teach His word and to be a blessing to His people.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness... And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: AND GREAT GRACE WAS UPON THEM ALL.

Acts 4:31, 33

The Holy Spirit anointed them and used them mightily. He gave them boldness to preach and grace for the work. Pray that the Holy Spirit will bless the meeting. The people must leave the meeting feeling so blessed that they will yearn to come back. The cell members should come out of the meeting blessed, questions in their hearts answered and burdens taken off them.

- iii. Pray that the needs of the people will be met during the cell meeting.

Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Psalms 16:11

- 3. **The cell leader must study the teaching material that has been given to him prior to the meeting.**

For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

Ezra 7:10

You must go through the points, scriptural references and windows or illustrations and let the message enter your heart so that you can teach it from your heart. I always encourage my shepherds to get the audio version of the message and listen because if you not understand what the pastor taught, how can you teach it? Are you going to teach your own ideas?

- 4. **Be the first to attend the meeting and set up the meeting place.**

Components of A Cell Meeting

The following activities are carried out at a cell meeting.

- 1. *Anagkazo* – *Anagkazo* is a Greek word which means to use entreaties, persuasion and every means possible to bring unbelievers into the kingdom of

God. Luke 14:23. The idea is to offer a quick, loving but firm and forceful invitation to those in the immediate community to attend the cell meetings, targeting especially sinners. So before the cell meeting starts, the cell leader must lead the members to do 15-20 minutes *anagkazo*; this is especially useful during the formative weeks of a new cell. It helps to grow the new cell as more and more invited sinners give their lives to the Lord. Assuming you start your cell meeting at 6pm, you can start your *anagkazo* at 5:40pm.

And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel (*anagkazo*) them to come in, that my house may be filled.

Luke 14:23

2. A short opening prayer by the cell leader or a cell member accompanied by a little congregational prayer. That should take 3 minutes.
3. Praise and worship should be done for 5minutes. Who is going to lead the praise and worship? Any of the members. Do not sing complex songs. Sing simple, popular and short tunes everybody knows.
4. Teaching of the word. This is done by the cell leader or his assistant in his absence and it must last for 25-30minutes.
5. Congregational prayer. This is done after the word has been taught. It should be up to 15 minutes

Three topics to pray;

- a). Prayer for the cell members.
 - b). Prayer for the local church.
 - c). Prayer for the community.
6. Offerings. This has some important uses. Firstly, it is used to rent buses to convey the members to service at the main church. It also serves as the platform to train the members to cultivate the important biblical virtue of giving.

Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

2 Corinthians 8:7

7. Discussion of the problems and the needs of the cell members. Decisions are

then taken to help solve them collectively by the cell members. Difficult ones must be brought to the pastor for solutions.

8. Breaking of bread. Sharing simple meal together causes deeper and stronger bonds to be formed.

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart...

Acts 2:42, 46

9. Announcements and closing prayer.

Guidelines for Teaching at the Cell Meeting

1. No other person should be allowed to teach at the cell meeting without the express permission of the Pastor. What does it mean? Do not allow just anybody at all to teach! Because if you do, strangers with other motives will capture the cell and turn it into their own church. Always remember that the sheep must be guided. At the cell meeting, the members continue to deepen their understanding of their apostle's doctrine. That is one of the critical aims of the cell strategy. For example, if on Sunday the senior pastor is teaching on soul winning, then at the cell meeting, soul winning is also taught.

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:42

Do not try to reinvent the wheel. Any cell leader who disobeys must be relieved of his duties. The cell is supposed to add and grow the church and not take away from it. Anything that has the tendency to take away from the church is against the vision.

2. It must be teaching and not preaching. The cell leader must teach and not preach. What is the difference between teaching and preaching? Teaching is systematic. Teaching brings more understanding, preaching brings quicker exhortation, that does not also last long. Preaching is often boisterous, noisy and dramatic. It is more suited for the big service at the mother church.
3. Read the points and the appropriate scriptures and explain them for further understanding.

4. Only the approved teaching material provided, which is, the message taught by the pastor on Sunday should be used. Do not go with any text book of your own.
5. If possible, make copies of the teaching materials for all your members.
6. The cell leader must allow questions, interactions, discussions and contributions from the members. This is very important because it is not like a normal church service where the time is limited and the pastor cannot be interrupted during his sermon.

Guidelines for Breaking of Bread

As noted earlier this is an integral part of the cell meeting.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, **and breaking bread from house to house**, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart...

Acts 2:46

1. The intention is not to fill and satisfy our stomachs.
2. Expensive food should not be brought to the meeting. This is to avoid the situation where poorly endowed cell members, who cannot bring anything along, become embarrassed and eventually leave the cell and even the church.
3. Light food like biscuits, soft drinks, loaves of bread, ice cream and cakes and the likes are recommended. Social drinks such as tea and coffee are apt for the cell meetings.

WHAT THE CELL AND CELL MEETINGS ARE NOT MEANT FOR

Unfortunately, like everything the church does, the devil tries to come in as an angel of light to distract it from its real purpose, and transform the works of God into something destructive. Watch out for the following trends, and take decisive actions including sometimes closing the cells if you notice them.

Worrying Signs in a Cell

1. The cell is not a “pray for me” centre.
2. The cell is not a “deliverance” centre.
3. The cell is not a “prophetic” centre.
4. The cell is not a personal ministry of the cell leader. It is a fellowship of the

main church. Pastors, make that very clear!

5. No cell leader can start a cell on his own or create another one without the express permission of the Pastor.
6. The cell is not the place for the leader to pursue his personal secret ministry.
7. The cell is a place where love, care, prayer, bible study, evangelism and leadership development is provided to the church members of the mother church.

Chapter 14

Characteristics Of A Healthy And Successful Cell

The following signs are indicative that your cells are healthy, strong and productive.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart...

Acts 2:46

Eleven Signs Of A Successful Cell

- 1. The cell meetings are held on the scheduled day.** Erratic cell meetings are an ominous sign and the senior pastor must not tolerate it. Often it is a sign that the cell leader is unavailable or undependable. He is possibly backslidden. So when the cell meetings are regular and come on at the scheduled day, it is a sign that cells are healthy.
- 2. Cell meetings start on time.** We live in a very worldly and busy society. People are very conscious of their time, Christians inclusive. Neither very early nor late start of the cell meetings is ideal. We have observed over the years that commencing the cell meetings between five and seven in the evening works best for most of our people. We teach our cell leaders to observe these times. Those who regularly start the meetings late in the night end up killing the cell. Most people want to have enough rest after long working hours; others want to study. Healthy cells are those who follow this principle of starting on time.
- 3. Cell meetings are regular.** This is an important principle. Anything that will succeed has to come on with a predictable regularity. It applies to a new shop, hospital, business or church. Frequent rescheduling or postponement of cell meetings is a bad sign. It is not healthy, its members gradually abandon it. If this is not remedied the cell will collapse.
- 4. Appropriate study material is taught at each meeting.** By appropriate teaching material, I mean the messages, teachings and doctrines of the local pastor. He is the apostle of the church and the cells serve as an avenue for the members of his church to continue to be taught the doctrines, body of knowledge, wisdom keys, that God has given to him.

