

EXTENDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD...ONE PERSON AT A TIME.

# ONE-TO-ONE®

SPRING 2017

## LIVING CELLS

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From the Editor

# Returning to Gatlinburg

BY STEPHEN SIMPSON

## Beautiful mountain village recovers from a deadly, devastating wildfire

**I**N LATE NOVEMBER, 2016, what began as a small set fire high in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park suddenly exploded into a horrific inferno that engulfed thousands of surrounding acres and settlements. Not only were hundreds of structures destroyed, but tragically, fourteen people died and more than 170 others were injured.

Much of the damage centered around the lovely mountain town of Gatlinburg. On the first night of the fire, my wife and I watched the news with our hearts in our throats, with tears, and with prayers, deeply concerned for many of our friends in the area. The Park Vista Hotel, which has been our host since 1999 for the **CSM Gatlinburg Leadership Conference**, was surrounded by flames with no escape for approximately 40 staff members and guests.

Initially, many news organizations falsely reported that the hotel had burned down. In the chaos of the fires, it's understandable how some reporters could be confused. Miraculously, however, the Lord spared every person at the hotel and the building itself. Now, just six months later, we are preparing to gather there once more, May 9-11, for our conference. The hotel has been open for all of 2017 and most of the main streets of Gatlinburg are undamaged or under repair.

However, many scars from the tragedy remain across the region. We've heard from many friends in the area how thankful they are for all of the CSM community who plan to be in Gatlinburg and for the many more who have been praying and supporting in other ways. It is appropriate that the theme of this year's conference is *"Living Cells"*, even as we watch the miraculous re-birth of Gatlinburg. Spring has come to the mountains, and with it comes new life.

We have an opportunity to demonstrate, in many tangible

ways, our support for the wonderful people of Gatlinburg, and especially, the staff of the Park Vista Hotel. It's been wonderful to get to know so many of the people there. Many of them suffered great personal loss in the fire. Please keep them in your prayers. Being there, especially now, is one way we can show that we care.

In 1960, Charles Simpson and his bride, Carolyn, celebrated their honeymoon in Gatlinburg. Little did my parents realize then how important the town would become to our family and ministry. As I write this, my Mom is with the Lord and my Dad prepares to celebrate his 80th birthday among his spiritual family and friends. We hope you can be there with us!

Our speakers this year will include **Larry Kreider** and **Dr. Michael Peters**, as well as my Dad and yours truly. Visit us at **[csmpublishing.org](http://csmpublishing.org)** or call (888) 811-2CSM for more information.

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Keynote

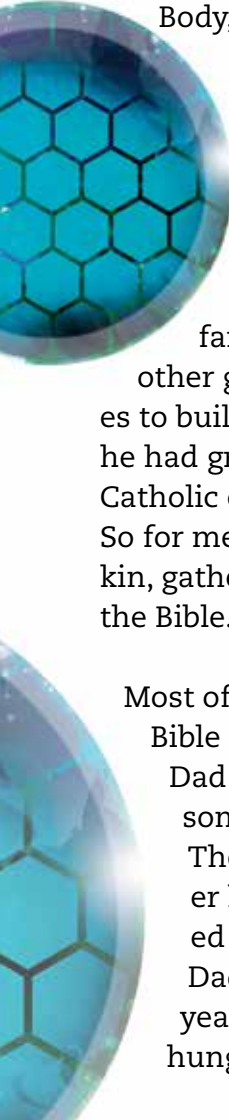
BY CHARLES SIMPSON

We can discover a secret that  
made the Early Church alive,  
dynamic, and growing.

# LIVING CELLS

**IT TAKES HEALTHY CELLS** to make healthy bodies. Cells are the smallest structural and functional units of any organism. They draw life and give life to the whole body as they are nourished and cleansed by the blood.

The Lord begins both natural and spiritual life in cells. When healthy, these cells multiply and resource the larger purpose of a living body. My purpose here is to examine the basic unit of the Lord's spiritual body. The same Lord who created natural bodies has created His spiritual Body, and there are parallel patterns.



