

HOUSE OF PRAISE INTERNATIONAL CHURCH

*Ministering the truth of God's Word in
the power of the Holy Spirit!*



Guidelines for HOPIC'S Home Cell Groups



Topics Included:

Personal Ambition-Key to Disaster

God's Re-education Program

Home Cell Groups-Key to Evangelism

Importance of Fellowship with the Holy Spirit and more

HOUSE OF PRAISE INTERNATIONAL CHURCH

Booklets written by Pastor Harlan & Doris Stilwell, Sr.

Understanding the Lord's Passover

Developing Oneness (Unity) Through the Love of God

Developing the Kingdom of God Within Us

*Receiving the Wisdom, Understanding,
and Knowledge of God*

Guidelines For HOPIC'S Home Cell Groups

Developing Our Spirit Man

Changed By His Glory

Understanding Our Redemption

Contact Information :

House of Praise International Church

7406 Alban Station Court B-206A

Springfield, VA 22150

email: pastor@hopic.org

www.hopic.org

Phone: 703-866-4140



HOUSE OF PRAISE INTERNATIONAL CHURCH

*Ministering the truth of God's Word in
the power of the Holy Spirit!*

Table of Contents

<i>Guidelines for Successful Cell Groups</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Personal Ambition-Key to Disaster</i>	<i>.....2</i>
<i>God's Reeducation Program</i>	<i>..... 2</i>
<i>Who Does the Preaching?</i>	<i>.....3</i>
<i>Steps for Establishing HOPIC</i>	<i>.....5</i>
<i>Home Cell Groups</i>	
<i>Importance of fellowship</i>	<i>.....8</i>
<i>with the Holy Spirit</i>	
<i>Motivated Lay Leadership</i>	<i>.....11</i>
<i>Preaching to a Growing Church</i>	<i>.....14</i>
<i>Using these Principles for unlimited.....</i>	<i>.....17</i>
<i>Church Growth</i>	

Guidelines for Successful Home Cell Groups

The guidelines used in this document are the result of Holy Spirit guidance, in line with God's Word, and proven on the battlefield of life. We must give honor where honor is due and I give thanks to a great man of God, Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho, of Korea, for giving us the benefit of his experience. His congregation, Full Gospel Central Church in Seoul Korea, implemented cell groups when they numbered 600 people. Today his church exceeds 1 million people. That is proven success my friend.

Because my goal as pastor at HOPIC is to be successful in increasing the Kingdom of God, I have chosen to use what I believe God has given me, through his servant, Dr. Cho. I have personally been in his pastor's conferences, seen the manner of man he is, sat under his teaching and can declare without any reservation, that he is a true servant of God, seeking only to advance the Kingdom of God, not his own personal reputation.

I purchased his book on cell groups at one of his pastoral conferences many years ago but had not really used it. In our recent discussions at House of Praise International Church regarding cell groups, their establishment and the problems associated with them, the Spirit of God reminded me that I had this book in my personal library. I immediately pulled it out and began to read it. I was very excited at what I was reading, for the wisdom given in this book addressed practically every problem associated with home cell groups and their implementation. Therefore I choose to develop the guidelines for HOPIC Home Cell Groups from this God given wisdom and pray for God's guidance for House of Praise Int'l Church in doing so.

Home Cell Groups provide us the biblical way for successful evangelism. The pastor must be the key person involved. Without the pastor, the system will not hold together. It is a system, and a system must have a control point. The controlling factor in home cell groups is the pastor. Through Home Cell Groups, each believer becomes a missionary as well as an agent for revival in their neighborhood. The cell group becomes the nucleus of revival in its own neighborhood. Home Cell Groups provide a real opportunity

for everyone to find meaningful involvement in life through their church. The Holy Spirit is able to use all as we worship the Lord, pray together, learn from the Word, experience the working of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, experience miracles and healing, establish loving relationships with fellow Christians, become a missionary to your own neighborhood as well as experience the freedom to discuss problems, receive counsel and prayer. Cell Groups are small thus providing a sense of belonging, knowing that someone is always watching out for you, caring for you and helping you. It must be understood that the greater purpose of a cell group is to provide a place to bring friends and neighbors to introduce them to Jesus Christ. Therefore it is for this purpose the group must divide once it exceeds fifteen (15) families. The following guidelines are set forth as the Guidelines for Developing HOPIC Home Cell Groups.

