

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Over the years I have heard people put down the celebration side of the church in a quest to lift up the small group or it's mission expression but I believe in the whole of church life - every aspect; the fellowship, the missions, the small groups, the large groups, the public meetings, the worship, the teaching, the outreaches, taking up the offering, and the giving away of offerings. I believe in the local church and all it entails.

God created the local church for many reasons. One of those reasons is to take new believers and disciple them or develop them to be fully devoted followers of Jesus.

You can actually see a progression in the early life of Jesus and His connection to the church in the book of Luke. A couple of things stood out to me that relates to you and I in our connection and journey in the local church.

1) Jesus was first brought to the temple, Luke 2:22

This is often everyone's first connection to church as we are brought either by parents, a partner, a friend, or it could have been some activity, event or speaker that interested us. However we come to church, don't live in that place, nor should we.

We shouldn't live in the place where we expect church to be a place where we are being *brought* to or where we are just going for our *own* personal benefit or personal gain so that church has just become, "*what it does for me*." This is a consumer based faith that creates Christians and not disciples; hearers and not doers, and church attendees not church builders.

This type of Christianity creates believers who pray, "Give me," instead of; "make me." "Help me," instead of; "send me."

In this first connection that Jesus had with church, a number of things took place that promoted Him to the next level of church attendance. We read in **Luke 2:21** that He was circumcised; a cutting away of fleshly habits that might be holding us back in God.

Hopefully this work, in our church is done by the conviction of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God and not the influence of self righteous believers.

Luke 2:23-24 also said that Jesus was 'consecrated to the Lord'. Church is a place where consecration happens. Again, it is where the Holy Spirit and the preaching of God's Word touches our hearts and we then hand things over to the Lord.

Our tithes and offerings are the same.

After about two months of being in a church; just hearing the Word and watching the believers was enough for me to reach a place for God to get a hold of my finances.

As I gave my tithe and offering to the Lord, it was like my finances were consecrated to God, I'm so glad they are, I'm blessed because of it. Other consecrations happened as well like deliverance and sanctification by the Holy Spirit.

Confirmation happens when we are first brought to the house like with Jesus when He first went. He was prophesied over by Simeon in **Luke 2:25-35**. Anna also spoke over Him in **Luke 2:36-38**. Confirming words that strengthen us, **Romans 1:11**. Other things like care, counselling, and Comradery of fellowship all build us in our developing faith. All these things take us to the next level of church life, like Jesus' move into taking Himself to church, **Luke 2:46-47**.

2) Jesus was found in the temple, Luke 2:46

For you and I to grow, we must find ourselves in the house of God and not just visiting occasionally. I love some of the things that Isaiah says about the house of God: "*Many peoples will come and say, come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths. The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*" **Isaiah 2:3**.

Moses also said: "*¹²The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; ¹³planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. ¹⁴They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, ¹⁵proclaiming, The Lord is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in Him.*"

Psalm 92:12-15

This is where we are no longer accidental believers but intentional followers.

The Bible says that Jesus was 'listening and asking questions.' If church to you is just a matter of listening to sermons, you will only ever take in about 10% to 20% of what is said. You've got to go a little deeper in study. In a home group, ask questions, discuss it and so on.

Outworking the topic will take you across the line so if the subject is on serving, then serve, if it is forgiveness, then forgive, if it is evangelism, then learn how to share your faith, just like it says in the Word, "*I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you*

will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ."

Philemon 1:6.

We must be so careful that we do not remain only hearers of the Word, bringing ourselves into deception, instead of doers, which in turn, will cause us to be obedient followers of Christ. **Matthew 28:19-20, James 1:22**

3) Jesus served in the temple, Luke 4:18.

This is the next step up when it comes to someone growing in God. I'm not just talking about doing something in the church building but serving in the kingdom with the gifts and talents that God has given to you and I. It could be leading, serving, counselling, praying, giving, or sharing your faith. It is when you begin to put your hand to the plough, you begin to grow in the Lord.