My father was a missionary in Southeastern Louisiana among French-speaking people. He met my mother there and my very early years were there. Dad met mother as he started a small home group in her family's home, and as time progressed, other groups began. There were not resources to build a church building like the one which he had grown up attending, nor was the local Catholic culture of that era favorable to that. So for me, "church" was a few people, mostly kin, gathered in a home to worship and study the Bible.

Most of those gathered had never owned a Bible and were hungry to hear it taught. Dad was eager to teach from the Bible and sometimes used the Catholic version. The service would often go into the later hours because those gathered wanted to hear what the Bible said. Though Dad continued in the ministry for over 60 years, he never forgot the excitement and hunger in those home groups.

## THE EARLY CHURCH

Many years later, after I began the ministry, I too would reflect back on those days, though we had long ago moved from that area. Though I was pastoring in a traditional setting, I continued to see that Jesus ministered in Peter's home where He healed Peter's mother-in-law. Jesus ministered in Mary and Martha's house where He taught. He ministered in Matthew's house where He met with sinners, in Simon's house where a woman washed His

feet, in Zacchaeus' house, and in the Upper Room where He offered the New Covenant. Jesus went from village and house to house preaching the kingdom of God. The Kingdom is His government in our lives.

Jesus sent the twelve disciples, and later the seventy, to villages, two-by-two, to find a home that would receive them, and then do there what Jesus had done. They returned rejoicing, and He rejoiced with them. After Pentecost, the apostles continued His pattern, and Jerusalem was filled with small groups of believers who



were eating together, fellowshiping, and following the apostles' model. They were opposed, persecuted, beaten, and sometimes killed, but they grew and multiplied by the power of the Holy Spirit. They were dynamic!

Jesus had not only given His disciples a growth strategy; He had given them abundant life and it spilled out into the whole world.

## MY AWAKENING

I grew up believing the Bible, even when I failed to live it. But after pastoring for seven years



and preaching the Bible, I wasn't seeing what I preached. Then, out of personal spiritual hunger, I visited a small group of people who had been baptized in the Holy Spirit, and there I was also baptized in the Holy Spirit. Our church then began a radical transformation as we sought to rediscover our spiritual foundations. It was a most exciting and fruitful season, like I had not ever witnessed.

Our transformation was not without opposition and mistakes, but small groups began to study the Bible through new eyes and seek the Lord together. We thrived and multiplied in spite of it all. Then, in 1966, we discovered a pamphlet, "The Lost Secret of the Early Church". It came with a warning letter which said that house churches had been tried and failed. Nevertheless, we began to organize small groups. Some succeeded and some failed.

History tells us that idealists often have a good idea but fail in the implementation. Something vital may have been missing or the timing was wrong. But it had succeeded in the New Testament, and most revivals had begun in small groups. Those revivals began, not because of a plan, but because people were desperately hungry to see God move and gathered to pray with close friends.

## HOUSE TO HOUSE

It is amazing how our genetics drive us even when we are not aware. In 1971, I resigned from pastoring that church and moved to another city far away. There, I gathered a small group of friends into our home, and we sought the Lord. We all wanted to be together to seek the Lord. Eventually each one who gathered became ministers and began other groups.

In 1973, I moved to the Mississippi Gulf Coast where we had some long-time spiritual relationships. They were already meeting in homes. Those cells were exciting, as they were being filled with the Holy Spirit and studying the Word. There was again opposition and criticism, but the groups were alive and vibrant in fellowship. Eventually, the cells became 55 in number over a 100 mile radius. We gathered them all together once a month and they numbered one thousand or more people. Then, some leaders began moving to other areas and starting cells.

The opposition was often fierce and some called us a "cult", though our theology and practice was biblical. Perhaps for practical reasons, or in reaction, we purchased land and built meeting facilities. Over time, we became "normal". We had endured a

three-and-one-half year IRS investigation and severe opposition. We had eventually won, but something was lost.