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship,

and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:42

It is important therefore for the local pastors and the cell pastors to ensure that the cell leaders always use the teaching materials provided. They should not be allowed to teach their own doctrines, neither should they be allowed to introduce doctrines of other churches or ministries. Although the latter may be good, but to avoid confusion, it is important to emphasize that the local pastor's sermons or messages is what must be used at the cell meetings. Consequently, any deviation from this policy is a signal that, that particular cell is unhealthy

5. **There is an atmosphere of love.** A cell where members are always fighting and are not happy means it is not healthy. Watch out when your members inform you they want to change their cells, or leave off being cell members altogether. Members of the cell must experience great Christian love, and not strife and contention that have the propensity to kill the cell.

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James 3:14-18

6. **There is an atmosphere of fellowship.** This is a great sign of a healthy cell. It means the cell members are able to freely interact, share, confide and share the deep matters of the heart one with the other. On the other hand, a cell where there is prevalent secrecy, suspicion and lots of holding back is a bad cell.
7. **There is an atmosphere of care.** Cell members ought to look after one another, they care and are interested in the personal well-being of each other. The presence of such an atmosphere shows that the cell is healthy.
8. **Regular weekly outreaches are carried out.** The absence of this sign is an indication that, that particular cell has lost one of its main visions - soul winning. It is a grave sign of an unhealthy cell. Dr Yonggi Choo says that "if a cell does not win souls, I close it down." I could not agree with him more.

Cells that undertake regular soul winning activities are very healthy cells.

9. New converts are regularly brought from the area to the mother church.

Pastors, if you look out for this particular sign, you will quickly know which of your cells are real cells and which are just home bible study groups. Cells with home bible study group characteristics, meeting just to have fellowship and bible study, but neglecting soul winning are unhealthy cells. The pastor must step in and correct that anomaly.

10. The meetings follow the approved format. In these cells, the program outlines for cell meetings are rigorously followed. Apart from that, such cells do not venture into other “extra-curricular activities”, such as being metamorphosed into a “pray for me” or “prophetic center.”

11. There is sense of security. This is where the cell members are protective of each other.

Cells which do not exhibit the above characteristics are not healthy. Neither are they successful. They require urgent and bold changes to make them effective, depending on the reasons for their poor state.

Chapter 15

Duties And Responsibilities Of A Cell Leader

In our Church, we have three categories of cell leaders, namely the Cell Leader, the Senior Cell Leader and the Cell Pastor.

- A. The Cell leader. This is the unit cell leader. He is in charge of only one cell. He reports to the senior cell leader.
- B. The Senior Cell leader. He is in charge of a cluster of cells. He oversees the cell leaders in this cluster of cells. He reports to the cell pastor.
- C. The Cell Pastor. He is in charge of a large geographical area, district or region. He oversees the senior cell leaders and the unit cell leaders. He reports directly to the Senior pastor of the church.

Duties of the Cell Leader

- 1. He is in charge of only one cell.
- 2. He must have his daily quiet time. A cell leader is a type of a pastor therefore he must do what a pastor does. One of your duties is to have daily quiet time, reading the Bible so that you will have the word of God in you to feed the sheep who have been given to you.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

- 3. He must pray at least one hour daily.

And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not **WATCH WITH ME ONE HOUR?**

Matthew 26:40

- 4. He must deepen his knowledge about the concept of cells by soaking in messages and reading books on the cell strategy continually.
- 5. He must seek to continuously catch an anointing for his cell work through prayer, bible study, reading books, soaking in messages and watching videos.
- 6. He must teach exactly what his pastor has provided in the study handout. Do not add your own ideas. Cell members must always continue in their apostle's (local pastor) doctrine.

7. He must mobilize all the converts won at the cell meeting on Sundays to the mother church. Our aim is not to keep the people in our cells but to bring them to church on Sundays so that they become part of the big church. So that we can grow and train them. Real converts who you win will follow you to church but backslidden members of other churches will not follow you to church because they do not feel part of your church.

If you win three converts on Saturday you must take all of them along with you on Sunday. Pastors, when you start cells and there are no converts, it is a sign that the cells are not working and there is no evangelism. Go into it quickly and address it.

8. He must encourage the members of his cell to attend Sunday and midweek services regularly.
9. He must provide direct spiritual oversight over the members of his cell by faithfully and effectively carrying out PSCI (Prayer, Visitation, Counselling and Interaction). Your cell members are your sheep and you must have oversight over them.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Acts 20:28

If you do not carry out PSCI after members are given to you, we cannot achieve our vision of caring for the members in smaller groups. A lot of shepherds do not do it. We have given you five sheep and you do not know where they are. When we ask you, you keep scratching your head!

10. He must successfully run the cell (see signs of a successful cell in the previous chapter).
11. He must be involved in every aspect of the life of the cell members.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

John 10:11

12. He must attend the special ceremonies of the cell members. In instances where he cannot be available, he must ensure that someone else deputizes for him.
13. He must identify potential cell leaders and introduce them to his senior cell

leader or the cell pastor for them to be trained.

14. He must mobilize his cell members to join the buses if buses are used.
15. In instances where the church is not using buses, the cell shepherd must actively encourage his members to attend Sunday and weekday service.
16. He must look out for his members on Sundays to know those who attended and those who did not.
17. He must take offerings at the cell meetings and faithfully hand them over to the treasurer designated by the pastor.
18. He must not take offerings in the first two meetings in order not to give a false signal that he has gathered them because of their money. Doing this can ruin the success of a burgeoning cell.
19. He must pay tithes. Any non-tither must not be allowed to do the cell work. It is a sign that he is not faithful to God, and therefore must not be allowed to lead His people.

If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

Luke 16:11

20. He must love the Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart and let his love for Him be the basis for all his service.

Christ's love has moved me to such extremes. His love has the first and last word in everything we do.

2 Corinthians 5:14 MSG

21. He must attend all important church meetings.
22. He must be faithful and loyal to God and to the vision the Lord has given to his pastor.

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:2

Duties of a Senior Cell Leader

If the church is large and there are many cells, the Pastor can put a couple of these cells under an experienced, seasoned, anointed and loyal shepherd, who is in the category of a pastoral trainee and such a person becomes a senior cell

leader. This is important because it will be difficult for the Pastor alone to have general oversight of all that goes on in hundreds of cells. The duties of such a senior cell leader include the following:

- 1) He is in-charge of a cluster of cells.
- 2) He must have daily quiet time.
- 3) He must pray daily for at least 2 hours. We must work as shepherds because we love the Lord. Any other reason is not a good reason. Spending quality time before the Lord regularly shows that you love Him. Your love for the Lord must always be the basis for serving Him. It must be the basis for your work and contribution in the church. Otherwise, soon you will be complaining that the pastor is 'using' me and you will even be making financial or other demands for your voluntary service in the church. In our denomination, we believe everyone can serve the Lord freely and voluntarily. I was a lay pastor for eleven years and was never paid anything for the work I was doing. I did it all from my free will and was so blessed doing it.
- 4) He must ensure that all the cells under him hold their meetings. Ideally, such a person should not himself run a cell so that he will have the time to move around and oversee the cells under him.
- 5) He must ensure that the meetings are held according to the laid down principles in respect to the day and the format determined by the head pastor.
- 6) He and the cell leaders under him must mobilize all the members under them into the bus to church on Sundays as well as during all other church events.
- 7) He must ensure full attendance of all members in his area for all organized church programs, e.g conventions, prayer meetings and weekday services.
- 8) He must ensure that P.V.C.I is done by the cell leaders and that all complicated problems are brought to the attention of the cell Pastor or ultimately to the Senior Pastor of the church.
- 9) He must ensure that all the cell leaders in his area attend the Cell leaders school.
- 10) He must work closely with his senior cell Pastor all the time.
- 11) He must identify potential shepherds/leaders in his area and train them.
- 12) He must ensure that all converts from his area have attended and completed the New Believer's School, have received Holy Ghost Baptism and have

undergone Water Baptism.