You will see that in church where the people that generally just sit and listen to sermons only, do not progress like those that serve as well as sit and listen.

From the day I came to church I have been active in my call and gifting and I would honestly put this down to the major reason for my strength and growth in God.

4) Jesus was kicked out of the temple, Luke 4:28-29

But what did He do? He went straight back into another one and began to minister. **Luke 4:31-33**.

Being offended, disappointed, let down, and hurt with the local church is not an option. However, forgiveness is and so is moving on. The reason these things can happen is because *your* part of the church and so am I and we're not perfected yet, so the chances of hurting one another from time to time are highly possible. This can either be a major growing point or one that causes us to pull back.

I remember being in another church where the Holy Spirit was allowed to move, then a new minister arrived who wanted to *hinder that freedom*. They brought some of the youth leaders into a meeting where, with his elders, he said that there would be no more praying for the sick, casting out of demons and praying for people to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I could have been really hurt and offended as this was the church where I learned all about the work of the Holy Spirit and where one of the elders prayed for me to be filled. So I just moved on to a place where there was freedom for the Holy Spirit to move.

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Kevin Wilcock

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Ozreach

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October
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In another church I was in, I became the youth leader and large numbers of young people got saved and became part of the church. But this nice little Pentecostal church was never the same. It was full of ex drug addicts and lots of needy people that were trying to grow in God. Some of the older members were upset that their church had now been taken over by all these new people. They then sent a petition around to have me kicked out of the church but I had a senior minister that stood with me.

Again, I could have been offended, but no, I refused to. These and many other incidents have just made me grow in God. As the old saying goes, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." Another powerful saying is: "As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend."

Proverbs 27:17.

So let all of what God has intended for His church to be your experience.

I love the church
Kevin



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I love the church

Kevin Wilcock



'I love the church'
400 page manual

\$40.00 plus postage

The church has got to be one of the greatest things God ever created. It is His vehicle that He has designed to touch and bring the world to Himself.

The Bible uses the word 'church' about one hundred times; most of those are in reference to the local church.

I've written this book for the local church, your local church. While you read it, I want you to think about your church, which is God's vehicle for reaching your community.

How's it running? What gear is it in; 1st, 2nd, or maybe just making a lot of noise in neutral? Could it possibly even be in reverse?

I have an absolute passion for the local church. I get stirred every time I read the statement, "Zeal for Thy house has consumed me."

As I travel to many churches across this nation and nations beyond, my prayer and desire is that every one of them will be a winner in its own community, standing like a beacon, glorifying God and drawing people to the Saviour because of its relevant and powerful witness.

In this book I don't present myself as an expert at growing churches nor as one that runs a mega size church. At the time of writing this book, I over sighted a church of about two hundred people while travelling about one hundred days a year, ministering into churches of about thirty to one thousand people.

My desire in this book is to simply come along side and help your church move up a gear or two, and possibly, even into top gear where it is fulfilling all of what God has destined for it to be.

This is simply a bunch of messages compiled by myself that will help leaders and those who minister in some form to serve and lead more effectively. It is also an introduction to some of our basic philosophy of how and why we do church the way we do.

They say if you take from one person, it's plagiarism. But if you take from ten, it's creativity. This manual is pure creativity. It has been borrowed from everyone I have had the privilege of sitting under, whether by conference, tape, book or on a personal basis. Thank you.

I have discovered there are three ways to get a sermon; hatch it, catch it, or snatch it. These messages were hatched, 'caught', snatched, rematched and dispatched to you. I hope you enjoy them.

Kevin

EXPERIENCE A MISSIONAL CHURCH IN ACTION

PUB CHURCH
IN THE LIVING ROOM
BEAUMONT ST HAMILTON
2 BEER SERVICE SUNDAY
See the 'Otto Boys'
15th August
@ 6pm -7.30pm



Soapbox

Idea Of North

will be playing on the
10th of September
at 8pm.