Cells became "care groups". Groups became more introverted and "teams" were formed to support church life: worship teams, ministry teams, outreach teams, ushering teams, and many more. All served useful purpose, but to be candid, they were not living cells. Church growth was not cell multiplication. As leader, I take responsibility for that.

Today, at the age of 80, I've been in the ministry for 62 years, and still regularly speak to churches, some large, some small. But I still long for the intimate, exciting fellowship of close friends seeking the Lord and sharing what He is saying through His Word. In saying this, I do not disparage the noble efforts of those churches who seek to teach and live the Word of God. But my genetics and the Bible still call me to meet with close friends around the presence of God to seek His will for the days ahead.

When the Lord is speaking to us personally, we often are able to see it everywhere in the Bible. God created the family, and the family is a cell. Daniel had three friends who prayed together. The early Church was composed of cells. Jesus went house to house. After His

Ascension and after Pentecost, the apostles followed His pattern house to house. The apostle Paul often closed his letters with greeting from his “house” to their houses, and they read his letters from house to house (see Romans 16:5, 10, 11; I Corinthians 16:15-19; Colossians 4:15).

All of the above examples and others were dynamic, multiplying, and interrelated through apostolic oversight. They were fruitful multipliers. They crossed all kinds of boundaries to eventually overtake Rome, in spite of demonically-inspired persecution.

## INGREDIENTS

Let me be clear. I have no qualms with traditional churches; Jesus loves it all, and I do as well. Mostly, they are a vital part of Christ’s Body and serve great purposes. I am not advocating an organization in conflict with tradition. I believe that for any group to succeed, there are necessary ingredients. My definition of success may vary from some others, but success is obedience to God and His Word. Here are some ingredients that I believe to be vital to a small group or a living cell:

**Organic Life.** Such groups are led together by the Holy Spirit. That makes them Christ’s Body. This is more than a program. These people share a common

life with each other and the rest of the body of Christ. The blood of Jesus circulates, nourishes, and cleanses (see 1 John 1:7).

**Spirit and Word.** The Holy Spirit quickens us and the Word of God establishes us, guides us, and is our bread. The Word is the lamp and light for our path. It provides the boundaries of fellowship and behavior; it is the seed that we sow (see Mark 4:14). When we live His Word in the Holy Spirit, we have and share Kingdom life (see Romans 14:17).

**Prayer.** Prayer and Bible study must remain the heart of our gathering as it was for the apostolic groups. Learning how to pray biblically and fervently can be learned as we observe the Word of God and those who model that for us. Real prayer is beyond repeating worn phrases, comes from the heart, and is done in faith. I suggest careful study of Jesus’ prayer in John 17. All things are possible if we believe.

**True Friendship.** Jesus called His disciples “friends” because He was able to give all to them, including His life, and all that the Father told him. They were the ones that He “fervently desired” to be with before He suffered. They were His covenant brothers with whom He established the New Covenant (see Luke 22:14-20).

**The Desire To Edify.** The purpose of our gathering is to build up and unify (see Ephesians 4:12-16).

To succeed in God’s purpose, we assist each other. We are not there to tear down, but to speak the truth in love. When Peter questioned Jesus about John’s future, Jesus’ answer was, “What is that to you?” Our fellowship must remain positive. If there are offenses, they must be handled according to Matthew 18. It is important that all be allowed to share while others listen. No one should dominate the conversation.

**Outward Focus.** While we are together for fellowship, prayer, and Bible study, an outward focus is essential to the Lord’s commission and helps us avoid the descent into introversion and introspection. We must keep those who do not yet know the Lord on our minds and in our prayers. Make room for testimonies of those who bring others to Christ.

**Multiplication.** Healthy cells multiply. We are not only reaching the needy and lost, we are reproducing healthy cells. That means training new cell leaders. That can be done inside and outside of the actual gathering. Not everyone will be called to create or lead a new cell. I recommend books by Larry Kreider and Dr. Michael Peters to help in understanding cell life and leadership.

