“And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord will return. They will enter Zion with singing, everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.”

Isaiah 35:8-10

Traveling the broad road (Matthew 7:13-14) is easy. It is comfortable. Many people are going that way. The narrow road is a different story. It is difficult. It is hard to find. It is not heavily traveled. Many people deny or even resent its existence. Throughout history, God has raised up men who have attempted to lead large groups or movements of people onto the narrow road. Great men of the Bible like Moses, David and Paul led such movements. Post-Biblical men such as Luther, Wesley and Campbell did the same.

Today the International Churches of Christ, led by Kip McKean, is a movement of God marching down the narrow road. The momentum after only 16 years is amazing - nearly 70,000 disciples in 72 nations! As of July 1 disciples live and meet in all 50 states of the U.S. We know of no other movement since the first-century church that has grown so rapidly both numerically and geographically. Dr. John Vaughan, respected authority on church growth, states that according to available information, the L.A. Church of Christ is the fastest growing church of any kind in the United States. At the present rate of growth, ICC churches will be the largest churches of any kind in most of the biggest cities of the world by the year 2000.

The need for breaking away from the denominational world is abundantly clear. Both show the membership, attendance and percentage ratios of attendance to membership for 25 churches. One table is of the 25 largest mainline Churches of Christ in the world. The second table is of the 25 largest International Churches of Christ in the world. Only two of the mainline churches have an attendance that exceeds membership, and the average attendance is only 82% of membership. They are not even getting their members to church, much less getting visitors there. These churches are dying. For the ICC churches, every one of the 25 largest churches has an attendance at least 23% larger than its membership and the average is 59% larger!

Last month Gloria and I spent a couple of days studying the Bible with a middle-aged couple who are leaders in a major Protestant denomination. He is the lead pastor of a 2000-member church, yet only has an attendance of 700. While his church includes several millionaires, the mayor and other community leaders, he is discouraged by the overall spiritual deadness of his group. While on vacation in Hawaii, they were invited to attend the Oahu Church of Christ, which just happened to be meeting in their hotel. They came and were blown away by what they saw. When I shared about the amazing things that God is doing in HIS churches around the world, he was dumbfounded and excited. Pray for this couple as we continue long distance discussions with them.

The religious world is a spiritual desert. Pray that many ‘priests’ dying of thirst can have the chance to hear about God’s modern-day movement.

HOPE worldwide continues its role in ministering to the poor and needy around the world. In June, the L.A. Church and HOPE were involved in “Habitat for Humanity” in South Central Los Angeles, a work project sponsored by former President Jimmy Carter. In one week twenty low-income houses were built from the ground up. Former President and Rosalynn Carter worked for the entire week side-by-side with several L.A. Church evangelists and others. Chuck Bray and I were able to have lunch with Mr. Carter and had the opportunity to share what we are all about.

This issue of L.A. Story is about “Breaking Away.” It is the companion publication to KNN 7. May we continue breaking away from the broad road of contemporary denominational religion, mediocrity and traditions of men. May God lead us as we chart the course on the straight and narrow.
“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Acts 2:42

The first century church was radically devoted to the Scriptures, to each other, to worship and to God. This radical commitment is typical of the disciples who are called the International Churches of Christ – God’s modern-day movement to reach the world with the gospel in our generation.

Recently, the Christian Chronicle published a list of the 25 largest mainline Churches of Christ. That list is reprinted here along with a list of the 25 largest International Churches of Christ. We have added the year these churches began and the percentage of attendance to membership.

We offer this information for only one reason: while we appreciate our heritage from the traditional churches, the International Churches of Christ are clearly distinct in conviction, lifestyle and impact. After nearly 200 years of existence as a movement, the mainline Churches of Christ are mostly a southern U.S. church that is not growing. Their largest church outside the United States is in Nairobi, Kenya and has only 500 members. In just 16 years, God has blessed the International Churches of Christ to grow the largest churches in several of the largest cities of the world.

The distinction is clear: When people are disciples, they not only go to church, they take their friends and they take the gospel to the whole world through the power of God.

Source: Statistics are from June 1995, as reported by International Churches of Christ Administration.

• Every twenty minutes somewhere in the world, a new disciple is baptized.
• The International Churches of Christ have grown 26% in the last year.