- 13) Ensure that offerings are properly taken by all your area cell leaders and that all monies are paid to the appropriate designated officers.
- 14) He must organize regular outreach programs in his area.
- 15) He must organize regular prayer meetings in his area.
- 16) He must attend all special ceremonies of the shepherds and members of his area.
- 17) He must ensure that all new ideas, directives, innovations and instructions from his pastor about the cells are implemented in his area.
- 18) He must know the whereabouts of his cell leaders and the members in his area at all times.
- 19) He must not take and implement decisions independently without involving his Pastor no matter how good they may seem.
- 20) He must consult and receive the express approval of the Pastor for any additions he intends to make to the cell work.
- 21) He must look out for signs of disloyalty in his cell leaders and bring them to the attention of the Pastor.
- 22) He cannot select and appoint cell leaders on his own. He should recommend all such people to the Pastor for his consideration.
- 23) He must be loyal to God and to the vision He has given his Senior Pastor.

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:2

Duties of the Cell Pastor

A Cell Pastor oversees a geographical area in the city and reports directly to the Senior Pastor of the mother church. The need for cell pastors arises in situations where there are a number of pastors in the church; so the Senior Pastor puts these pastors in charge of the large districts or regions.

A cell pastor undertakes effective spiritual oversight of the cell work by doing the following:

1. Daily quiet time.

2. Daily prayer of at least three hours a day. Those who do not pray always struggle, but the Lord blesses those who pray. What can you do for the Lord on your own? Nothing! That is why you must rely on Him and in Him for Him to use you. One of the things I have realized is that Satan attacks the cells all the time. Anytime Satan sees the source that will extend the work of God, he attacks it. All throughout the bible, Satan attacked many people. He attacked Adam, Moses, Joseph and Jesus. He somehow knew their destinies and tried to attack their beginnings so the cell work requires a persistent dose of regular prayer.

Jesus spoke of the parable of the wheat and tares and said while men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares.

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

Matthew 13:24-25

Pastors, we cannot afford to sleep because as we are working for the Lord, Satan is also planting evil seeds to destroy the work of God.

He said unto them, An enemy hath done this...

Matthew 13:28

He is planting spirits of backsliding, hurts and offences and rebellion. Sometimes you are in the church and you have not done anything wrong to your church member but he becomes hurt and just leaves the church. These are all orchestrated by evil spirits, that is why we cannot sleep. We must watch and pray!

Satan drops something in the heart of the people and they turn against you. Sometimes, they wake up and they just say they will not go to church or serve God anymore. One of the things the anti-Christ will do when he comes is that, he will make the saints weary and drain them of enthusiasm and passion. This spirit is already at work.

And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High...

Daniel 7:25

Therefore a Cell Pastor must pray a lot to keep all these evils away so that the

work can flourish and succeed.

3. Weekly fasting, and personal monthly retreats.
4. He must continually deepen his understanding of the cell concept by reading books and listening to messages.
5. The Cell Pastor must ensure that all cells under him are running well. He must ensure that all fellowships under him are healthy by watching out for the signs of successful cells.
6. He must ensure that new areas are identified for the creation and development of new cells.
7. He must provide continuous training for his cell leaders.
8. He must identify cell members who can be trained to become cell shepherds.
9. He must provide leadership and soul winning activities for the cells in his area.
10. He must provide pastoral care for all the members in his area through PVICI.
11. He must diagnose problems and challenges that confront members in his area and address them.
12. He must receive new converts on Sundays and enroll them in the new believers school and assign them to cells for effective follow up.
13. He must ensure that all aspects of the cell vision of the church are fully implemented and adhered to in the region under his oversight.
14. He must report critical issues concerning members in his area to the senior pastor.
15. He must always think about the work of the cells and must be consumed by it.
16. He must follow the bus mobilization strategy that has been designed by the senior pastor.
17. On Saturdays, a cell pastor must spend at least 3 hours praying for the sheep and sinners to attend Sunday service.
18. He must receive and review the weekly report of the cell leaders.
19. He must complete and submit monthly cell report to the cell administrator.

20. He must eat, drink, bath, talk, dream and sleep cells. He must be totally consumed by the cells.

21. He must be loyal to God and to the vision God has given to his senior pastor.

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:2

Chapter 16

Strategies For Evangelism In The Cells

Methods for Cell Evangelism

In my opinion the most effective and practical mode of evangelism for most cell leaders and their members is personal evangelism or person-to-person evangelism. Some call this type one on one witnessing. The following are useful and practical steps for carrying out one-on-one evangelism.

- a. Pray before you go out.
- b. Dress appropriately and decently. Make sure you do not go around with an offensive body or mouth odour. The ladies must ensure that their dressing is not suggestive. Both of these put off potential converts.
- c. When you locate a sinner, approach boldly and cheerfully.
- d. Introduce yourself and your mission without mentioning the name of your church first. People are put off when you mention the name of your church. They say to themselves (and sometimes to you directly), “I also have my church”; “I attend so so and so church” so use wisdom. Jesus did not send us to go and preach about our church, he sent us to go and preach the pure message of salvation to sinners so focus on that.
- e. Sit down only if you are offered a seat. In some cultures it is rude for you to pull a chair yourself to sit. It is seen as an ugly intrusion. You must remember that evangelism must be *missional*, that is, you must be willing to adapt it to the culture of the community, without compromising the truth of the word of God.
- f. Use appropriate and traditionally accepted gestures. Do not greet with your left hand for example in cultures where this is deemed offensive and disrespectful.
- g. Witness to the person allowing the Holy Spirit to guide you.
- h. Always pray for the sinner to give his life to Christ before you leave.
- i. Ask your new convert if there is anything he or she wants you to pray for him or her about. When you are praying for people, do not only pray “spiritual prayers”, but also pray for their needs.
- j. Take as much information as possible about the person so that you can do follow up. EVANGELISM WITHOUT FOLLOW UP IS USELESS, A

WASTE OF TIME, FRUITLESS AND IS NO EVANGELISM.

Ask questions such as “can you please tell me your full name?” “Is there any name or popular name you are called by at home or in your neighborhood?” “Is this your real number?” Do not take the residential or postal address of people but rather take the exact information for easy identification and location of your new convert.

k. From the cell meeting invite the person to church.