Do an occasional review of the cell to see if it is meeting these criteria. If not, discuss it

*“Living Cells” continues on page 14.*



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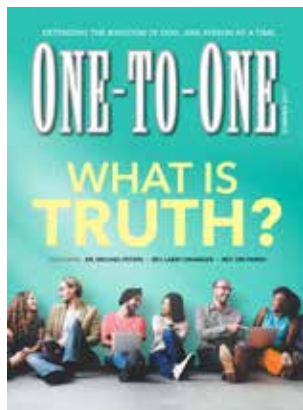
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# COMING SUMMER!



## What Is Truth?

*Featuring:*

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## Discipleship

**J**ESUS STARTED a revolution 2000 years ago by taking twelve men and training them to take His place. I call it the mentoring revolution. Paul followed Jesus' example when he discipled Timothy, Titus, and Silas. The mentoring concept was sporadically picked up by faithful believers in Christ throughout the past 2000 years, but mostly mentoring has been left undone. Now is the time for each of us to pick up the responsibility of making disciples in order to continue the revolution started by Jesus Christ.

Jesus set the revolution model by spending most of His time with His disciples. They were young. In fact, Jesus chose John, believed to be only seventeen years of age and the youngest of The Twelve, to be his closest disciple. Although Peter, James, and John were part of Jesus' inner circle, He also spent lots of time with The Twelve. Jesus' style of disciple-making has been all but lost in many parts of the body of Christ today. Yet through this simple concept, Jesus reproduced Himself in His followers to start a revolution. Call it what you want—mentoring, discipling, coaching, or spiritual fathering or mothering—it is all basically the same thing: caring about the spiritual growth of another believer.

# join the

YOU CAN BE WORLD CHANGER BY REACHING ONE

Paul really grasped this truth of disciple-making when he told Timothy, "You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:1-2). Paul exhorted Timothy, who was his disciple, to find another disciple who would disciple another.

## YOUR TURN

It is our turn to continue the revolution. Here is my question for you: Who is the "disciple" who you are mentoring after the pattern of Jesus and Paul the apostle? I want to issue you a challenge that has the potential to revolutionize the world. This challenge is for every believer, not just pastors and missionaries. We are ALL called to make disciples according to Matthew 28:19-20. I challenge you to ask God for just

one reproducing disciple (a person willing to mentor someone else down the road). Just one! Sure, if you want to disciple more, go for it as God gives you the grace. But start with one, and encourage your "disciple" to disciple someone else next year. It might be someone at work or school, a family member, an acquaintance from church, a friend or a person who is lonely.

Pray and ask someone to meet with you every few weeks (maybe for coffee or tea) and talk about your walk with Jesus, and then pray for them daily! Mentoring is not hard. It does not require understanding rocket science! You can change the world, one person at a time!

Every year, the pattern repeats as you each find another person to disciple who is also a reproducing disciple. In ten years, by discipling only one person each year who is also discipling one person, you will have been responsible to disciple directly or indirectly more





BY LARRY KREIDER

# revolution

PERSON, AND TEACHING THEM TO REACH ONE.

than 1,000 people! You will have joined Jesus' mentoring revolution, which becomes exponential!

After 20 years, mentoring only one disciple each year, guess how many disciples you will be responsible for? More than one million! That's right – more than one million. Do the math if you do not believe me. After 30 years, the number jumps to more than one billion! No wonder the enemy has been hiding this truth from God's people and keeping us busy in activity—even religious activity. Now for the naysayers and doubters who are saying, "But we do not live in a perfect world. What if it breaks down?" My response is simple: I will take a half million disciples if it breaks down. I'd even rather have a few new believers than none at all.

I have been blessed to be making disciples for almost forty years. I have stumbled many times, but it has been worth it all. I have used

many different books and resources written by various authors as a tool to help me mentor others. I have also had the privilege of authoring and co-authoring 32 books during the past twenty years.