25 LARGEST MAINLINE CHURCHES OF CHRIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Begun</th>
<th>Congregation</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Madison, Tennessee</td>
<td>4,361</td>
<td>3,180</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Richland Hills, Fort Worth, TX</td>
<td>4,065</td>
<td>2,678</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Golden Heights, Ft. Lauderdale, FL</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>Fifth Ward, Houston, Texas</td>
<td>2,543</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Waterview, Richardson, Texas</td>
<td>2,466</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Central, Amarillo, Texas</td>
<td>2,170</td>
<td>1,610</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Highland, Abilene, Texas</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>Highland Oaks, Dallas, Texas</td>
<td>1,966</td>
<td>1,532</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Broadway, Lubbock, Texas</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Central, Baltimore, Maryland</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Sunset, Lubbock, Texas</td>
<td>1,691</td>
<td>1,550</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Grieve Hall, Nashville, Tennessee</td>
<td>1,569</td>
<td>1,410</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Pleasant Valley, Little Rock, AR</td>
<td>1,550</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Mayfair, Huntsville, Alabama</td>
<td>1,538</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Southern Hills, Abilene, Texas</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1,430</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Golf Course Road, Midland, TX</td>
<td>1,475</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>South MacArthur, Irving, Texas</td>
<td>1,475</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Homewood, Birmingham, AL</td>
<td>1,472</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Garnett Road, Tulsa, Oklahoma</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Highland Street, Memphis, TN</td>
<td>1,304</td>
<td>1,256</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Kingsley Terrace, Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Woodmont Hills, Nashville, TN</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>115%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Schrader Lane, Nashville, TN</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>College, Searcy, Arkansas</td>
<td>1,293</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>139%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>North Atlanta, Atlanta, Georgia</td>
<td>1,240</td>
<td>1,175</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Averages: 1,907, 1,474, 82%

Source: Adapted from Churches of Christ in the United States, 1994, Mac Lynn. Figures do not reflect, in some cases, the most recent membership and attendance figures. Some churches were deleted for lack of statistics. Others may have been missed.

• According to Why Churches Grow, the average mainline church baptizes 8 people per year (6 are children of members) and keeps only 2 of those baptized.

25 LARGEST INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES OF CHRIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Begun</th>
<th>Congregation</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Los Angeles, California</td>
<td>5,246</td>
<td>8,576</td>
<td>163%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>New York City, New York</td>
<td>3,893</td>
<td>6,799</td>
<td>175%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Boston, Massachusetts</td>
<td>3,618</td>
<td>5,724</td>
<td>158%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Chicago, Illinois</td>
<td>2,811</td>
<td>4,344</td>
<td>158%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Manila, Philippines</td>
<td>2,259</td>
<td>3,620</td>
<td>160%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Moscow, Russia</td>
<td>2,154</td>
<td>2,818</td>
<td>131%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Atlanta, Georgia</td>
<td>1,772</td>
<td>3,375</td>
<td>190%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Mexico City, Mexico</td>
<td>1,651</td>
<td>2,546</td>
<td>154%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>San Diego, California</td>
<td>1,613</td>
<td>2,938</td>
<td>182%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>San Francisco, California</td>
<td>1,539</td>
<td>2,423</td>
<td>157%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Kiev, Ukraine</td>
<td>1,403</td>
<td>1,903</td>
<td>136%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>2,026</td>
<td>153%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Lagos, Nigeria</td>
<td>1,297</td>
<td>2,017</td>
<td>156%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Miami, Florida</td>
<td>1,248</td>
<td>2,129</td>
<td>171%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Sao Paulo, Brazil</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>1,903</td>
<td>162%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Novosibirsk, Russia</td>
<td>1,114</td>
<td>1,674</td>
<td>150%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>London, England</td>
<td>1,086</td>
<td>1,706</td>
<td>157%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>1,070</td>
<td>1,726</td>
<td>161%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Johannesburg, South Africa</td>
<td>1,051</td>
<td>1,805</td>
<td>172%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Toronto, Canada</td>
<td>1,032</td>
<td>1,593</td>
<td>154%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Kingston, Jamaica</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>153%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>St. Petersburg, Russia</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>123%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>1,514</td>
<td>194%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>130%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Abidjan, Ivory Coast</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>1,280</td>
<td>181%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Averages: 1,659, 2,657, 159%

Source: Statistics are from June 1995, as reported by International Churches of Christ Administration.

