



Movements that change the world **- Steve Addison**

About Movements

Jesus founded a missionary movement that now spans the globe. As his followers we are called to continue his mission in the power of the Holy Spirit.

From biblical, historical, and contemporary case studies, *Movements* identifies the five recurring characteristics of dynamic missionary movements: white-hot faith, commitment to a cause, contagious relationships, rapid mobilization and adaptive methods.

This book is for anyone who wants to follow Jesus and change the world.



About the author

Steve Addison is a lifelong student of movements that renew and expand the Christian faith. Steve is married to Michelle, together they have planted churches, raised four children and now lead a thriving mission entity.

He has Bachelor degrees in Economics and Theology and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Fuller Seminary.

Steve serves as Australian director of Church Resource Ministries. Steve's calling is to spark church planting movements—everywhere.



Reviews

A thoroughly readable description of the dynamics of missionary movements, as well as how to initiate, maintain, and extend them.

—**Alan Hirsch**

Forge and Shapevine

author of *The Forgotten Ways*

Steve has done his homework and has the qualifications necessary to identify the core characteristics of movements. The good news is he does it in a way that enables all of us, not just the academics, to understand it.

—**Bob Roberts**

Glocalnet

author of *The Multiplying Church*

Steve synthesizes his vast amounts of experience, wisdom, and research into an easy-to-read book. We can benefit from all his hard work in a few hours of reading.

—**Neil Cole**

Awakening Chapels

author of *Organic Church*

Every so often a book comes along that fuels the flame that was started in my heart years ago when I was a young and on-fire world changer. I love this book!

—**Floyd McClung**

All Nations

Cape Town, South Africa

author of *You See Bones, I See an Army: Changing the Way We Do Church*

Practitioners and thinkers with a passion for mission will want to read and re-read this book.

—**Dr. Martin Robinson**

Together in Mission (UK)

author of *Metavista: Bible Church and Mission in an Age of Imagination*

An important book for our times—well-researched, well-written, and well-thought-out. Steve puts his fingers on the essential qualities that have defined movements of the Spirit throughout the ages. And the stories he tells—biblical, historical, contemporary, and personal—give us hope for fresh movements of God in our day.

—**Dr. Robert E. Logan**

CoachNet International Ministries

author of *Be Fruitful and Multiply*

As I read the manuscript I felt that I had met a long lost brother. I had to read it through in a single sitting. It pulled me through from start to finish. Steve vividly reminds us that Jesus did not found a religion, but a movement!

—**David Garrison**

International Mission Board, SBC

author of *Church Planting Movements: How God is Redeeming a Lost World*

I couldn't put it down till it finished rearranging my mind. This is a keeper!

—**Ralph Moore**

Hope Chapel, Hawaii

author of *How To Multiply Your Church*

Steve casts a compelling future vision by tracing God's discernible lessons demonstrated in movements. He taps into the heart hunger of the growing number of us that want to see God do something great.

—**Ed Stetzer**

missionologist and author of *Planting Missional Churches*



Synopsis

Jesus founded a missionary movement that now spans the globe. His followers are called to continue his mission in the power of the Holy Spirit.

A movement is a group of people pursuing a common cause. Movements are characterized by discontent, vision, and action. For good or for evil, movements change the world.

From biblical, historical, and contemporary case studies, we can identify five recurring characteristics of dynamic missionary movements.

1. *White hot faith*

The great movements of the Christian faith are unleashed through the presence and power of God in the midst of his people who are faithful to his Word, led by his Spirit, and engaged in his mission. Jesus brought his followers into the same ardent relationship he had with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. He sent them to the ends of the earth with nothing but the message of salvation and the reality of God's power.

2. *Commitment to a cause*

People who change the world live in alignment with their deeply held beliefs. They build environments that sustain and reinforce commitment to their cause. Their agenda for change brings them into tension with the world around them, but they are also deeply connected with their world. It's the combination of connection and distinction that enables movements to be catalysts for transformation.

3. *Contagious relationships*

The most important factor in a person's decision to adopt a new faith is a close and positive relationship with a committed believer. Missionary movements grow exponentially when the gospel spreads through networks of preexisting relationships. For continued growth, a movement must maintain open relationships with outsiders, and it must reach out into new, adjacent social networks.

4. *Rapid mobilization*

Missionary movements spread through the efforts of ordinary people. The rapid spread of the gospel requires the efforts of non-professionals who are not dependent on external funding and are not strictly controlled. Converts must immediately begin sharing their faith and planting new churches. The role of key leaders is to model effective ministry; they recruit and deploy workers, then train them on the job

5. *Adaptive methods*

To fulfill their mission, the most effective movements are prepared to change everything about themselves except their core beliefs. Unencumbered by tradition, movements feel free to experiment with new forms and strategies. Movements pursue their mission with methods that are effective, flexible, and reproducible which outlast and even surpass the influence of the first generation of leaders.

Conclusion

Jesus calls us to participate in a missionary movement that will one day reach every tribe, every language, every people, and every nation. These five characteristics point the way to how we can obey his call.