Personal Ambition: Key to Disaster – Setting goals and having faith to believe God to meet them is good and wise. The problem often comes when, after seeing God bless them, we become convinced that God has made us someone special and He is doing it all through me. Pride opens the door for Satan to come in and divide and conquer. Proverbs 16:18 tells us that “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” When this occurs, we must realize that we are using only head faith, not heart faith. Head faith cannot claim anything. You are claiming only the logos, which is the general Word of God when you are in pride. We must learn that it is only when the Holy Spirit gives specific confirmation (rhema, the revealed Word of God to an individual) that we can claim any of God’s promises as our own. Then our faith becomes heart faith, and with that kind of faith we can move mountains.

God’s Reeducation Program – As a leader in the Kingdom of God, God has commanded us to “*study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*” II Timothy 2:18. God wants his leaders to teach and preach His Word, not vain babblings and empty useless talk, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness. There are two primary things that are critical for God’s leaders to do, one is take time to meditate on God’s Word and second thing is the need to have intimate fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Although we are told to fellowship with the Father and with the Son, we are to have “*communion*” with the Holy Spirit

(II Cor. 13:14). Communion goes deeper than fellowship. One dictionary defines communion as "an intimate relationship with deep understanding," and another says it is "the act of sharing one's thoughts and emotions with another." Think of a marriage. When a man marries a woman, he doesn't just bring her into his house and leave her there. He doesn't treat her as just a "thing" in his house. He loves her and shares his life with her—intimately. That is the kind of relationship we are to have with the Holy Spirit. For it is the Holy Spirit who quickens the Word and gives it life, bringing to us God's revelation. Leaders are to lead, not control. God told us specifically in Eph.4:11 that He "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." In this we can see that God's servants are called to equip the lay people, so the lay people can carry out ministry, both inside and outside the Church

Who does the preaching - We 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. In the early days of the Church, there were 100,000 Christians in Jerusalem, out of a population of 200,000. With only 12 Apostles, who could take care of the house-to-house ministry? There had to be leaders of smaller groups – of house fellowships. Together with the 7 deacons (Acts 6), the lay leaders would have to share the responsibility of carrying out house-to-house ministry. The People chose 7 deacons to minister to the physical needs of the growing congregation, while the apostles limited themselves to prayer and the preaching of the Word. Then after deacon Stephen was stoned, the church was scattered and even the deacons became preachers (ex. Phillip Acts 8). The Apostles had delegated not only the authority to minister to physical needs but also the authority to preach. With the adding of 3,000 members on the Day of Pentecost and 5,000 the next day, we can see the only way the needs of these people were taken care of was in the homes. Other churches were mentioned as meeting in houses – the church in the house of Lydia (Acts 16:40), the church in the house of Priscilla and Aquilla (*Rom. 16:3-5*) and the church in the

house of Philemon (*Philem. 2*). Clearly there is much scriptural support for home meetings. In Exodus 18, we see Moses' struggles, trying to judge the Israelites in the wilderness. After much effort by Moses, His father-in-law Jethro, saw that it was too much for him and showed Moses how to delegate authority so that he would not wear himself out trying to meet the needs of all those in his charge. In verses 21-22, he told him to select capable men from all the people, "men who fear God", "trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain, and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens, and lighten Moses' load. Clearly, delegation of authority is definitely part of the will of God. Some people question whether or not women are scripturally allowed to preach. *Romans 16:1* tells us that Phoebe, worked as a servant (deaconess) of the church at Cenchrea – under Paul's authority. How do people labor in the Lord? They do it by witnessing, praying with people, preaching. Helping however was always under a man's authority.

The Local Church is the preserver of faith and Christianity. Home Cell Groups contribute to it. Cell Groups must be integrated into the whole ministry of the local church and their influence should not expand beyond the boundaries of the local church. By being a part of a local church, it provides spiritual protection and blocks cults and bondages from becoming established in the lives of its members. Cell Group members are taught to depend on the Holy Spirit themselves and to develop a life of faith.