• Every twenty minutes somewhere in the world, a new disciple is baptized.
• The International Churches of Christ have grown 26% in the last year.
SPREAD OF MAJOR CHRISTIAN MOVEMENTS IN THEIR FIRST 50 YEARS

FIRST CENTURY CHURCH:
Thirty years after Jesus said, “Go and make disciples of all nations,” Paul wrote in Colossians 1:23: “This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven.” No movement since has turned the entire world upside down.

REFORMATION MOVEMENT:
In 1517 Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the Wittenberg church door and boldly began the Reformation Movement. Spreading throughout Europe, Luther, Calvin and Zwingli’s radical messages called people back to the Scriptures. This movement spawned most of today’s Protestant denominations.

WESLEYAN MOVEMENT:
During their lifetime, John and Charles Wesley spread their radical call to the Scriptures and righteous living throughout the British Isles as a reform movement within the Church of England. After their deaths, their followers began the Methodist Church.

RESTORATION MOVEMENT:
Thomas and Alexander Campbell and Barton W Stone called for radical commitment to the Scriptures and away from denominationalism. However, this unity movement splintered into many factions and has never had a great impact outside the United States.

GOD’S MODERN-DAY MOVEMENT:
Begun in 1979 by Kip McKean, it is called the International Churches of Christ. God has grown this movement from one church in Boston, Massachusetts, to 210 churches in 72 countries around the world in just 16 years.

Recently even MTV called the International Churches of Christ, “The fastest growing f...
A UNIQUE MOVEMENT
The International Churches of Christ are truly a unique movement in history. Here are 10 convictions that define our unique stand for God.

1 LOYALTY TO SCRIPTURE
We believe the entire Bible is God's Word and use it as the guide for our daily lives.

2 TRUE CHRISTIANS
True Christians are true disciples baptized as the Scriptures teach.

3 THE TRUE CHURCH
The true church is composed of only disciples. Jesus taught only one standard of discipleship.

4 UNITED IN LOVE
No other church is as mixed racially, socially, and economically in membership and in leadership.

5 UNITED IN PURPOSE
In no other church is every member expected to be involved in seeking and saving the lost.

6 WOMEN’S MINISTRY
In all of our churches, the Women’s Ministry Leaders powerfully lead the women.

7 UNPRECEDENTED COMPASSION
Every disciple is in some way involved with caring for the poor and needy HOPE worldwide, supported by our churches and led by Bob and Pat Gempel, has grown to 60 projects around the globe in only 5 years.

8 A UNIQUE WORLD PLAN FOR EVANGELISM
Our plan to evangelize the world is daringly unique: One church planting other churches that plant other churches to evangelize their area of the world.

9 RAISING UP NATIONAL LEADERSHIP
Most of our churches are led by nationals.

10 DEFINING CHRISTIANITY
Our churches are defining Christianity in nations like Russia and the Ukraine, Thailand, Japan, South Africa, China, the Middle East and even the United States.

WHY MOVEMENTS FAIL
All movements have failed to repeat the early Christians’ success because of:

- Failure to hold to the Scriptures
- Failure to sacrifice self and renounce sin
- Failure to love each other deeply
- Failure to remain unified
- Failure to keep their purpose clear

When any movement for God fails in these ways, it becomes just a Monument.

THE MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

THE BIBLE
"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples." John 8:31

LIFESTYLE
"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Luke 9:23

LOVE
"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:34, 35

UNITY
"May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me." John 17:23

PURPOSE
"This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." John 15:8

BAPTISM
"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19, 20

THE STANDARD
"The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch." Acts 11:26

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem . . . “ Psalm 122:6

The Gempels’ living room, where 30 would-be disciples gathered in Boston, Massachusetts, on June 1, 1979 for the first meeting of what is now known as the International Churches of Christ.

Elena Garcia-McKean, Women’s Ministry WSL (lower left), pictured with Megan Blackwell, Chris Fuqua, Robyn Williams, and Gloria Baird (lower right).

Sasha and Louisa Kostenko, with daughter Liza, new GSL’s in Russia.

L.A. STORY 8/13/95

form of alternative religion in the United States.”
Each of our World Sectors is responsible for evangelizing their area of the globe. Following are some of the growth centers in each World Sector:

**LOS ANGELES**
Kip & Elena McKean

- In only 6 years, growth from 40 to a weekly attendance of 9,000.
- Growth of over 1,200 disciples in the first seven months of this year.
- Record missions contribution of $3.3 million.
- Fastest growing church of any kind in the United States in 1994.