Bar & Restaurant Opens
at 6pm

Show begins at **8pm**

\$45.00

For Soapbox nights
you must book

Life Church office: 4961 0223,

The Idea of North



soapbox café

KEVIN'S TRAVEL

29th July-1st August
1st August
4th August
20th August
26th September

Perth
Nowra NSW
Bowral NSW
(Family Holiday)
Back @ Life



GlobeReach local missions and some of the works we support overseas

INDONESIA – Colin & Kim Crago



We're Back

Hi All,

This is just to let you know we have arrived safely back in Solo after the long enjoyable sojourn in Australia.

One of the reasons why it took so long was because the Indonesian Government thought we were still in Indonesia. However it seems no matter what you do it will take 3 months to get a 'Limited Stay Permit' when you are out of the country. Our old one ran out on the 4th of March.

For the next 5 years we won't have to go out of the country to renew it. Praise the Lord.

Things were still carrying on when we got back though' perhaps on a fairly 'maintenance track.' Everyone seemed to be glad to see us and there is a good positive attitude at the moment.

Our big problem is finding a new building to house the Church & ministry school. We have always worked on the basis that if someone was able to do the job they should be accorded the recognition. To maintain an "Activities License" for a Church we are now being told that a pastor must have a degree from a Government recognized school & an ordination from a

Government recognized Synod. That puts us in a difficult position when we move .

In addition we must have agreement with the people around the place we move to as well as the Govt. officials - Rt & Rw etc. SO WE NEED LOTS OF PRAYER. New people are coming into Church so we must be doing something right.

We spent so long in Aussie we are now really missing it, even though its winter there. Many blessings to everyone

Colin & Kim.

Email: colin.crago@gmail.com

FIJI – Peter & Jill Schultz



Step Out Step Free to Start

This Monday, after the morning parade, seven inmates will assemble in the

Nasinu Prison classroom for the beginning of the 'Step Out - Step Free' curriculum.

Every morning for the next two weeks Naca will teach the group sessions activities and every afternoon Peter will do the individual counselling.

These seven inmates are fresh from the courts

and new into Nasinu. As we undertake this we already have another fourteen new inmates waiting.

We are excited to be able to undertake this complete trial of the first module of the 'Step Out - Step Free' curriculum.

Prayer Needs

- Naca as he prepares and teaches every morning.
- Peter for the individual counselling with each of these seven inmates.
- The love, energy and humour for each day.

- Jill to agree to bake the muffins and brownies for each day's morning tea.
- Protection and good health for everyone involved and their families.
- The laying to waste of deceptions and the building of truth in each man's life.
- Christ-Centred transformation in each of these seven men's lives.

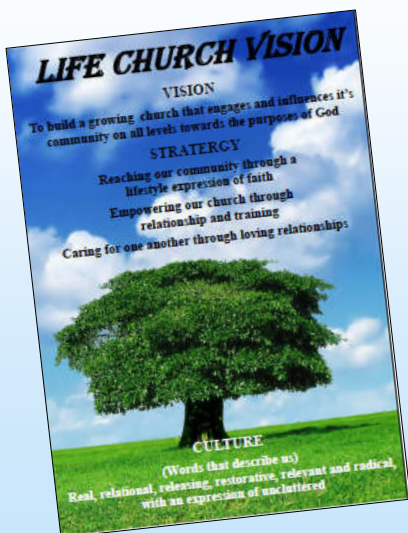
Thank so much for partnering with us in this way and we'll keep you updated.

Peter, Jill & Naca

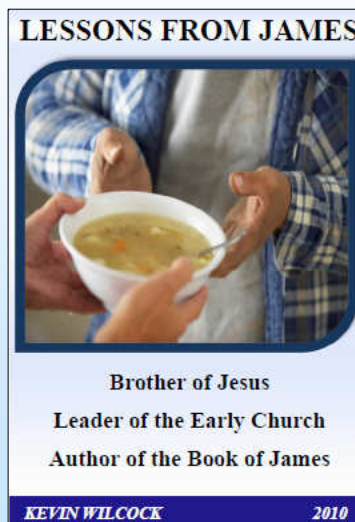
Email: peter.d.shults@gmail.com

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Ozreach Conference— Building Great Churches that Influence Communities