Steps for establishing HOPIC HOME CELL GROUPS are as follows:

Home Cell Groups, key to church revival & evangelism. The only way that Home Cell Groups will be successful in a church is if they are used as a tool of evangelism and spiritual growth. They provide us the true biblical way of evangelism and everyone can and should be involved. The pastor must be the key person involved. It is a system, and a system must have a control point. The controlling factor in home cell groups is the pastor. A lot of groundwork must be laid before they can be implemented. As pastor of HOPIC, I will train the cell leaders and motivate them to reach the goals which are to be established for each group. The nitty-gritty can be delegated to an associate, but the leadership will remain with the pastor.

INITIALLY, we will start small. We will select a few lay leaders and train them as cell leaders. They will form their own home cell meetings and once they begin bearing fruit, then we will get the whole church involved. Every cell meeting shall follow an established order of worship. There will be opening prayers and singing, followed by either a representative or corporate prayer, preaching from the Word of God for encouragement (using the outline given) and then taking of an offering. Meetings will end with testimonies, prayers for healing and the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and a closing prayer. Leaders are to follow the order of worship established and must conclude the meeting within one hour. They are to begin and end on time. Food for fellowship afterwards should be limited to cookies and coffee or tea. Cell Leaders must be Spirit filled. Other qualities are: Enthusiasm that is infectious, have a testimony - to show what God has done for them, be dedicated - to the Lord and the Church through;

- (1) His attendance record (church and cell groups),*
- (2) His tithing record which is an essential part of his life of faith, and*
- (3) His demonstrated commitment to unity in the life of the church.*

Those who are overcritical or out of step with the majority will not easily follow the pastor's directions for leading the home cell group. Is Spirit filled (baptized in the Holy Spirit, with the evidence

of speaking in tongues). In this, we are assured that the leader can lead others to Christ and pray powerfully for the people's needs (especially physical and spiritual healing).

Cell Leaders must have personal time for prayer and Bible study. Once leaders are selected, they need to be trained in leadership meetings. First, the Cell Leaders must learn from the pastor so that they can pass on the pastor's teaching to those in the cell meetings. **IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE TEACHING AT CELL MEETINGS FIT IN WITH THE OVERALL PROGRAM OF TEACHING IN THE CHURCH.** Cell Leaders are vitally important to this overall church leadership. Therefore to prevent chaos from developing from a lack of direction, the pastor will follow a principle established and recommended by Dr. Cho to meet briefly with the cell leaders each week and provide them with a standard lesson outline and CD from the previous Sunday's meeting. It is a good idea for cell group lessons to follow the pastor's Sunday sermon, perhaps to enlarge upon some of the more important points. In addition, a copy of the weekly lesson being taught will be made available to all members each Sunday (example in a bulletin) that they may prepare for the lesson in advance. In time, we will adopt a standard Bible study course for cell groups similar to the standard Bible Study Courses available in many churches.

Only the cell leaders are to do the teaching basing their lessons on the outlines distributed to them each week. It is because of my concern for what is being taught that there shall be no outside speakers without consulting with the pastor first. Most such speakers have their own self-propagating ministries, and they would expect to receive an offering wherever they went. Cell leaders are not to take an offering for anything except the work of our church. Following each meeting, each Cell Leader is to complete an Cell meeting information sheet recording the name of the speaker, attendance, the number who were saved, the number who backslid and the amount of the offering. The information sheet is to be turned in to the pastor weekly. Each cell group is to appoint a registrar and a treasurer. The registrar will have the responsibility of counting the offering and keeping a record, and the treasurer holds on to the money until it is turned over to the church treasurer on Sunday. In addition to lessons from the Word of God, there are other functions of a cell meeting that make it truly a gathering of God's people. There is always worshiping through the singing of hymns, psalms and choruses, as well as the

prayers of the Leader and others in the group. We must always provide the groups a time of open prayer, where all are permitted to bring their prayers of thanksgiving, confession, intercession and petition before the Lord.

Another ingredient of our Cell Meetings is ministry to one another. Members are encouraged to share their prayer needs so all can pray for them. You will see many miraculous healings take place right in the cell groups, as one prays for another, making it clear that the Holy Spirit works in those meetings just as He does in the church services.