OTHER EVANGELISTIC STRATEGIES FOR THE CELL MINISTRY

i. Music and dance.

ii. Gospel street carnival.

iii. Christian movie nights.

iv. Salvation Christian parties.

v. Small-sized open air crusades.

vi. Social media evangelism. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp groups, Telegram groups etc.

vii. Drama evangelism.

viii. Breakfast meetings.

ix. Musical concerts.

Chapter 17

Bus Mobilization and The Cell System

What is bus mobilization? This simply means using buses to gather and convey people to and from church. One of the powerful keys that brings a powerful impact and success to the cell work is the use of buses to bring the members from their various localities to church. It helps especially poor people who live far away and do not have money, and it really encourages them to come to church. It is important that as you implement your cell ministry strategy, and especially as you see growth, you add on this strategy.

At the cell meetings, offerings are taken and so the church needs not have to use its scanty resources to pay for the buses. If cell leaders will take the offering seriously, the church will be able to use those monies to pay for the buses. The church's direct income may not be used at all.

HOW TO DO BUS MOBILIZATION

The following steps should be used to achieve maximum and effective mobilization or gathering of the cell members to attend the services at the mother church.

1. Mobilization of church members should be an ongoing process throughout the whole week. This implies that, this activity cannot be undertaken only on the morning of the service. The actual Sunday bus mobilization is the culmination of a series of measures that have gone on throughout the whole week, including those described below.
2. Bus mobilization to church begins during the cell meetings. During the cell meetings, the cell leaders must tell the members about the buses and also how and where they can actually get on them on Sunday mornings, or any other times. This needs to be emphasized and re-emphasized. Ask questions to find out the problems the members may have in the bus usage. For example, the bus stops may be very far from a particular group of cell members. In such cases, the cell leaders must devise a means of making sure that the bus locations become closer and easier for them to join the buses.

Maybe the bus arrives too early or too late or tends to be irregular. So by asking questions, the church members will be able to raise these issues and then the leaders can address them.

The unreliability of some bus drivers in fulfilling their commitments is an issue

we have had to contend with over the years. This greatly hampers the effectiveness of the mobilization. With time we have learnt to be patient with them, and have humbly befriended them. By the grace of God, the Holy Spirit Himself has touched the hearts of many such problematic drivers to be saved. Some have even joined our church. All these have helped solve the challenges and difficulties we have faced with these bus drivers.

3. Early Sunday morning, the cell pastor together with his senior cell leaders and cell leaders must meet to discuss the strategy for mobilization on that day. In our church, this early meeting of the leaders takes place between 6 to 7 am. The strategy involves assigning different cell leaders to different small communities, taking into consideration the distribution of the cell members and the bus stops. The cell leaders literally diffuse into the homes of their cell members, especially new, weak and backslidden ones and encourage them to get ready to join the buses. This is *ANAGKAZO*, *ANADEIA* AND *BLAZO* IN ACTION! These are all actions Jesus says we must take to ensure that His house is filled, so that the kingdom of God is not depleted.

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force (Greek *Biazo*).

Matthew 11:12

And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel (Greek *Anagkazo*) them to come in, that my house may be filled.

Luke 14:23

I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity (Greek *Anaideia*, meaning *shamelessness*) he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Luke 11:8

It is this powerful combination of human and divine forces (cell leaders, buses and the Holy Spirit) that ensure that thousands of cell members gather each Sunday in the presence of our loving Savior to praise and worship Him and to be touched by the power of His word and His awesome presence.

4. The buses must not arrive too early or too late. Neither of these two scenarios is helpful. If the buses arrive too early, they will meet most of the cell members still sleeping and reluctant to join. This results in the buses leaving

virtually empty. On the other hand, late arrivals, leads to the situation where most of the members miss crucial aspects of the service such as the prayer and praise and worship time. We have observed that if the latter scenario persists, the cell members often decide to find a means of coming to church on their own, others simply go back home. Both of these situations defeat the real purpose of introducing bus mobilization into the cell ministry - making it easy for most of the church members to come to church, and therefore ensuring church growth.

5. The cell pastor and his cell leaders are free to use small or big buses depending on their convenience. Sometimes, big buses are not able to ply and meander through certain corners and terrains, but small ones can. Also bigger buses tend to be more expensive, while being often difficult to fill. So depending on the areas where the people live and the road networks, a careful analysis of which type of buses should be used must be made. A crucial decision in all these discussions must be affordability and sustainability of the buses for the long term.
6. The pastor and the cell leaders must use common sense to determine the number of buses to be deployed on Sundays depending on the prevailing weather conditions. Assuming you normally use fifteen buses, and on a particular Sunday it rained heavily and persistently, you will have to reduce the number of buses for that particular day, since the truth is that if you send out your usual fifteen buses, they are likely to return mostly empty. But remember that the drivers will not reduce their charges once they have made the trips! I know you are anointed but when doing the work of God you also need to use wisdom.

But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

1 Corinthians 1:24

7. On Sundays, the real mobilization must be done by several people. Every bus must have a bus captain who gently, and with Anagkazo, Biazo and Anadeia keep people from moving about. What happens is that, when the bus arrives, not everybody arrives at the same time so those who are around begin to move about. The bus captain is in place to organize the cell members to smoothly join the bus. In addition he determines when the bus should move or vice versa.

Bus mobilization leads to church growth. But a lot of thinking must go into it to ensure its effectiveness. The steps described above and any others that may be added by cell pastors will bring much success to this aspect of the cell ministry.

Chapter 18

Challenges Associated With The Cell System

Early Challenges of the Cell System

Just like most new adventures, challenges are encountered in the early periods of running cells. The effect of early challenges is that they frustrate and delay the establishment of the cells, as well as retard its momentum. The early or short term challenges include the following:

1. Church members not properly understanding the concept and therefore giving divided support, cooperation and attention. This is why you must first undertake a detailed vision casting. To properly spell out the concept to your church members.
2. Ill-trained cell leaders. If you do not train the potential cell leaders well, they will not know how to do the work well afterwards. In fact improperly trained cell workers will cause perennial difficulties in your cell strategy.
3. Inadequate numbers of properly trained cell leaders. When the numbers of the cell leaders are inadequate, you will end up giving large numbers of cells to the few ones; they will not be able to handle them properly. The cell members will not be looked after well. Simply put, they have been given too much work!
4. Refusal of members and other people to open their homes for the cell meetings to be held there. This stalls the progress of the implementation of the cell strategy. Sometimes the newly trained cell workers get so frustrated that, they end up giving up entirely. Sufficient period of vision casting, coupled with in-depth teaching on the benefits (I notice they get really excited about the OBEDEDOM BLESSINGS!) of the cells to the members, help to reduce this challenge.
5. Lingering suspicion in the minds of the church members about this whole concept. “Thomaic” church members or “Thomases” about this whole concept! They are just suspicious, cannot ever wrap their heads around anything new! There are people who will not believe until they see this new concept working. Such members do not participate, cooperate and believe in this new idea. Sometimes they even oppose such a laudable move. Much of their attitudes boils down to ignorance. So the local pastor must deploy the tools of prayer, love, patience and continuous teaching to overcome this

group.