Ed Stetzer
www.edstetzer.com

Interview with Ed Stetzer

Ed: Why did you write *Movements that Change the World*?

Steve: A number of reasons. As a church planter I remember hearing Peter Wagner say, "Starting new churches is the most effective form of evangelism under the sun." I thought if that's true, then starting church planting movements could be even more effective.

I dived in to some church history and discovered that God was continually raising up movements for the renewal and expansion of the Christian faith. I learned that those movements are always on the fringes.

I began looking at Jesus as the founder of a missionary/missional movement that now spans the globe. I read Acts and Paul that way, and the lights came on.

Ed: You've identified the characteristics of dynamic movements. Tell us about them.

Steve: The five characteristics are: white-hot faith, commitment to a cause, contagious relationships, rapid mobilization and adaptive methods.

White-hot faith is the engine room of a dynamic movement. The apostle Paul was not converted by clever arguments but through a powerful encounter with Christ on the Damascus Road. We would not have had the Reformation without Martin Luther's struggle with the question of, "How can a holy God forgive a sinner like me?"

The secret of Jesus' life and ministry was his relationship of loving obedience to the Father and dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit. He drew his disciples into the same relationship and sent them out with no other resources.

A white-hot faith provides the motivation, energy and legitimacy to go change the world.

Next is commitment to a cause. For good or for evil, history is made by people committed to a common purpose. Nothing changes unless people care deeply and are willing take action. Jesus had high expectations of his followers. So high, that some of them walked away.

John Wesley was the founder of the Methodist movement. On one occasion he visited Bristol. When he arrived there were 900 people in the local Society. When he left 143 of them had been removed for various reasons: among them wife-beating, smuggling, and drunkenness. Wesley led a disciplined movement that changed the world.

The third characteristic of movements is contagious relationships. We are all just six handshakes away from everyone on the planet. Ideas, like viruses, spread from person to person and from group to group. In the age of the internet, contagious relationships are still the most important form of communication.

The most responsive people to the gospel are those who have recently seen someone in their world come to faith.

Whenever we see the Christian faith expanding exponentially, it's traveling across networks of preexisting relationships. We tend to focus on building quality relationships with a few. Jesus focused on connecting broadly and then through one responsive person, reaching households and villages. That's how we see the gospel spreading in Acts.

The fourth characteristic is rapid mobilization. Movements don't abolish the clergy, they just ordain everyone for ministry. What did Jesus do? He went after ordinary people and trained them on-the-job. His lecture on the nature of faith was conducted on a sinking boat in the midst of a storm. There was theological content integrated with life and ministry. Jesus grew leaders and released them to go and change the world.



You don't get dramatic expansion of a movement if everyone is a paid professional. If anyone is paid, they are paid to pioneer new fields and mobilize others. Whether they are in New York or New Delhi, that's what missionaries do.

The last characteristic is adaptive methods. The best illustration of an adaptive method I can think of is the game of soccer. Soccer is the world's game played by hundreds of millions and watched by billions. Why? I think it's because you can drop a ball at the feet of a three year old and she can start playing. It may take a lifetime of practice to master the game, but only an instant to begin enjoying it. Try doing that with American or Australian football.

Adaptive methods are simple, flexible and transferable. That's one reason why Jesus taught by telling stories. A good story, like the prodigal son, can be told by anyone to anyone, even across the boundaries of culture and time.

Movements are unchanging when it comes to their core message and beliefs. At the same time they are willing to change everything else to get that message out and get the job done. Unfortunately we have churches that are unwilling to change their methods, but quite happy to change the heart of the gospel. They have the worst of both worlds and the fruit is clear to see.

Ed: What are some contemporary examples of adaptive methods?

Steve: I think the Alpha program is a good example. The strategies that David Garrison and others have developed to fuel church planting movements around the world is another clear example.

Ed: Where are the examples of dynamic movements today?

The exciting news is they are mostly in the developing world—Africa, Asia, Latin America. These are also the regions of greatest population growth. Today, over 90% of new Christians will come from these regions. Expect that trend to continue.

In the US I've been encouraged by leaders such as Neil Cole, Bob Roberts, Ralph Moore, Tim Keller, Mark Driscoll, and Jimmy Seibert who emphasize multiplication of disciples, workers and churches rather than just growth. A growing band of leaders are seeing the church as a movement.

The whole missional/emerging discussion has helped unfreeze us all in our understanding of church. If that can be combined with a commitment to the Gospel and a passion to multiply disciples it could be quite fruitful.

Ed: Who do you want to reach with the message of this book?

Steve: As I wrote I thought of a number of actual people. A couple leading a home group who have led eighteen people to Christ in the last year, and are wondering if this is the beginning of a new church. I thought of the leader of a large church in Kenya that is growing leaders who plant churches in the suburbs and the slums. I thought of a young woman in China who has come to faith, and is now reaching her friends with the gospel. I thought of a church leader in New York with a vision to reach the cities of the world.

Ed: What difference do you hope the book will make?

Steve: I want people to discover Jesus as the leader of a movement that changes the world.

Ed Stetzer

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Fact sheet

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