Finally, the meetings are required to be evangelistic. The lesson and testimonies should lead newcomers to the person of Jesus Christ. Cell members are to look around the neighborhood for unbelievers they can invite to the meetings. Many will give their lives to Christ right there in the cell meetings and will cause our church to grow. Evangelism is essential to renew and replenish the life of the church. Jesus said in *Matt. 28*, it was to begin in our hometown first. After several months of ministry, it is time to expand to the whole congregation. Cell leaders and cell members will be invited to give their testimonies to the whole church in the general church meeting. By that time, we will have many statistics also to back up our testimonies of healings & helps and how many unbelievers have been led to Christ, etc. The enthusiasm of the Cell leaders and the members will be infectious. People will be convinced that the cell system has something for them. At this point the entire church membership will be assigned to a cell group. Groups that meet without EVANGELISM as a goal do not produce much growth in a church.

We therefore will not have home meetings that are strictly for fellowship. It is alright for our members to meet for fellowship on their own, but I believe the meetings should be highly disciplined, if they are to produce the kind of evangelism and growth for the Lord Jesus Christ which the Bible reveals is possible. Without Evangelism as a goal they will not produce much growth and there is a great danger they will only feed on themselves. As the Bible reveals, the traditional pastoral structure is not capable of ministering to the needs of large congregations. Therefore delegation of authority and formation of home cell groups are the only way of meeting all of those needs.

IMPORTANCE OF FELLOWSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

We must give the greatest importance to fellowship with the Holy Spirit. This need goes beyond being filled and being guided – each Cell Leader must have real fellowship with the Holy Spirit. I know in my own preaching ministry, if I don't have the anointing of the Holy Spirit, my message will not bring results, no matter how much time I spend in preparation of the sermon. And if it does not bring results, it is wasted. This is mentioned because many people do not know the meaning of "fellowship with the Holy Spirit." They say they are born again, baptized with the Holy Spirit, and have experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in ministry. "What more do we need?" That's a great mistake. I had that attitude a long time. I said I was born again, had the baptism in the Holy Ghost, spoke with other tongues, and had the diploma. But God revealed to me that the Holy Spirit is more than the Spirit of power and the Spirit of being born again. The Holy Spirit is a person, who lives within me. Living with someone means you have fellowship with that person, recognition of each other. It means intimate fellowship and communication. We must have a deeper fellowship with the Holy Spirit and our ministries will be multiplied and empowered greatly.

Most of us have the Holy Spirit in a legalistic way, but you don't have intimate fellowship with Him. You may bring a wife into your home legally, but you may also leave her alone in the home as a thing, not as a person, if you don't have fellowship with her continually. Most of us have our fellowship similar to what is recorded in *1 John 1:3*, which says "*our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ*" (NIV). Like most Christians, I had what I felt was fellowship with the Father and with His Son. I prayed to the Father, and I prayed to the Son, Jesus Christ. I worshiped the Father and I worshiped the Son. Like most Christians, I mentioned the Father and I mentioned the Son, but very seldom did I mention the Holy Spirit. But the Bible not only commands us to have fellowship with the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ, it also commands us to have fellowship, or "*communion*",

with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14). The meaning is clear. The Father finished His work in Old Testament times. Then He sent His son, Jesus Christ, who was crucified and resurrected. Now, seated on the right hand of God the Father, Jesus has finished His work. TODAY, we have the age of the Holy Spirit. The Father is working through the Holy Spirit, and Jesus is working through the Holy Spirit. So the Holy Spirit is the administrator of the love of God and the grace of Jesus Christ. Communion in the Greek language is “koinonia”, which has several meanings: fellowship, partnership, and distribution. The love and grace of God is constant, but they are in heaven. How then are they brought to our hearts right now in this hour here on earth? It is through the communion of the Holy Spirit. We may have a great theological knowledge about the love of God and the grace of Jesus Christ but without the communion of the Holy Spirit, there will be no reality of them in our hearts. This is the main problem with the church today.