With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

Ephesians 4:2

For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

Colossians 1:9

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

2 Timothy 4:2

6. Disorganization. In training your pastors or cell leader or shepherds, you must demonstrate and make the process practical. The picture must be clear to the members. Structures must be in place so that people really understand the concept. It must be also clear to the members where their cells are located. Who is my cell leader? When do the cell meetings come off? These and other such questions must be answered and spelt out for all to know, understand and acknowledge. Effective administrative structures must be in place. Lack of proper organization will create great difficulties for you.

HOW TO OVERCOME EARLY CHALLENGES

These early challenges will be overcome through the following steps:

- a. Retraining of the cell workers – ill-trained shepherds must be retrained.
- b. Reorganization – divide the church into smaller units for effective take off of the cell. Sort out any and every lingering organizational confusion. Make things clearer.
- c. Reassurance – reassure the church that the cell system is a good thing. It will work and the church will grow. They will be pastored and shepherded much better. They should not be suspicious. They are going to have and enjoy great benefits from the cells.
- d. Prayer – The mother of all solutions! Prayer changes things! Remember that everything by prayer, nothing without prayer! Take all the issues to God in prayer.

Be careful for nothing; BUT IN EVERY THING BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Philippians 4:6

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. THE EFFECTUAL FERVENT PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAILETH MUCH.

James 5:16

- e. Perseverance – Do not give up! Like the old good saying goes “Rome was not built in a day”. Anything that is worth doing comes with challenges. Keep pressing and working at it.

But none of these things move me...

Acts 20:24

- f. Re-emphasis – Teach and talk about it again. Do a teaching series on the cell system at regular intervals.
- g. Can do attitude. Do not crumple! Say things like, it will work, and we will do it. As things smoothen up, church members will gradually accept this new concept

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Philippians 4:13

Long Term Challenges of the Cell System

Late or long term challenges in my experience surface from about two years of implementing the cell strategy. The law of degeneration sets in. These types of challenges have the potential to wipe out the gains made and even totally kill the cells. The local pastor must be alert, recognize them, and take continuous, vigorous, and relentless steps to deal with them. Failure to do so will result in the inevitable collapse of the whole cell system in your church. “Bishop my cells are not working” is a statement I have heard from many frustrated pastors. These challenges include:

1. Loss of zeal by the cells leaders.

This is one of the commonest challenges you will face. Many of the cell leaders just loose interest in the cell work. Do not be deceived, the cell work is very involving, demanding and energy-sapping. These realities and often personal

backsliding make the cell leaders to throw in the towel.

And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

Acts 12:25

And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

Acts 15:37-38

Cell pastor get ready to encounter many JOHN MARKS!!!

2. Complacency of the pastor and cell workers as a result of the initial success.

To be complacent means feeling satisfaction with oneself or achievement. Your success in cells must not make you complacent but rather stir you up and cause you to press on even harder.

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect:...

Philippians 3:12

3. Not being able to assimilate the huge numbers of converts who are won into the church as a result of the cells.

This challenge is related to not having structures to maintain the growth. It is countered by seeing ahead, and creating fellowships, ministries, departments and such groups in the church, where the increasing numbers of members can belong and serve. Persistent “great wastage” of the results of the cell work, brings disillusionment into the rank and file of both the cell leaders and their cell members. The growth of the church can stall, stagnate and even actually go down.

4. Not being able to mobilize most of the members in the cell groups into the main church to become active members.

What this means is that you have a lot of people attending cell meetings, who do not become members of the main church. These people do not become active, have loose associations, and therefore cannot be trained and released to help with the work. So the main aim of using the cells to grow the church is not achieved.

5. Stagnation in the growth of the cells.

One of the signs of a successful cell is that it is always multiplying. A cell that is not growing is stagnant. Stagnation is a real challenge you will encounter in your cell ministry.

6. Unfruitful cells. Unfruitful cells do not win souls and therefore they do not bear fruits.

The essential aspect of the cell ministry, soul winning, is grossly absent from these cells. Watch out always for such cells, and institute measures to get them to become fruitful. The unchecked continuous presence of these unfruitful cells can become a dangerous contagion that can affect most of the cells.

Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

1 Corinthians 5:6

7. Abandonment of the cells by the cell leaders.

Some of the cell leaders just abandon the cells. The sad part of this is that, this could have happened months ago without the knowledge of the pastor. Sometimes, cell leaders lose interest in the work or relocate and that marks the end of the existence of that particular cell. Others just get tired and jump the ship, unannounced! You may be saying with confidence that, you have 250 cell groups, whereas in reality you may have only 120! This is not fantasy! It's what this author has experienced!!!

And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, WHO DEPARTED FROM THEM FROM PAMPHYLIA, AND WENT NOT WITH THEM TO THE WORK.

Act 15:37-38

FOR DEMAS HATH FORSAKEN ME, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

2 Timothy 4:10

8. Frequent and unauthorized cancellations of the cell meetings by the cell leaders.

This is an ominous sign, the cell is about to be abandoned by the cell leader.

9. Unauthorized change in the day and time of the cell meetings by the shepherds.

This challenge is associated with cell leaders who have become increasingly busy and distracted from the cell work. They try to fix the cell meetings to suit their convenience.

10. Inability to continuously train cell leaders.

This will prevent your cells from increasing in numbers. You need more cell leaders to initiate multiplication and expansion of your cell strategy.

11. Inability to sustain the vision (losing the vision). With time, even the most ardent cell pastor can be distracted into other things but be like Apostle Paul and remain focused.

Brethren,...but this one thing I do....

Philippians 3:13

How to Overcome Long Term Challenges

These challenges can be overcome by doing the following

1. Be alert to find out problems that persist or keep coming up. Diagnosing such challenges is the starting point to finding solutions.
2. Have a strong monitoring, analyzing and evaluating office to run the administrative part of the cell work. If this office works well, it will help you to know the reality on the ground.
3. Have a monthly business meeting to analyze and evaluate the work of your cell ministry. The cell leaders, cell pastors, and other leaders, should be made to present reports at such meetings.

The following category of cell leaders should be changed or withdrawn completely:

- i) Those who no longer are interested in the cell work (they may not voice it, but their actions show that, Matthew 7:20).

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Matthew 7:20

- ii) Those who abandon the cells for long periods consistently.
- iii) Those who have become too busy.

- iv) Those who complain and murmur.
- v) Those who persistently run away from continuous cell leaders training.
- vi) Those who persistently do not engage in soul winning.

4. Set up a cell leaders' continuous training school. This school could engage in retreats, camp meetings, watching of teaching videos, and weekly teaching sessions. This way the cell leaders' skills will be continuously sharpened, their enthusiasm will be boosted, and they become more and more anointed for the work.
5. Train and release more cell leaders to replace those you remove. In fact, this is one of the most powerful keys to a great cell work in your church. Do not give up on training and bringing more youthful, eager and hungry cell leaders. I have realized that with time, there is an almost total change in guard of the cell leaders.
6. Have a reward system for your cell leaders. This can be done in the following ways:
 - i) Appreciate the work of the cell leaders from the pulpit frequently.
 - ii) Offer them assistance first if the need arises.
 - iii) You can even have a special end of year award ceremony, during which hard working and fruitful cell leaders can be openly recognized and rewarded.
7. Keep planting cells. The principle of the seed teaches that only 25% of the cells will do well, and be fruitful. So the more cells you plant, the likelihood that the overall result will be good.