But hands down, the books that I have written that have helped the most people by far are the small 12-book Biblical Foundation Series books that are being used for personal mentoring and disciple-making. Literally hundreds of thousands of these books are being used as practical tools to help disciple the next generation. Believers study one chapter a week (or one booklet a week) and discuss these vital foundational truths with their "Timothy." It doesn't matter to me which tools or books you use – many good resources are available in the body of Christ. The most important thing is that we are making disciples according to the model and mandate of Jesus.

## RENEWED FAITH

When you and I help others with the basics of Christianity, guess what? We also receive renewed faith from His Word to live victoriously above the struggles of daily life. No matter how talented or experienced we are, if we want to excel at anything, we must practice the fundamentals—the essentials. It's true for playing the piano, it's true for playing baseball or golf, and it's true for living the Christian life. Discipling a younger believer brings us back to the basics of Christianity again and again.

This is my one-person challenge for you as you approach this next season of your life: Ask God to help you find your "Timothy." Take a step of faith and help them grow in Christ. So then, who is your 2 Timothy 2:2 reproducing disciple going to be? Let's continue the revolution! **121**



**LARRY KREIDER** serves as International Director of DOVE International, a network of 350 cell-based congregations around the world. He has been in ministry since 1971, planting cell groups, writing many books and articles, and speaking globally. He and his wife, LaVerne, reside in Lititz, Pennsylvania.





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wisely

BY STEPHEN SIMPSON





# “If I can say anything to younger people, it’s this: Please pay attention to wisdom from trustworthy people who care for you.”

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**I’VE BEEN BLESSED** with wonderful parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, pastors, teachers, coaches, mentors, and friends. My wife and daughter are amazing. Whatever good I’ve done in life comes from God and from these people.

Recently, I had some time in prayer and reflection regarding my life thus far. I like to tell people that I am older than Bieber and younger than Bono. In the past few years, two superstar singers, born within weeks of my own birthday, passed away. The world mourned the loss of Whitney Houston and George Michael. There’s nothing like death to remind you of your own mortality.

My late Swedish maternal Grandmother had a saying, “Too soon old, too late smart.” I wish I had been a better listener, especially when I was young. Wise and loving people tried to give me great advice and help, but too often, I ignored it and brushed it off. The price I’ve paid for not listening has been astronomical. The more I realize this, the more painful it is.

## KEYS FOR LIFE

If I can say anything to younger people, it’s this: please—for your sake and for the sake of all who will depend on you—invest your life wisely. Please pay attention to wisdom from trustworthy people who care for you.

Seek out godly mentors and follow them. Be purposeful in surrounding yourself with good influences. Rid yourself of toxic relationships. Avoid foolishness. Good investments pay huge dividends; bad investments bring ruin. And we are always investing, one way or another. Every choice has a consequence.



Be slow to anger and quick to forgive. Bitterness is poison; get rid of it. Don’t get offended, don’t be reactive. Be a realist, but also be an optimist. Don’t be negative or whiney. *Perpetually peeved people are boring!* Be thick-skinned and tender-hearted. Laugh easy and often. Make others laugh. Proverbs 17:22 says it’s good, like medicine. Speaking of Proverbs, read one chapter a day. You can read the whole book in one month that way, and next month, start again! Let

it work its way into your heart and mind until it guides your steps.

Always give thanks to the Lord and remember His blessings to you. Remember that every good gift comes from Him (see James 1:17), and all you have belongs to Him. Honor Him with your tithe (giving your first 10% of income back to Him). Avoid debt and impulse buying. Save money. Be generous to others. While you’re still young, get a strong financial advisor who has integrity and insight; follow a financial plan. Do this now!

Take care of your physical and mental health. These are precious gifts. Steward them well.

## CLOCK IS TICKING

Above all, have reverence for God and His Word. *Enjoy a personal relationship with Him through Jesus Christ.* Be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Walk wisely, because life is a lot shorter than you think it is. Every moment is a gift from God. How will you invest the time, resources, and energy that you have? It’s not too soon to start praying and thinking about it. **121**

**STEPHEN SIMPSON** is the Editor of One-to-One Magazine and the President of CSM. For information on speaking availability, please call (251) 633-7900 or e-mail [onetreesteve@bellsouth.net](mailto:onetreesteve@bellsouth.net).

