

**Church Growth: Growing the Body of Christ**  
**By Pastor Tommy Barnett**  
**Phoenix Assemblies of God**  
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Pastor Barnett said: "I am not here to tell you how to do it. I want to share my testimony. In doing this, I look for one person *who is the miracle* in the house.

The presentation of Barnett years ago encouraged T. D. Jakes, who at the time had a membership of 200 and was discouraged.

In the past 5 years, more have been saved, more miracles have occurred, and more money has come into Pastor Barnett's ministry (None of the money "stuck").

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. (Amos 9:13)

Focus on the supernatural timing of God. Forty-two of the books of the Bible speak of multiplication (e.g.):

And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, (Gen. 1:28)

### **Pain with Growth**

There is pain in multiplication, just like there is in childbirth. There is relational pain:

- Some love you when you are small only.
- Some want to keep you in a box.

If you have a problem with my coat of many colors, get angry with my father.

There is the:

- pain of failure, and
- risk incurred by taking a leap of faith
  
- He that wins souls is wise.
- The minimum number of souls being saved where you are is one/day (365/year).
- We have God who is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent.
- Do not despise your own thoughts.
- It does not take much to please people.

[Referring to 2 Kings 4:1-7, Pastor Barnett said] “Everything you need is in the house” by quoting 2 Kings 4:2. Too often we say we have nothing. God used the little [the 2 Kings 4 widow had] to produce her miracle.

### ***Empty Vessels is the Key***

We are good at being filled but not at being spilled. Too many attendees are filled. Go after empty vessels, the hurting.

### ***The method is not sacred, the message is***

Pastor Barnett said that he is biblically conservative but liberal in evangelism. “I will do anything in good taste to get people to church.” They have parties or anything in good taste to get people to come. At these gatherings, including the weddings and funerals he conducts, he makes an altar call.

The growth was built on *service*. Build a ministry by finding a need and meeting it. Pour into the lives of others. They can't fight love.

Start with one ministry and get all involved and excited about it. Once a ministry is operating, Pastor Barnett starts another.

### **Adopt a [City] Block**

*Adopt a Block* is one ministry he started. On Saturday at 4 pm, 700 people go out “cold turkey” with fliers that say: “I am your servant. What can I do for you?” They spend 4 hours in the effort. They clean and perform other services. Many will not witness to people, but they will serve them.

### **Money Follows Ministry**

Money follows ministry. Ministry does not follow money.

Do not share God's vision with people with whom you have no relationship. Shut out the nay-sayers, the doubt-peddlers.

### **Whatever you want you have to give away**

Pastor Barnett developed a \$4 million ministry to help others. He initially thought to use part thereof for the ministry of his church. But God directed him to give all of it away, saying “I will be your source.”

### **Inner-City Ministry**

Some have concluded that a large ministry cannot be built in the inner-city. Pastor Barnett disagrees. That is where the biggest need is. “But where sin abounded, grace did

much more abound" (Rom. 5:20b). They built Dream World in one of the worst parts of California.

### **Pursue the Dream If . . .**

1. Pursue if the dream is bigger than you are, and only when God is involved. God is looking for someone who will allow Him to use him.
2. Pursue if the dream is God's dream. Pursue when you let go of the dream, but the dream will not let go of you. If you keep a dream for 5 years, it will come to pass.

For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: thought it tarry wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. (Hab. 2:3)

Barnett had a "Dream-World" dream for 40 years before it came to pass. And he fought it for 5 years.

3. Pursue if it is God's dream. You will be willing to give your life for it and to die for it.

### **Dream World**

For the Dream World location, he made an offer that was so low that he thought it would be rejected. It was not. The agreement involved a balloon payment of \$3.9 million.

Two months before the balloon payment was due, they did not have the money. But the following happened:

- Pastor Barnett's largest member contributor was opposed to Dream World. But sometime later, he wanted to come to see it. Barnett did not want him to come because of his past opposition. But when the contributor came, he was overwhelmed with this helping ministry and wrote out a check for \$1 million.
- This largest member contributor told Pastor Barnett that his son wanted to see him [Barnett] sometime during the next week. Barnett said "tomorrow." The son gave him a \$1 million check.
- A member of Barnett's church sat next to a wealthy person on a plane. The member was excited about the Dream World ministry and shared this, which resulted in a visit to Dream World by the wealthy person. Barnett cringed when many of the very young used the name Jesus when talking about what was happening at Dream World because the visitor was Jewish. But the visitor was impressed and made a multimillion dollar donation. So they were able to make the balloon payment.