But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

Matthew 13:8

8. Pray and ask for the Holy Spirit power, presence and help to be with the cell work all the time.

And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them...

Mark 16:20

And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

Acts 11:21

Chapter 19

What Spells Doom For Cells (Cell Killer Blows)

These factors will kill the cell groups. They are KILLER BLOWS for the cells. What are these killer factors.

Cell System Killers

1. Complacency

Do not have a sense of achievement or satisfaction. It will result in lukewarmness. When you become lukewarm you will lose the very drive, energy, enthusiasm that you had to build the cell system. It will be a potent prescription for the destruction of your cells. Your cell system will begin to fall apart.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

1 Corinthians 10:12

2. Lack of an effective monitoring system.

Without this you will not know what exactly is going on with your cells. You will be easily deceived about the state, quality and quantity of the cells.

After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

Matthew 25:19

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

1 Corinthians 10:12

Without a monitoring system you will not know when bad seeds are being sown into your cells. Bad seeds of lying about attendance at cell meetings, exaggerations of the state of the cells, abandoning of the cells without your knowledge and so on and so forth.

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this.

The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

Matthew 13:24-28

3. Lack of a deep understanding of the cell system by the Pastor.

This is perhaps the greatest cell killer blow. It means you are blind and how can you lead others into great spiritual fruitfulness?

Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

Matthew 15:14

You, your cell leaders and the cells themselves will fall into the ditch, if you really do not understand what you are doing.

4. Putting new wine into old wineskins (Matthew 9:17).

This arises when the Cell pastor runs the new cells with old shepherds or sending newly trained cell leaders to run old cells instead of starting new cells.

Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

Matthew 9:17

5. Failure of the Cell Pastor to apply some flexibility in the running of the cells

6. Immorality of the Cell leaders.

This just destroys the very foundations of your cell ministry. And therefore the cells cannot stand. Such leaders have backslidden, are not truly committed to the cell work because of their guilty conscience. God doesn't bless their work because of their rebellion towards Him.

If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Psalms 11:3

7. The absence of a good cell leader and failure to raise up a suitable replacement for him.

8. Competing church programs and activities.

In other words there are other equally important church activities and in some

cases even more important, that can lead to the collapse of the cell system. Some of these activities take away the time that should be used in building the cells and the time for the cell meetings. You have the same people doing all the things. Cell leaders are engaged in other church activities and may not have time for the cells. The same applies to members. All activities that compete with the cells for time, resources, and people, must be cut off or they will kill the cells.

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Matthew 6:24

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

Philippians 3:1

Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

1 Timothy 4:15

9. When the cells are not performing their primary functions of CARING for its members.

I think caring for the cell members is very crucial, if it is not emphasized by the pastor and enforced, people no longer see the need to be part of the cells. This leads to the collapse of the system. The strength and survival of a cell is its ability to take care and be there for its members, that is, ability to respond promptly to the needs of members. The cell leader is usually not the best preacher and does not have to impress through his preaching. He is an “ordinary” person. His weapon is to ensure the members are cared for and given the required attention and shepherding. He must always be there for his people and must make sure all the members do likewise.

10.Frequent cancellation of cell meetings.

For anything to succeed it must be regular, people should expect it to be there. When the cell meetings are cancelled on a frequent basis, even because of good reasons (e.g. to make way for other church programs, conferences etc), it gradually grounds the cells. It is not an easy balance to have. We try to reschedule to another early time or day when other such equally important

church activities are coming up.

11. Lack of flexibility in running the cell system.

Flexibility on the part of the local pastor to accommodate changes in job, location, residence and the like of his cell leaders is important.

To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

1 Corinthians 9:22

In his world-acclaimed leadership book, *The Art of Leadership*, Bishop Dag Heward-Mills says this about inflexibility: “Be flexible because rigidity is costly and very dangerous. Rigidity is defined as being hardened in a bad way”.

There will by all means be special circumstances, reasons, conditions, that will require that you allow some flexibility to allow the whole cell system vision to be achieved. Failure to maturely accept such realities will end up destroying your entire cell system. Over the years we have had to be flexible.

Examples of such flexibility:

- i. An example is changing our meeting days from Thursdays to Saturdays.
- ii. Giving some people special permission to have their meetings on other days because of their circumstances.
- iii. Having Cell meetings on different days when we have conventions and other special programs, or during raining seasons, sports activities like African cup or World Cup competitions.

We need to be ready to study and understand peculiar situations and make quick changes to keep the cells running. This is not to suggest that we should not have structured approach or regular and permanent meeting times and days. However, because of the small nature of cells, unskilled leaders and other bottlenecks, it is important to relax the rules sometimes to keep things going. Rigidity can lead to the collapse of the cells.

12. Weak leadership. Apart from the fact that the Senior Pastor himself must be a strong leader to keep the cells running, he must also select strong leaders to supervise or manage a couple of cells. Weak leaders will accept all manner of excuses and totally destroy the cells. Every program comes with challenges. Strong leadership is needed to confront the challenges and overcome them.

Weak leadership is the killer of the cell system. Remove all weak leaders otherwise you cannot have a thriving cell system.

13. Neglect of the cell system. The cell system like the human cells needs constant nourishment to continue to function properly. Many cells become weak when they are not given the needed attention. Cell leaders also become weak and abandon the cells when not given the needed attention and support. Neglect of the cells by the head Pastor and other leaders can lead to the death of the cells.

14. Not wanting to use students, young people, Because of such unwarranted bias by some pastors, which despise the contributions of young people, it becomes difficult for them to replenish weak, lazy and non performing “mature and adult” cell leaders.

15. Not replacing efficient cell leaders quickly when they cannot continue.

16. Putting new wine into old wineskin.

17. Allowing the cells to become home bible study groups. When a pastor does not correct the shepherds from existing records of not doing outreaches and no souls won, then the cell is no more a cell, but a home bible study group. The cardinal sign between cells and home bible study groups is evangelism and soul winning.

18. Lack of continuous effective supervision by the pastor. This happens when the senior pastor himself does not drive the cells anymore; he over delegates the direct supervision. The senior pastor must without fail, and in a relentless, continuous manner, have his eyes on the cells.

Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?

Proverbs 27:23

It is clear that the presence of the above listed factors have the propensity to not only derail the results you have gained from your hard work of establishing cells, but also, if not checked, fought against and corrected vigorously, will ensure the total collapse of your entire cell system.

Pastor, remember that a good general fights a good fight! So fight to let your cell system survive and flourish for a long time! It is a major veritable key to church growth.

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

1Timothy 6:12

Chapter 20

Monitoring, Analysing And Evaluating The Cells

Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?

Proverbs 27:23-24

I want to introduce you to probably one of the most critical areas of running the Cell System in your Church. It is very important for the Pastor to continuously monitor, analyze and evaluate the state of every single cell in the church. Dear Pastor, *be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds* (Proverbs 27:23). The Cell Church Pastor can do this by paying close attention to collecting and analyzing data from the cells. A well-organized monitoring system through the use of data has led me to take many critical and timely decisions which have led to the survival of the cell system in my church. I recommend that every cell church must have a dedicated Administrator or team who are responsible for organizing data to aid the Pastor in the running of the cells.