DAVID & ALIX MORSE

Alix and I share an ever-increasing love for the local church. We are convinced that the Kingdom of God will most effectively advance through the influence of flourishing, empowered local churches; churches just like yours. God is connecting leaders across cities, nations and across the globe so that we can advance the Kingdom to a world that needs its liberating message in increasing measure.
www.energizerlifechurch.com



DARRYL GARDINER

Darryl has been involved in youth work for more than 25 years. He ran a boys' home for 16 years. He is part of Incedo, a national youth organization. He is a regular speaker and trainer in New Zealand and overseas.



KEVIN WILCOCK

Kevin has pioneered and pastored a number of growing churches. Kevin's realness and relational ability to the Australian culture has allowed him to travel extensively across the nation and beyond. He now serves as Team Leader of Life Church Newcastle and Ozreach Incorporated.
www.lifechurch.org.au

When: *Friday 15th & Saturday 16th October 2010*
Where: *Tuggerah Lakes Christian Fellowship, 22 Adelaide Street, Tumbi Umbi (near the Entrance)*
Register: *Via email to: info@lifechurch.org.au or phone 4961 0211*

Kairos Prison Ministry - Peter McGregor

Since retiring from a career in accountancy, I have become involved with a Samaritans program; 'Friendship House.' This program assists ex-prisoners to re-establish themselves with a new life. The house accommodates up to 3 men for 4 weeks. This includes a program that provides a pathway for their time outside which hopefully leads to a crimeless life, full of hope.

The Samaritans initially provide bedding, food vouchers etc, to assist these men. A volunteer arrives daily to transport them to various places such as Centrelink, banks, clinics, parole, housing, clothing and food outlets.

The most important agenda, is to establish permanent accommodation for them after their stay at Friendship House.

I have personally seen over 50 men pass through this house and still catch up with many of them on their journey. Some frequently come to Soul Café run by Life Church. I also see them in everyday life around the town. They are most appreciative of the assistance and the guidance that the volunteers at

Samaritans have provided.

This year, I was invited to participate in Kairos Prison Ministry. This is a local community based Christian ministry that serves those in prison. I attended a 6 week training course every Saturday with a team that spends a full week at St Helier's Correctional Centre to assist some 25 prisoners who are chosen by the Prison Chaplin to participate in the program. These inmates who take part in this program are given the following:

1. Time to reflect on their time to date
2. Hear the life stories of many team members
3. Learn that choice is an option for them
4. Learn that some team members have had lives equally as theirs but made positive responses to difficulties and challenges
5. Realisation that, 'what was' doesn't have to be, 'what will be'.

During the Kairos program, participants are placed in small groups made up of a team leader and other participants. Each group is encouraged to be like a caring family. For many inmates, this is the first

experience of a supportive family involvement.

We were required to write some 18 letters, one for every inmate who participated in the program. These were delivered during the last days of the course. We also had daily prayer, song, Bible reading, talks and the inmates were encouraged to participate. They loved the food that was provided each day, (much better than prison food).

After the weeks at St Heliers, we are committed to return once a month to share with these inmates or as I would rather call them, 'our mates'. I have found that many of them are willing to share on many aspects of their lives and ask many questions about their walk back to a life of renewed hope.

I have also been involved in other prison visits recently at Cessnock and Kempsey jails to assist some that were in need. Many inmates have no contact with family members either by way of visits or mail. I have found it equally rewarding to me as well.

I thank the Lord for placing me in this ministry.

Peter McGregor

Mates in Ministry

Briars in Bowral

Bring your partners

When: Wednesday
4th August 2010
Time: 7.00pm to 10.00pm
Venue: Briar's 653 Moss Vale Road Bowral
Cost: Dinner & Drinks
Speaker: It's a social and Kevin will bring something to the table

To book phone Life Church on: 4961 0211
Email: info@lifechurch.org.au



OzReach is a relational based network of churches & ministries that are committed to parenting and planting churches across the nation.

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