

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

Acts 2:41; Heb. 6:1-3; Rev. 2:1-10; Rev. 3:1-6

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

- Wonderful lesson from our dear departed brother in Christ, W.T. Allison.
- Today, we will examine the stages of growth and decline through four groups in the scriptures.
 - Early Church (Jerusalem)
 - Hebrew Christians
 - Ephesus
 - Sardis

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

- What we find is that the church began a burning zeal..... matured.....became complacent.....left its first love..... and died.
- The purpose of our lesson is to recognize the formula for maintaining our zeal and avoid the habits that will lead to congregational decline.
- We will look at each group to determine what precipitated the stage they occupied.

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

- *Reviewing.....*

THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

- **Eight things that they did:**
 - Preaching- Acts 2:41; 8:4; 8:35
 - Benevolence- Acts 2:41-47; 3:1; 4:10; 5:14; 6:1-7
 - Prayer- Acts 1:14; 2:42; 4:31-34; 12:5
 - Cooperation- Acts 6:5

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

- *Reviewing.....*

THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

- **Eight things that they did:**
 - Men of good report- Acts 6:3
 - Generosity- Acts 2:41-47; 6:3
 - Discipline- Acts 5:11
 - Love- Acts 4:37

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

- *Reviewing.....*

THE HEBREW CHRISTIANS

- This group was characterized by complacency
- Heb. 6:1-3; 5:12-14
- The mission of the church is the mission of Christ
 - Luke 19:10
 - We are either missionaries or mission points.

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

- *Reviewing.....*

THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

- This group left its first love.
- Rev. 2:1-7
 - There were some positives as well as negatives
 - They defended the truth and endured patiently.
 - But, they were missing something.

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

- *Reviewing.....*

THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

- We must always be interested in conserving the past; however, we must have a plan for the future.
 - This plan can't be to circle the wagons and service only the membership.
 - We can be as straight as a gun barrel doctrinally and as empty as a gun barrel spiritually.

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

- *Reviewing.....*

THE CHURCH AT SARDIS

- This group had become dead
- Rev. 3:1-6
- Characteristics of a dead church:
 - Imprisoned by previous patterns of activities.
 - Soul winning is downgraded

CYCLES OF CHURCH GROWTH

- *Reviewing.....*

THE CHURCH AT SARDIS

- Characteristics of a dead church:
 - Satisfied with being mediocre
 - Church building oriented religion
 - Evangelism becomes optional