

shared experiences are prominent” (131). Organic mentors live life along with their mentees. These mentoring relationships tend to be temporal, so that current needs can be met. Technology affects organic mentoring, and the chapter on technology shows the positive and negative aspects, by explaining how it connects and how to help mentees build personal relationships. In the epilogue, the authors give a list of the blessings of good mentorships.

The book ends with an epilogue and three appendices entitled, “Mentor’s Training Tools and Tips,” “NextGen Preps,” and “A Leader’s Guide to Start and Maintain a Mentoring Culture.” In the epilogue, the authors give a list of the blessings of good mentorships. The first appendix gives instructions on the training of mentors. The second appendix is written to the mentee and gives help for a two-session mentee meeting. The third appendix helps leaders know how to start and maintain a mentoring program.

The Great Commission includes more than witnessing. It demands both reaching and teaching. Mentoring is a form of teaching/discipleship that is needed in our churches today.

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McGavran, Donald A. and Winfield C. Arn. *Ten Steps for Church Growth*. New York, New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1977. 138 pp. \$3.95.

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Written by the father of the modern Church Growth Movement, Donald McGavran, and one of his early students, Win Arn, *Ten Steps for Church Growth* provides the reader insights into the thinking of these two pioneers of the movement. While this book has long been out of print, used copies are available through an online bookseller, ranging in price from \$0.01 to \$55.72. I acquired my copy through the generosity of my former pastor, Gary Inrig, who had made a number of books from his library available to the staff when he left his role as senior pastor. Having heard so much about these two men during my seminary education, I eagerly plucked it from the shelf, along with many other church growth-oriented books.

*Ten Steps for Church Growth* was published in 1977. One might wonder whether the ten steps it suggests are as applicable to today’s churches as they were nearly forty years ago. Peruse the table of contents, and you will discover that the titles of each of the ten chapters suggest timeless church growth principles. While ten is the number of perfection, the authors are quick to dispel that notion about their book and invite the reader to join them in their quest of discovery (15).

What motivated these men in their quest to discover church growth principles? The answer to that question is at least partially answered in their personal messages that precede chapter 1. If you are like me, you may be tempted to skip over such preliminaries and simply begin reading the first chapter. That would be a mistake. You would miss hearing what drove these men to persevere in their efforts. Allow me to entice you with a couple of excerpts from each of them. For example, Don McGavran relates the following about his journey:

My initial involvement in Church Growth began with the conviction that God wants people to know Jesus Christ, to become his disciples, to know his power, and to begin living as new creatures. That is a common conviction among Christians, but there is nothing in that conviction itself which would have started the Church Growth school of thought. Along with that, I became acutely conscious that churches were not achieving this goal as effectively as they could. (1)

McGavran goes on to explain the necessity of sound research to gain understanding of the causes for growth and non-growth. “We must see what God is blessing to the growth of his church and what he is not blessing” (3).

Regarding his own research, Win Arn said,

Struggling with the problem of “the fruit which remains,” I began to find answers. For example, I discovered that evangelistic efforts can be well advertised, financed, promoted, prayed for, and evoke decisions, yet be relatively fruitless if they are not a vital part of the local church ministry. In fact, the closer evangelism is integrated into a local church, the greater will be the “fruit that remains” (11–12).

The rich content of their personal messages warrants more attention than can be devoted here. When you read them, you may find yourself asking, as I did, why we do not make a more conscientious effort to evaluate and redirect our ministries to effectively reach the unchurched people in our communities?

At least part of the answer to that question and its solution can be found in chapter 10, entitled, “Churches Grow as They Risk for Growth.” Some congregations shy away from taking risks for growth because of fears of all kinds—fear of failure, fear of people’s opinions, fear of not having all the answers to questions that might be asked, fear of change. Recently, I taught some kids how to whittle at our church’s day camp. Eight- to ten-year-old boys and girls armed with razor sharp hobby knives guarantees some cut fingers. One young camper allowed her fear of getting cut to put knots in her stomach before our second day of class. Being cut was something she had never experienced. As soon as she did, her anxiety disappeared; she had no trouble completing her project. Sometimes we can magnify the thing

we fear well beyond reality. When fear inhibits individuals and congregations from evangelistic activity and disciple making, they miss out on the joy it brings and the opportunity to glorify God. McGavran and Arn gave this encouragement, “While the task may seem impossible to the individual Christian or to the individual church, remember, many commands and promises of Scripture are given not only to *you* but to the Body of Christ. *I* can’t do it, *you* can’t do it; but, empowered by the Holy Spirit, *we*, the church, can do it” (118–119, emphasis theirs). The solution to overcoming our fears is faith.

A helpful feature of the book is the section at the end of each chapter entitled, “Questions for Review and Discussion.” The questions are designed to help readers apply what they are learning to their local church. Typically, there are four to six questions. To get the most out of this little book, take time to wrestle with the questions and apply them to your church or to the ministry in which you are engaged. Invite others to join you in the process.

The authors also include other helpful items. A glossary clarifies their usage of key terms. Appendix A lists a number of resources (films, cassettes, posters, and magazines) which would have been quite useful when the book was published. Churches will find the statistical questions posed in Appendix B to be helpful, with some minor modifications for their particular situation. For example, there is an assumption that churches have an adult Sunday school program—statistics could be collected and analyzed for home groups instead.

One of the intriguing aspects of the book is the forthrightness of the authors in addressing objections. In laying out each of the ten steps, they anticipate and present objections in question form as though they were engaged in conversation with their readers. Those questions are clearly answered, as well as the follow-up questions that their answers might prompt. For instance, notice the following:

*Isn't it God's business to persuade? If we are faithful in telling the story, the rest is up to the Holy Spirit.*

When Titus came back from Macedonia, he found Paul in the Corinthian synagogues arguing and “persuading.” There is a good biblical basis for assuming that God frequently persuades through us. If we sit quietly in our corner and refuse to persuade, we are actually being disobedient to the Holy Spirit (54, emphasis theirs).

The authors also ask questions that they want to answer for the benefit of their readers. I found their question and answer methodology to be an effective, though a bit tedious, means for presenting the ten steps.

I suspect that many of us might be put off by a book published in the 1970s. Do not judge *this* book by its publication date. *Ten Steps for Church Growth* is worthwhile reading for anyone who believes that God wants his church to grow and who is concerned enough to get involved.