Dear Pastor, do not take data lightly. It can lead to the destruction of all that you have labored to build. The scriptures pay attention to numbers. In fact, there is a whole book in the Bible called NUMBERS. The numbers from your data represent souls. Someone counted the five thousand men besides women and children Jesus fed with five loaves and two fishes, as well as the twelve baskets of leftover food.

And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

Matthew 14:21

Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

John 6:13

The early church, which is the first cell church, paid close attention to numbers. The scriptures record that there were three thousand converts when Peter preached on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41), and five thousand more souls were added in Acts 4:4.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Acts 2:41

Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

Acts 4:4

Apart from gathering data, it is also important to use this data to effectively monitor the cells you have planted. I have met many pastors who have the data but do not use it for making important adjustments to the running of the cells. The data is probably kept on the desktop of some administrator and examined from time to time. I encourage you to receive and analyze information from the cells on a weekly basis. It helps you to be abreast with emerging developments in the cells and take appropriate decisions concerning them.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO MONITOR THE CELLS

1. Monitoring helps you to know the state of the flock.

Be thou diligent to *know the state* of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.

Proverbs 27:23

Through the use of an effective monitoring system, the Pastor is able to know the exact state of the cells. I have used this monitoring system to know how many cells are currently active, cells which meet regularly, number of new converts and first timers and which cells brought them to church, the state of prayer in the cells, the state of care in the cells, the personal prayer life of the cell leader, the state of evangelism in the cells, growth patterns in the cells and so on.

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

1 Corinthians 9:26

With this information in hand and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I am able to take important decisions to strengthen the cells and the cell leaders. At some point in the running of our cells, we identified through our effective monitoring system that even though we were recording many new converts in church, we were not experiencing growth. This was because many cell leaders shifted their focus on just bringing new people to church but did not bother about

their retention. The over-concentration on soul winning also led to a neglect of old church members which led to many of them backsliding. I quickly started a teaching series on retention evangelism and our church begun to grow again.

2. Monitoring helps the pastor to take heed unto himself

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Acts 20:28

As I have already discussed in previous chapters, complacency sometimes deprive Cell Church Pastors and leaders from reaping a full reward. Through regular and effective monitoring of the cells, the Pastor is able to identify emerging weaknesses in the cells and correct them immediately. For instance, there are occasions where cell leaders become content with their numbers and relax with evangelism but a good monitoring system is able to identify this quickly and start another cell out of that cell to bring more zeal and life to it.

3. Monitoring makes cell leaders accountable.

4. Monitoring helps in the starting of new cells.

5. Monitoring helps to identify new cell leaders.

6. Monitoring helps to identify struggling cell leaders.

7. Monitoring helps to identify hardworking cell leaders.

8. Monitoring helps to identify the state of doctrine in the cells.

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

1 Timothy 4:16

9. Monitoring helps to identify the state of prayer in the cells.

10. Monitoring helps to identify the state of evangelism in the cells.

11. Monitoring helps to identify the state of care in the cells.

12. Monitoring helps to know the state of offerings in the cell.

HOW TO USE DATA TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE CELL SYSTEM

Our Cell church has developed a very effective monitoring system over the years. I must admit that these monitoring systems have evolved out of the

various challenges we encountered on the journey to building a large, growing and healthy cell church. These systems have greatly aided us to objectively assess the state of the cells and also its leaders. Through these systems, I organize monthly assessment meetings for my cell leaders and Pastors to fine tune various areas of the Cell work. I recommend that this is done electronically.

1. CELL LEADERS LOG BOOK (Appendix A)

This is the primary document from which every information about a Cell is found. Every Cell leader is given a log book to record every activity undertaken in the cell on daily, weekly and monthly bases. This log book is submitted to a team of administrators every Sunday from which information is captured into a central database system. This log book contains among other things names and contacts of cell members, cell meeting attendance, Sunday service attendance from the cell, evangelism activity in the cell, prayer activity in the cell, prayer life of the cell leaders, care activities in the cell, messages preached at the cell meeting among others.

2. WEEKLY AND MONTHLY CELL ACTIVITY REPORT TEMPLATE (Appendix B)

This is a database template used for recording information from the Cell Leaders Log book. This template is usually kept by the Cell Administrator and his team. The administrators use this database system to do analysis of the performance and health of the Cells and present reports to the Pastor on weekly and monthly bases. The administrators also generate information for our monthly Cell Leaders Assessment meetings by preparing various graphic presentations. Notable among the fields found in this template include Cell Leaders Activity Summary, Cell Meeting Quality Assurance Report, New Converts and New Converts School Reports.

3. CELL PASTORS WEEKLY ACTIVITY FORM (Appendix C)

This is a form for assessing the weekly performance of Pastors who oversee a number of Cells under the Senior Pastor. In view of the fact that Cell Overseers do not personally run any particular Cell, it is important to monitor their oversight activities on a weekly basis. This report forms the basis of weekly interactions between the Senior Pastor and Cell Overseers.

Please feel free to use these forms if you find them useful. You can adapt them for your peculiar situation, or you can develop entirely new forms for the use of

your church. But by all means have some form of systems in place to carefully monitor, analyze and evaluate what you are doing.

May the Lord grant you an anointing to build a wonderful cell based church and churches for the glory of our soon and coming King, Jesus, the Savior of the world. Amen!

SECTION 2

THE CELL SYSTEM LOG BOOK

PREFACE

This log book is intended to help the user of the CELL SYSTEM BOOK to undertake the monitoring and assessment of the cell leaders' work.

You are welcome to duplicate the various forms to create your “customized log book “ , which can be given to all your cell leaders.

This log book includes the following:

APPENDIX A: Cell leaders log book

APPENDIX B: Weekly and Monthly Cell Activity Report Template

APPENDIX C: Cell Pastors ' Weekly Activity Form

I hope that this CELL SYSTEM LOG BOOK will be a useful aid for the practical implementation of the teachings expounded in the CELL SYSTEM BOOK.

God bless you

Emmanuel L. Nterful

APPENDIX A: Cell Leaders Log Book

This is the primary document from which every information about a Cell is found. Every Cell leader is given a log book to record every activity undertaken in the cell on daily, weekly and monthly bases. This log book is submitted to a team of administrators every Sunday from which information is captured into a central database system. This log book contains among other things names and contacts of cell members, cell meeting attendance, Sunday service attendance from the cell, evangelism activity in the cell, prayer activity in the cell, prayer life of the cell leaders, care activities in the cell, messages preached at the cell meeting among others.