We may have a wonderful theology and truth from the Bible, but if we don't have the definite cooperation from the Holy Spirit, it will be only theory. You're not preaching from your experience of the love of God and the grace of Jesus Christ. We have beautiful buildings, wonderful choirs, well-educated ministers and brilliant messages, while the people in the pews are starving to death. They have all sorts of knowledge poured into their minds, but their spirits are arid and starved. To be successful in the King's business, there needs to be a very, very, close partnership with the Holy Spirit, and to do this there must be fellowship. When we fellowship with the Father, we address Him and say, “Father I love you, I recognize you.” Praise God! And to the Son we say, “Jesus I love you, I praise you.” But when we come to the Holy Spirit, what do we do? Often we do nothing. Without communion with the Holy Spirit, which includes fellowship, partnership and distribution, you can't have effective fellowship with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. So we force ourselves to recognize the Holy Spirit, to welcome Him and to worship Him, because He is a person, in you, your partner. Say to Him, “Holy Spirit, I welcome you, I recognize and love you. I depend upon you. Dear Holy Spirit, let's go. Let's bring the glory of God to the people. Just say, “OK, I'm beginning. You supply all the knowledge and

wisdom and discernment, and I'm going to give it out to the people". After finishing your message, you say "Dear Holy Spirit, we did a wonderful job together, didn't we. Praise God!" If you do this, depend upon the Holy Spirit in this way, you will have a mighty anointing of God on your life and in your ministry and sermons, with tremendous results and numerous conversions as well as healings. The reason is the Word of God says whatever is not born of the Spirit, is flesh. We must nurture an even greater relationship with the Holy Spirit. He has been given to us to work with us, not just to stand in a corner. God is on the throne, and Jesus is at His right hand, but the Spirit is here on earth, in me and in you, to work together with us to bring success to the King's business. Begin to pray together, pray in the spirit, read the Bible together, and plan your ministry together. *In Acts 15:28*, the early church made their decision with the Holy Spirit. Spend the first hour of your day with the Holy Spirit and you will begin to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit so intimately, that when He speaks, you will understand. Praying in tongues helps us to have constant fellowship with the Holy Spirit. This kind of fellowship with the Holy Spirit signifies a life of prayer. It is through our prayers God chooses to work in the world today.

Powerful, Spirit-inspired prayers work miracles. All of us need to be saturated with prayer. Prayer is our spiritual breathing. If we don't pray, our spiritual lives will die and the only real kind of prayer is the kind that can be seen as fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Any other kind of prayer becomes formal and legalistic. God wants us to have intimate fellowship with Him through the Holy Spirit. What do we pray for? God wants us to bring all our needs unto Him. Most prayers are for the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues. Next are family problems, then healing, and then business (or financial) problems. Fasting and prayer are part of our fellowship with the Holy Spirit. There are answers to prayer. By showing God that we are willing to change our attitude towards prayer, we open ourselves to praying according to His will. All of us, beginning with the pastor, need to have this kind of prayer life and this kind of fellowship.

MOTIVATING LAY LEADERSHIP

We have pointed out that the success of home cell groups depend upon the;

- a) Guidance of the pastor,*
- b) A trained lay leadership and*
- c) Continual fellowship with the Holy Spirit.*

There is a fourth requirement that I believe is necessary if the cell system is to work smoothly and that is MOTIVATED LAY LEADERS. When a child is born into the world, it hungers for two primary satisfactions: food and loving touch. The parent may provide all the physical food required but if there is no loving and caring touch, psychologically the child will not grow properly and may even die. Grownups as well, hunger to be loved and hugged and touched. Without that loving touch, we adults would be starved psychologically. To have a loving home, the husband and wife need to touch each other very often. Friends as well need to experience a warm handshake, exuberant back slapping, sometimes and a playful punch at each other. It makes them feel alive! BUT, we must go beyond this touching of the outward man (person), to show that we humans have to be touched inwardly as well, IF WE ARE TO BE MOTIVATED TO LOVING ACTION.

The pastor and the lay members must work as a team in providing leadership for home cell groups. The pastor cannot do all of the heavy work of evangelism so that the church will grow so the lay leaders must be motivated to undertake their share of the work. This means that the pastor needs to know how to touch the inner man (person) of the lay leaders to motivate them. Then the pastor can accomplish great things through them. How do we motivate people? To motivate the inner person, we must touch the personality of that person. This is done in three (3) ways:

- 1) Recognition,*
- 2) Praise and*
- 3) Love.*

Everyone needs to be recognized.

