

# What's Wrong with Being Big?

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I have never known it to fail. When a church starts to grow, the critics start to work on it. I have never understood why a church that is not growing does not attract criticism but one that is growing does. I suppose it's because a church that is not growing may be a church that is not working. An idle church doesn't attract any kind of attention, not even unfavorable!

No clearer picture emerges from the early chapters of Acts than that when the church is doing what God has commanded it to do, it often becomes big. The church began on Pentecost with about 3,000 people (Acts 2:41), and before very long the number of men alone came to be about 5,000 (4:4). From that point, the church is described as "multitudes, both of men and women" (5:14) and beyond that the number multiplied "exceedingly" (6:7).

The same phenomenon was experienced in the towns outside of Jerusalem in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria as the disciples scattered from Jerusalem (Acts 9:31). The church in Antioch began with a "great number" and after that "much people was added" (11:21, 24). There was nothing wrong with big churches then.

Neither is there anything innately wrong with being a small church now. Many great and good people are the products of small churches and there is certainly a place for them. There were small churches in the first century. However, if a church remains small because it has spiritual dwarfs for its leaders, and because it is interested only in self-preservation instead of evangelizing the world, then there is evil in that smallness. Also, if a church seeks bigness just for the sake of bigness and worldly pride and resorts to unscrupulous and unscriptural schemes to attain it, then such a bigness is wrong. But, if a church is a beehive of Scriptural activity and is striving with all its heart and soul to reach the lost, then it should grow bigger and bigger, and it certainly does so with God's blessing!

I can't see why any Christian would not want the Lord's church to grow. It is exciting to be a part of that growth and to see it happening before one's very eyes. As a church grows, it is able to do more. It has greater manpower and womanpower. The more people a church reaches, the more it can reach. There are more jobs and more places to serve. We are servants of a great God who has big plans for us. Be not afraid of bigness!

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