APPENDIX A
CELL LEADERS LOG BOOK

MONTH:			WEEKLY ATTENDANCE																				
NO.	NAME	TELEPHONE NO.	CELL MEETINGS					SUNDAY SERVICES					WEEKDAY SERVICES					OTHER					STATUS
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
1																							
2																							
3																							
4																							
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11																							
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13																							
14																							
15																							
16																							
17																							
18																							
19																							
20																							

NB: INDICATE UNDER STATUS: 1. CM (CHURCH MEMBER) 2. UCV (UNESTABLISHED CONVERT) 3. ECV (ESTABLISHED CONVERT)

APPENDIX A

CELL LEADERS LOG BOOK

CELL MEETING				SUNDAY SERVICE			WEEKDAY SERVICE			OTHER (SPECIFY)		
WEEK	DATE	ATT.	OFFERING	WEEK	DATE	ATT.	WEEK	DATE	ATT.	ACTIVITY	DATE	ATT.
WK1				WK1			WK1					
WK2				WK2			WK2					
WK3				WK3			WK3					
WK4				WK4			WK4					
WK5				WK5			WK5					
AVGE TOTAL				AVGE TOTAL			AVGE TOTAL			AVGE TOTAL		

TEACHING AND PREACHING ACTIVITY		
WEEK	PREACHER	MESSAGE
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

NEW BELIEVERS/ FIRST TIMERS		
WEEK	NEW CONVERTS	FIRST TIMERS
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

NAME OF SHEPHERD:.....

APPENDIX A
CELL LEADERS LOG BOOK

SHEPHERDS' MONTHLY ACTIVITY

PRAYER						
FORM OF PRAYER	DURATION					
	WK1	WK2	WK3	WK4	WK5	TOTAL
PERSONAL PRAYER						
CELL MEETING PRAYER						
WEEKLY ORG. PRAYER						
MONTHLY ORG. PRAYER						
OTHER						

OUTREACH/SOUL WINNING ACTIVITY						
FORM OF OUTREACH	DATE	NO. OF CELL MEMBERS WHO PARTICIPATED	PASTOR/CELL SHEPHERD PARTICIPATION (YES/NO)	DURATION	PLACE OF OUTREACH	NO. OF SOULS WON

THE FOLLOWING CODES SHOULD BE USED 1. **PTPE** (PERSON TO PERSON EVANGELISM) 2. **GOWO** (GROUP ORGANIZED WEEKLY OUTREACH) 3. **GOMO** (GROUP ORGANIZED MONTHLY OUTREACH) 4. **OTHERS** (SPECIFY)

APPENDIX A

CELL LEADERS LOG BOOK

VISITATION/FOLLOWUP					
No.	WEEK1	WEEK2	WEEK3	WEEK4	WEEK5
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
RMKS					

BOOK READING ACTIVITY			
NO.	TITLE OF BOOK	AUTHOR	WHAT YOU LEARNED
1			
2			

MESSAGE SOAKING ACTIVITY			
TYPE OF MESSAGE (Eg. CAMP, TUESDAY SERVICE etc.)	MESSAGE TITLE	PREACHER	FAVORITE MOMENT OF MESSAGE

APPENDIX B: Weekly and Monthly Cell Activity Report Template

This is a database template used for recording information from the Cell Leaders Log book. This template is usually kept by the Cell Administrator and his team. The administrators use this database system to do analysis of the performance and health of the Cells and present reports to the Pastor on weekly and monthly bases. The administrators also generate information for our monthly Cell Leaders Assessment meetings by preparing various graphic presentations. Notable among the fields found in this template include Cell Leaders Activity Summary, Cell Meeting Quality Assurance Report, New Converts and New Converts School Reports.

APPENDIX B
WEEKLY AND MONTHLY CELL ACTIVITY REPORT TEMPLATE

PART A- To be completed Weekly	Under Each Area, please indicate YES/NO or provide DATA where applicable				
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
PRAYER:					
Daily 2 hour prayer					
Weekly long prayers (Minimum of 5hrs)					
Saturday 3 hour prayer					
THE WORD:					
Daily quiet time					
Scripture memorization					
Read in house books					
Teaching and preaching the word at services and training programs (e.g. shepherds meeting, new believers school, satellite church meeting, prayer meetings, church service, ROTCOM)					
SOAKING IN THE WORD:					
Has and Listens Bishop Dag's podcast					
Has and listens Bishop Nterful's podcast					
SOUL WINNING ACTIVITY:					
Led weekly AOFM PTPE					
Number of AOFMS that did outreach					
Number of souls won					
Number of New Souls brought to church					
Visited New Converts					
Visited Old Members					
Visited Backsliden souls					
Did Deep Sea Fishing					
Counseled members					
Sunday Attendance					
BUS MOBILIZATION:					
Number of Buses					
Number of people brought by Buses					
BUS EXPENDITURE:					
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
AREA WEEKLY AMOUNT PAID FOR BUSES					
AREA TOTAL AMOUNT PAID FOR THE MONTH					

APPENDIX B

WEEKLY AND MONTHLY CELL ACTIVITY REPORT TEMPLATE

PART B- To be completed at the end of the month

Under Each Area, please indicate YES/NO
or provide DATA where applicable

PRAYER:			
Monthly personal retreat (At least one day)		Total Number of AOFMS/SCs	
Involvement in congregational prayer.		Total Number of Souls Established	
SOAKING IN THE WORD		70% membership AOFM/SCs meeting attendance	
Machaneh message. At least one camp message a month.		70% membership Sunday attendance.	
Soaking in videos - At least one video a month		GOOD ADMINISTRATION	
SOUL WINNING AND RETENTION:		Has membership database	
Led monthly GOMO		Has AOFM/SCs database	
Total No. of Souls won		New converts database	
Total No. in NBS		Database for all shepherds	
Total No. attending Sunday services regularly		TRAINING OF SHEPHERDS	
Total No. attending Tuesday services regularly		Has 12 'apostles'	
Total No. attending AOFMs regularly		Has 3 inner apostles	
Total No. being trained at AOFM training schools.		Has a training program	
Total No. in other church ministries, e.g. choir, ushers etc.		Churns out new shepherds and potential shepherds	
CHURCH GROWTH		LOYALTY	
Total no. of new AOFMS/SCs started		Loyalty Traits score	
Total no. of AOFMS with regular meetings		Faithful tither	
ROTCOM (Service held and attendance)		Financial commitment	
AOFMS complying with standard meetings procedures		No moral issues	

APPENDIX C: Cell Pastors ' Weekly Activity Form

This is a form for assessing the weekly performance of Pastors who oversee a number of Cells under the Senior Pastor. In view of the fact that Cell Overseers do not personally run any particular Cell, it is important to monitor their oversight activities on a weekly basis. This report forms the basis of weekly interactions between the Senior Pastor and Cell Overseers.

Please feel free to use these forms if you find them useful. You can adapt them for your peculiar situation, or you can develop entirely new forms for the use of your church. But by all means have some form of systems in place to carefully monitor, analyze and evaluate what you are doing.

May the Lord grant you an anointing to build a wonderful cell based church and churches for the glory of our soon and coming King, Jesus, the Savior of the world. Amen!

APPENDIX C

PASTORS' WEEKLY ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

WEEK ENDING (DATE):

NAME OF AREA:

NO. OF CELLS:

Name Of Pastor	
No. of hours – Sat Evening Prayer	
Previous Sunday Attendance	
Current Sunday Attendance from CELLS	
Previous Week's Bus Attendance	
Total No. of members who came by bus	
Total No. of new people brought from Area	
No. of New converts received from alter call in church	
Interaction with members during the week • List the names of at least 7 people you interacted with after service	
Visitation done during the week • List at least 5 people visited	
Counseling • List names of people you counseled during the week	
How many CELLS did outreach?	
No. Souls Won	

This form must be collected from the office, completed and returned to the Administrator latest by 2pm each Sunday