1) RECOGNITION – All people need to be recognized. At House of Praise Int'l Church we like to give certificates as a means of recognizing special achievements among our various leaders, including the leaders of home cell groups. In our church, we will also have a cell leader's convention, twice a year. They are to all come together for 2 days. After the convention is concluded, a citation recognizing them for their accomplishments will be awarded. This kind of recognition is equally important in the home. A husband should regularly recognize his wife's accomplishments, and likewise the wife should recognize the accomplishments of her husband. A gift of special celebration is always appreciated, making a person feel much more important to his spouse.

2) PRAISE – we should always make an effort to find out the good qualities or the accomplishments of others and then praise them highly for their characteristics and achievements. That really puts fire into their hearts. If a husband does not know how to praise his wife he will soon be starving! And if a wife does not praise her husband for doing a good job working around the house, he is not going to be motivated very much to do more work. ALL OF US ARE BORN WITH A HUNGER FOR PRAISE. If pastors want to be real leaders in their churches, they must learn how to praise the accomplishments of their lay people. If he doesn't know how to praise them, he does not really have the qualifications for leading them. Without praise, people will not be motivated. In today's society, the best way to motivate anyone is not to find fault with him, but to look for his\her good points and praise him for those. By praising people for their good points you will be helping them to correct their faults. Praising is the best method of motivation, even in Christian work. Anytime anyone does an especially good job at something, they should be praised for it. A slap on the back and a "my what a wonderful job you did on this", when done with real sincerity, the person will remember it for years.

3) LOVE – to motivate people, we need to give them genuine love, which is evident by the expression on our face, the tone of

our voice and the way we act. People truly respond to genuine love. I respond to love. I can feel the love radiating from the people in the congregation. I become very motivated, and try my very best to help them. I will not neglect them and I will never forget them. I also love the people very much, and they know it. They can feel it for it is a genuine concern for their benefit. Many people can organize, and they can organize beautifully. But an organization, no matter how beautifully it is put together, is not going to work properly if the people in it are not properly motivated to do the work.

PREACHING TO A GROWING CHURCH

I have mentioned several prerequisites for establishing a strong, growing church based on home cell groups. They are fellowship with the Holy Spirit, delegation of authority to a group of lay leaders, and the training and motivation of those leaders. Now, I would like discuss one additional consideration, PREACHING. This subject may seem like an obvious one to some but it is not as simple as it may appear. The STYLE of one's preaching will often determine whether home cell groups will result in a growing church. I have already mentioned my dependence on the Holy Spirit. Close fellowship with the Holy Spirit is ESSENTIAL. It is through His intimate presence in our lives that we receive the inspiration and anointing to bring the message NEEDED by our congregation at every service. Through my fellowship with the Holy Spirit, I feel a real anointing when I go out to preach. Oh what a difference the anointing makes. Whether it is an expository (detailed) teaching on Wednesday night or a topical message on Sundays, if I teach according to my own knowledge, no one will listen to me. But if I take the Holy Spirit with me, the people will grow in grace and listen for hours, as the Holy Spirit quickens the Word of God. After many years of preaching, I have found that only the Word of God quickens people. Teaching the Bible, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit is very powerful. In my preaching I have a very definite goal. My first goal is always to help people to meet Jesus Christ personally. If they are unbelievers, let them meet Jesus Christ and be converted: if they are believers, let them meet Jesus Christ and become more profound in their faith. If I miss the bulls' eye here, the sermon is a failure. My second goal in preaching is to help people succeed in life, spirit soul, body and business. As the people in my congregation become successful in their home lives, successful in their business live and careers, and with their relationships with other people, then I also become successful. As much as I want to become a successful minister, to that same extent I try to make the people of my congregation successful. My own success is a secondary goal. The people must succeed first. FINALLY, the goal of my preaching is to help people serve God and other people in a greater way. Once people meet Jesus Christ and become successful in their own lives, they should use the power and the success of their newfound relationship with Christ to serve God and other people with spiritual energy, mental

energy and physical energy, and with an abundance of finances. While others in the world are slowing down, our people are becoming prosperous, even in the midst of severe inflation and economic depression, which is what we have had recently in the United States. Yet the blessings continue to increase in our church. So, in all of my sermons, I always have 3 goals: to introduce people to Jesus Christ, to make them successful and to motivate them to serve God and their fellowman. THEN I HAVE A SURE FOUNDATION AS A MINISTER.