**COMMONWEALTH**
Douglas & Joyce Arthur

- New Delhi Church is the largest non-Catholic church in that city.
- First residents have now moved into Village of HOPE housing for 450 families of leprosy patients.

**MIDDLE EAST**
Cory & Megan Blackwell

- Some of the most challenging countries remaining.
- HOPE worldwide projects open doors in Beirut.
- New church plantings this summer.

**CHINA**
Scott and Lynne Green

- 8 year-old church of over 2,000 in attendance has planted 3 churches in China and one in Taiwan.
- More church plantings this summer including Olaanbaatur, Outer Mongolia, and Beijing, China.

**ACES (Africa/Caribbean/Empire State/the South)**
Steve & Lisa Johnson

- At nearly 7,000 on Sundays, the largest church of any kind in New York City.
- Third fastest growing of any kind in the United States, according to current information.
- Second fastest growing church in the Movement.

**Lagos**
First African church to break 2,000 in attendance.

**Johannesburg**
Nearing 2,000 in attendance, the most integrated church of any kind in South Africa.

**CHINA**
Scott and Lynne Green

- 8 year-old church of over 2,000 in attendance has planted 3 churches in China and one in Taiwan.
- More church plantings this summer including Olaanbaatur, Outer Mongolia, and Beijing, China.

**MIDDLE EAST**
Cory & Megan Blackwell

- Some of the most challenging countries remaining.
- HOPE worldwide projects open doors in Beirut.
- New church plantings this summer.

According to current information of Dr. John Vaughan, editor of Church Growth Today, “In 1994, the L.A. Church was the...
MILESTONES

DISCIPLES IN ALL 50 STATES

The Boston Church sent out the planting to Burlington, Vermont, this summer. The mission team is led by Scott Sweeney and Danielle Dunlop. Scott is a former Harvard varsity football player and Danielle is a graduate of Boston College. For the first time, God’s modern-day movement now has disciples in all 50 states.

200TH CHURCH PLANTED!

In July newlyweds Danny and Kwan began the church in Beijing, China. Danny was a lawyer and Kwan was an honor student. They have been discipled by Scott and Lynne Green and sent out from Hong Kong to lead the evangelization of China.

ALREADY 22 CHURCHES HAVE BEEN PLANTED IN 1995!

FRONTIER MINISTRIES

72 NATIONS REACHED – 94 WAITING

A real movement keeps moving into uncharted waters. Incredibly, there are now disciples in Beijing, China, and Beirut, Lebanon. God willing, there will be a church in Jerusalem soon.

We have 94 countries yet to reach by the year 2000. Some of them are the most difficult to evangelize. Yet it will be done by the power of God as disciples are willing to go anywhere, do anything and give up everything to accomplish this Great Commission.

Is it any wonder that God chose this hour for his movement? More than half of the people who have ever lived on the earth are alive right now. What is it going to take to finish the task?

The seed of the gospel planted in the hearts of men and women, and watered by the tears of the saints produces fruit in all nations.

In the first century, world evangelism cost the tears and the lives of the disciples. They freely shed the tears of sacrifice, rejection and persecution. Today the cost is the same.

GROWTH THROUGH FAMILIES

Honolulu, Hawaii

The greatest wish for Art and Cynthia Wong of Oahu was to see their wonderful family saved. They were able to bring their two beautiful teenage daughters, Kiera (a UCLA student) and Corrie, as well as Cynthia’s parents, Henry and Alice Leong, to Christ. Art is now training for the eldership in the Oahu church.

Stockholm, Sweden

Bill and Sally Hooper made a great faith decision years ago to quit their jobs and move to be a part of the great Boston Church and then to be a part of the LA mission team. Now they are in the Dallas Church where Bill serves as an elder. Their daughter, Leigh Anne, went on the original mission team to Moscow. After marrying another team member, Derek Vett, they planted the church in St. Petersburg, Russia. They now serve as Evangelist and Women’s Ministry Leader in Stockholm, Sweden. Derek and Leigh Anne recently had their first baby, Haley.

There are thousands of stories of families being reconciled through God’s Kingdom. With all of the painful family situations in the world, one fact is more and more amazing: In 16 years in God’s modern-day movement, there has never been a divorce between disciples who remain faithful to God.

fastest growing church of any kind in the United States.”