

CCSBA Focus on Church Growth

Recently I've been camped out in the book of Philippians. There Paul spends time writing to the church about how God wants them to be, and about how God wants each individual believer to be – so that the church can be all that He wants it to be.

I love the way he starts out, "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." There is thanksgiving in what God started and continues. There is joy over man's response to what God was doing in their hearts. And, there is confidence that God will continue making the church and its members all He desires them to be.

In Philippi God started a gospel movement which would greatly impact folks there and in other places. Likewise, God has started gospel communities (churches) here in southern Missouri – and He has a great desire for them to be filled with folks who are growing believers so that the church can become all that He wants it to be.

Recently I read an article by Tim Keller concerning gospel movements. One of the important things he points out is there is both an individual aspect and a corporate aspect to a movement. The movement starts within the heart of an individual, and continues in the joining together of the transformed to become a church which facilitates and stewards the movement.

Keller says that it is necessary for one to clearly understand the gospel. Whereas most folks think of the gospel being, "Jesus died for me, so I should live for him", that does not go far enough. But when one understands that faith in Christ results in their salvation and justification before God, along with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit for Christ glorifying works, then they are more motivated to boldly live out their Christian faith.

The result of this understanding is that "nominal Christians" (those who call themselves Christians but have not really been born again) get converted. Sleepy Christians (with no sign of the power and fruit of the Spirit) wake up. And non-Christians start getting

converted, because Christians are more willing and able to engage them and show them the beauty of Christ.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 CAROL CHATMAN
- 3 RHONDA FLANIGAN
- 4 STEPHANIE GILBERT
- 18 SHERRY COOPER
- 23 DONNA PAGE
- 24 RALPH MAYES

CCSBA CHURCH PRAYER FOCUS

Qulin



Jim Cornman, Pastor

Calvary, Dexter



Danny Collins, Pastor

Black River



Allen Clark, Pastor

Fellowship



Tim Freeman, Pastor

PRAY FOR THESE PASTOR-LESS CHURCHES

**Essex
Northside Bernie
Second
Harviell FBC**

**Trinity
Center Hill
Emmanuel**

CCSBA Focus on the BSU

Church family, thank you so much for your prayers during these first few weeks of school at Three Rivers College. My wife and I had face to face time with almost 800 students over the first 5 days of school.

We have already had students in our home, and I've been leading some small group Bible studies. Over the next week, I'll be doing follow up on these new relationships and charting a course for the rest of the school year.

Please be in prayer for these new relationships and God's guidance in my planning. Please visit our website trccbsu.com if you are interested in learning more about what we are doing.

- Daniel

Church Growth cont.

Keller also points out that churches which have experienced seeing many lives transformed by the gospel have a balance of emphases. They stress:

- Solid teaching and preaching of the Word
- Anointed worship and extraordinary prayer
- Loving fellowship and thick community
- Outward-facing and bold evangelism
- Compassionate, vigorous social justice

Whereas churches, usually small churches, tend to only focus on one of these areas – those in the middle of a movement begin to see more of a balance between all of these areas. A common mistake is to think that we can program our churches the right way and then we'll see growth. However, we must always remember that it is the movement of the Spirit which transforms hearts and begins a movement among men. It does not depend on the group size, but completely on God.

Within CCSBA we have many small churches. But regardless of size, each church can have the characteristics mentioned above. As the gospel of Christ transforms lives, the Holy Spirit begins to work and does a mighty work which can only be attributed to God. Spirit filled believers can produce solid teaching and preaching. Spirit filled believers can worship wholeheartedly, and pray fervently for Gods movement. Spirit filled believers have great community and loving fellowship. Spirit filled believers are outward focused and evangelize boldly. Spirit filled believers live Christ-like and promote righteousness among all men. Spirit filled believers experience growth – and Spirit filled churches experience growth. "Live by the Spirit!"

Calendar for September & October
Sept. 4 Office Closed for Labor Day Holiday
Sept. 12 CCSBA Executive Board Meeting 7 PM
Sept. 15 MBC Fellowship Golf Tournament, Eagle Knoll Golf Club
Sept. 15-16 WMU Sept. Council Update Cooperative Program Month
Oct. 2 Annual Meeting at Puxico FBC
Oct. 9 WMU Quarterly Meeting, Fellowship Baptist (on 67 South near Harviell) 10:00- 12:00

CCSBA Office Hours

8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday –Thursday

8:00 am – 12:00 pm, Friday

Web: www.ccsba.com

Facebook: @CaneCreekStoddardBaptistAssociation

Address: 2090 Three Rivers Blvd.

Poplar Bluff, MO 63901

Phone: 573-686-1115 Fax: 573-686-1116

Ministry Team

Jim Gentry, DOM (ph: 870-219-2355)

Daniel Bray, BSU Director

Sandy Arnold, Office Assistant

CCSBA Focus on Disaster Relief Training Opportunities
Hannibal Sept. 8-9
Sikeston Nov. 3-4 New volunteer training
www.mobaptist.org/dr disasterrelief@mobaptist.org
 If interested, please sign up online, or give Bob a call to find out more details. You can reach him at 573-300-3192.

For urgent and up-to-date prayer requests, news, and other information please visit our site at www.ccsba.com.

CCSBA Financial Status
 Sept. '16 – August 31, 2017

Budget to date	Contributions received
\$ 118,800.00	\$ 118,592.55