Where do you begin you might ask. Well, I always begin with the GOODNESS OF GOD. That is a very important theology. Many religions are born in fear not in love and have had a wrathful, vengeful God preached to them and so had great difficulty relating to a loving, good God. When I was born again, I prayed to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Once I had, the love of God began to pour like a river into my soul. The greatest things I have experienced as a believer is the love of God and the goodness of God. As a father myself, I do everything to bring goodness to my children. *Matt. 7:11 "if you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him"*. Some Christians think they have to always suffer and struggle to be good Christians. Well, if our suffering brings any redeeming grace to other people, then I believe that suffering is justified.. But Jesus Christ did not ever suffer from sin, or sickness, or oppression of Satan. Did He suffer from poverty? Yes He did, but in a redeeming ways as it says in 2 Cor. 8:9, "though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich". NIV. THEN from what did Jesus suffer? Persecution. He only suffered for the sake of the gospel, because of persecution. Therefore, neither should we accept suffering except by persecution. And if that suffering does not bring any redeeming result, then that suffering is for nothing.

Next, I preach on the blood of Jesus Christ. Our sermons and our faith must always be based on the blood of Christ, for without the blood of Jesus Christ there can be no redemption. The blood redeems our disobedience (from sin and death), which we inherited from our father, the first Adam. So I base my sermons on the blood of Jesus Christ and build the faith of the people in my congregation so that they will not fear anything. I put faith into their hearts.

When our people leave the church and return to their homes and businesses, they do not live only by their own circumstances, but they live by faith. The Bible says “the righteous shall live by faith” and “be it unto you according to your faith”. Without building faith into the people, they have nothing to claim for victory. When our faith is founded on the blood of Jesus Christ, the devil can’t stand it.

Then, after building on the goodness of God, and on redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ, I build on the foundation of a successful life. It is a sure biblical principal from Genesis to Revelation. If you want to have financial success in your business, then you should apply the principle of sowing and reaping, for the Bible says, “Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall MEN give unto your bosom” (*Luke 6:38*). And how do you keep your HOME life happy and healthy? By keeping Sunday holy, not doing any work, and worshipping God with the family. How can you have business success? Apply the principles of faith in Hebrews 11.

So I teach these principles of success to the people in our church, and they apply them to their lives. Just as we in the church leadership apply the principles of church growth through home cell group. And people are successful! The method of preaching then, is to counsel the people to help them meet their needs. People are always coming to church in great need, but if the preacher is only talking about theology, history and politics, the people are not going to be helped in their personal lives, where they need the message. They will be dozing off instead. We must meet the need of the heart.

Finally, in all my sermons, I try to UPLIFT the people in some way. I try to instill faith, hope and love in them. I try to teach them how to be successful Christians, never pounding them down. We must uplift them and lead them into righteousness. The Mosaic law was given to condemn the people but the grace of Jesus Christ was given to redeem the people. Of course we speak against sin — although not in a condemning way but in a constructive way. I say that if you live in sin you are going to hell, but I always show them there is a way out — how to come out of their sin through the blood of Jesus Christ. I never leave our congregation with a feeling of condemnation. Jesus said I came not to condemn so we cannot either. When I preach on faith, hope and love, I know I am preaching to the needs of the people and the sermons are uplifting them.

USING THESE PRINCIPLES FOR UNLIMITED CHURCH GROWTH

A minister may have adopted all of the principles discussed here, delegating authority and forming home cell groups, being in constant fellowship with the Holy Spirit, motivating his lay leadership and preaching meaningful sermons — and still fall far short of the unlimited church growth experienced by Pastor Cho's Church. The number one requirement for having real church growth, unlimited church growth, is to set goals. That may seem obvious, but the real determining factor is the way we apply this principle. Unfortunately it is possible to set goals in the wrong way and then put in a great deal of self-effort in exhorting leaders to bring in new members. Some growth may be reached in this way but it will reach a plateau.