Dream World has over 200 ministries now. They started a mobile medical van ministry.

(Pastor Barnett said that his father taught him: "When you do not know what to do, take up an offering.")

## Plow in Hope

By Apostle James I. Clark  
August 11, 2006

1 Cor. 9:7-10

- The COOLJC's subtheme is the following: Fanning the flames of Pentecost.
- Watch with whom you share God's vision.
- If you work for God, He will make sure you benefit. You will be part of the reaped blessing.
- Work in the present with the vision of the [future] harvest.
- Heb. 11:1
- Imagine positive things. Envision the end before you begin. Plowing in hope is seeing the harvest before you start to plow.
- If we are in Christ
- Acts 18:10
- God can bring life anywhere!
- There will be dry seasons and drought periods.
- Faith is not faith until tested.
- [All fields are not level. So] plow up and down hills.
- John 7:38
- Psa. 1:3
- You must plant and water before your will reap.
- We are not working alone. If God is your partner, you have to win.
- God will not bless you with what He has for you until you are ready.
- God regards the seeds [we are to sow] as precious.
- Psa. 147
- Acts 12:8
- Heb. 11:6
- In Pilgrim's Progress (recommended reading), faith dies in the city of Vanity Fair. What sustained [the character] Christian was hope. The number one weapon against us is discouragement. Great despair is depression.
- "Hope maketh not ashamed" (Rom. 5:5)
- [To reap,] you need water and irrigation.
- Phil. 4:19
- The Lord needs vessels to hold the seed.
- John 4:11
- Lu. 8:5
- Diligent commitment of strength, endurance, and vision are required.
- The following are the methodical steps needed:
  - Praying
  - Fasting
  - Willingness to suffer

- Working daily in the field
- Aim high
- Heb. 6:10
- A muzzled ox will not function at full strength. This refers to paying tithes!
- If you look back, the rows you plow will be uneven.
- Lu. 9:62
- Two mistakes you can make are the following:
  - Looking back
  - Calling around
- The harvest is not your church building.
- Cultivate the youth.
- It is hard to plow when unequally yoked.
- We are in a spiritual battle. [So,] stop looking at people. When God led Pastor Clark to move from 125<sup>th</sup> Street (near Amsterdam Avenue), some thought he was going to ask people to put their homes up. He did not.
- Eph. 6:12
- Instead of focusing on those who are not doing what God wants them to do, preach to the sheep.
- Do not rely on the easy way and quick fixes.
- Rom. 5:5
- Isa. 41:10
- Matt. 9:37-38
- God will bless you to bloom where he plants you
- Isa. 35:1-2
- 2 Sam. 22:47
- Psa. 23:5-6
- Isa. 30:5
- It takes time, focus, effort, patience, tenacity.
- Plow in hope.
- Plant in faith
- Water in prayer
- Apostle Bonner labored [his first] 10 years in Detroit and no one was baptized. But then the harvest began. [Elder William Hall (Assistant Pastor, Solomon's Temple, Detroit, MI) said that when Apostle Bonner [also] became pastor of Refuge Temple, New York City, and spent time there away from Solomon's Temple, the Lord added souls to Solomon's Temple whether Apostle Bonner was at Solomon's Temple or not.]
- Hab. 2:3

## Pastors' Diocese Meetings

Apostle James I. Clark

“For who hath despised the day of small things?” (Zech 4:10).

- The General International Annual Convocation can now [significantly] focus on evangelism, workshops, and training.
- There are 546 [reporting] churches in the Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc. (COOLJC).
- District elders and bishops are to be in touch and communicate with the pastors and churches in their area. They are to be ready to address problems as they arise in an attempt to resolve them. Two questions are the following:
  - Is there a problem?
  - Can it be resolved?
- The diocese is to have a plan. Question:
  - Are the pastors familiar with the plan?
  - Do they know how their actions fit into the plan?

The plan should be written and have at least 3 goals. The plan is to also deal with human and financial resources.

- Regional meetings are for fellowship and training.
- We should celebrate what others are doing to advance the kingdom even when their methods differ from ours. Celebrate the ideas and accomplishments of others.
- We are to endeavor to get the unsaved to attend. They are the recruiting pool for new [church] workers.
- Ask repeat visitors: “What do you like about us?”
- Sinners do not have the power to stop sinning. Do not focus their attention on all the things they need to stop doing. Focus their attention on all of the things God wants to do for them.
- **Conversion:** There is more than one conversion. Peter illustrates this. There is [baggage] we bring with us when God saves us from which God will convert us.