# Happy 80th Birthday CHARLES SIMPSON!

**T**HIS APRIL, PASTOR CHARLES Simpson celebrated his 80th birthday during a very active season of ministry. Born in 1937, in New Orleans, LA, he spent his early years living with his parents, who were faith missionaries and church planters among the south Louisiana bayou communities.



In the early 1940s, his father answered a call to pastor the First Baptist Church of Theodore (Alabama), where Charles was raised and graduated from High School. At age 18, in 1955, Charles also answered God's call into ministry and two years later became the pastor of Bayview Heights Baptist Church in Mobile, Alabama. He completed his B.A. degree at William Carey College and studied at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.



Charles married his beloved wife, Carolyn, in 1960. By 1964, he had experienced the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the church was swept up in a historic revival that affected the world. Charles became recognized as a pioneer in the Charismatic Movement and in raising up cell groups.

In 62 years of ministry, he has traveled millions of miles in ministry across the globe, disciplined leaders, planted churches, written numerous books, published magazines and pastoral letters, released hundreds of audio Bible teaching messages, and had a profound, wonderful impact on countless lives.

Charles and Carolyn had three children and nine grandchildren before Carolyn passed away in 2008; they were married for 47 years. Charles resides in Mobile and continues to travel and write extensively. His most recent book, ***Straight Answers to 21 Honest Questions About Prayer***, was published by Chosen.



Please join with us in thanking God for his life and ministry and in praying for many more years of good health, strength, provision, and joy. [121](#)

with other leaders. Every cell needs to be accountable to oversight; otherwise "wild cells" can develop. We call that "cancer". A review can help us to evaluate and determine if we are succeeding. When we sense that improvements can and should be made, we call that "growth".

There are no perfect cells because there are no perfect people. But we can be in the perfecting and maturing process if we follow the guidelines and incorporate these ingredients. Many have already begun this process. If you have not, consult with a mature leader before you begin. After you begin, stay in contact with other leaders who are doing it well. And, I pray God's blessings upon you. These are amazing promises to those who do so biblically! Remember the words of Jesus:

*"Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:19-20).* [121](#)

**CHARLES SIMPSON** is Editor-in-Chief of *One-to-One Magazine*. He ministers extensively throughout the United States and among the nations. In 2017, he celebrates his 80th birthday and 62 years of ministry.



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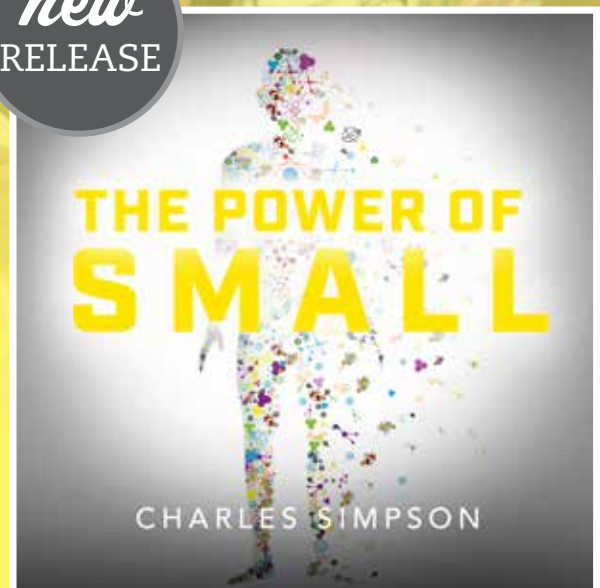
In this new message, Charles shares about the pitfalls of Western culture—the idea that “bigger is better”, even in spiritual things. Many Christians are buying into the idea of more church programs, buildings, and activities. But what can God do with small groups of believers committed to Him and His mission? Charles Simpson shares fresh insights on an eternal truth!

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