The church growth I am talking about will have no plateaus. When we invite God to be involved, He shows us that we should establish clear-cut goals, not only to build a growing church but also to form a victorious personal prayer life. When we pray, we must be very specific, have a clear cut vision, and we must expect God to answer. Heb. 11:1 says "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for.....". You see "without having a clear-cut goal of the "things" or a clear-cut vision of the objects, how can you hope? How do you have faith?"

There are many examples in scripture for this. When Jesus was on the road to Jericho, He was approached by a blind man, Bartimaeus. Now Jesus and everybody else knew what Bartimaeus wanted – to be healed of his blindness. But Jesus clearly asked the question, "What do you want me to do for you?" and the blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, I want to regain my sight!" Jesus said to him, "*go your way; your faith has made you well*". Mark 10:51-51. You see, Jesus asked specific questions, expecting goal-oriented answers. And throughout scripture God did miracles in response to clear-cut requests with specific goals in mind. When we relate this to the church or our cell groups, we can see that we

have mostly prayed daily for revival, but still had an empty church. We have had a wrong attitude about building a church much as we did about prayer. God will answer our prayers only through our own dreams, visions and faith. We know God is within us by the Holy Spirit, which means He is not going to bring the answers to me from beyond me, but those answers were going to bubble up from within me. Now we know that the capacity for God's answer depends on the size of the pipe in which we give Him the opportunity to work. If the size of my pipe is small, the blessings are only going to trickle down; but I through faith can increase the size of that pipe, causing the blessings to pour down.

The next principle is dreaming. You need a goal yes, but if you don't have a dream (vision) you will never reach that goal. The Bible says *"Where there is no vision, the people perish"*. Prov. 29:18. That means when you don't have a vision, you don't produce anything. The Holy Spirit wants to communicate with us and the dream (vision) is the basic material with which the Holy Spirit works. If we don't have a vision He has nothing to communicate with us about. When Abraham was 75 years old, God gave him a vision of being the father of many nations. When he was 100 years old, Abraham was ready to have that vision fulfilled and God call him out and let him count the stars in the sky because He wanted Abraham to visualize the number of his children, which would be "as numerous as the stars of the sky." Joseph also had a dream of his brothers bowing down to him. Dreaming seems foolish to the natural mind, and I would agree, if dreaming is done without goals. BUT when you establish a goal and begin to dream for that goal, that dream becomes creative. The Holy Spirit uses it to bring the future to the present!

Next, we must BELIEVE. *Mark 11:23* says we must really believe we are going to get what we ask for, what we are dreaming for. And we must speak the believing word. We must never, never speak in negative terms (i.e. I can't do it, I have no finances, I have no strength, etc). If we are depending on the Holy Spirit of God we are not depending upon our resources but heavens resources.

NEXT, to produce growth, we must persuade the congregation of the reality of that goal and get some enthusiasm

started. By constantly speaking about your goal and vision, you are generating enthusiasm in the people and persuading them that it is going to happen. I cannot build a big church by myself. I need the cooperation of all our members, to join their hearts with mine to believe for the growth. By speaking about it, I am releasing power, as it says in the Bible. *Mark 11:23*.

LASTLY, you must prepare for it. You must get ready for growth. Begin raising funds for a larger church building, etc. When we believe for growth, and when that growth becomes real to us in our visions, then we need to act as though we already have that growth. You see, the Bible says we must count the costs, plan, believe and act on our faith. God is our total resource. If we depend on any other source, we will have no one to turn to when shortages come. God must be our total resource. He never fails.



HOUSE OF PRAISE INTERNATIONAL CHURCH

Where Jesus Christ is still Lord

Our Vision

Our Goal and desire is the same as that of our Lord Jesus Christ, to fulfill God's end-time calling to enlarge the Kingdom of God, by reaching the multitudes with the gospel of Christ for all levels of our society. We are bringing glory and honor to the Father of our Lord Jesus by teaching and preparing God's people for works of service through the Word and Anointed Worship, through the manifested presence and revelation power of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor Harlan & Doris Stilwell, Sr.
7406 Alban Station Court B-206A
Springfield, VA 22150
email: pastor@hopic.org
www.hopic.org

Phone: 703-866-4140



Pastor Harlan & Doris Stilwell Sr.

