

I took some liberty in fixing a few typos as I compiled these quotes ~nick

Excerpts from [House Churches and the Discipling of the Nations](#)

by Grace Wiebe (*A good overview of some positive aspects to Home Churches*)

Over the past number of years especially, there has been a growing movement of house churches around the world which God seems to be initiating in order to help to not only reach with the Gospel many of the missed segments of society, but also to more effectively disciple/nurture believers and encourage the development of spiritual growth/godly character by providing the loving accountability we all need through the kind of close fellowship that is available in house fellowships.

House churches can be catalysts to help us to mature spiritually and to be what God has called us to be as we live out our part in the Great Commission. They can also solve many of the financial struggles of more traditional models of churches and of seeing the Great Commission financed by freeing up funds which would not normally be available. They can help to raise up, train and multiply many servant leaders (resulting in much less burn-out of leaders).

House churches can also provide a built-in protection system in case of persecution, can provide the sense of family and belonging that we all long for (Generation X especially seems to cry out for this dimension) and address the daily authentic reality of living the Christian life in the world today.

...The very nature of house churches enables them to be an excellent incubator, nursery, Bible school, hands on training site, etc. for new believers all the way to seasoned/mature believers. It is also poised to be an excellent missionary sending support network.

House churches can provide an excellent atmosphere to develop and utilize the spiritual gifts. House churches are more flat in structure and less administrative, thus cutting out a lot of the bureaucracy and politics that are often involved in more traditional models, so they are freed up to move and act quickly as God leads. The low administration also keeps down the costs which can be then be directed towards the poor and reaching the lost.

The 5-fold ministry of pastor, teacher, apostle, prophet and evangelist can also be utilized throughout the networks to bring greater effectiveness to these churches, and to multiply new pastors, teachers, apostles, prophets and evangelists to also train and multiply others with these giftings.

Although house churches also have imperfections because people are still people, the nature of house churches is a model extremely conducive to Christ's command to DISCIPLE THE NATIONS, especially as house churches network with other house churches in their community and throughout their country, and indeed with other house church networks throughout the world.

Excerpts form [The Priesthood of All Believers](#) by Karl Ketcherside
(I love the passion here and enjoy Mr. Ketcherside's analysis, it's convicting!)

[Before the Reformation, the Protestant world had forgotten] the implication of a universal priesthood of believers and there is every evidence that many of us are treading on the same dangerous ground. The spirit of professionalized service rendered purely for the fee involved, rears its head throughout the land, and betokens the fact that it still lives to quench the Spirit and to throttle the gifts of the many.

He [Jesus] said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." But the sons of God now come, not to minister, but to be ministered unto. The result is that the saints are no longer participants in the arena but spectators in the grandstand. The pulpit has become the sacred precinct of a professional dramatist and resembles the stage for a polished performance rather than a speaker's stand for sharing life and experience of others of like precious faith.

Thus the congregation is spoon-fed for years and never learns to feed itself. The fact is that we are delivering babies who never intend to grow, enrolling students who never intend to graduate, enlisting soldiers who never intend to fight, and registering racers who never intend to run. Our motto has become, "There he is Lord, send him!" The Ship of Zion is no longer manned by a volunteer crew working for sheer love of the Captain, but is steered by a pilot and an assistant pilot, while the remainder are paying passengers who are going along for the ride and complaining as they go.

It is astounding how much dead weight there is in the average congregation. Dead timber produces no fruit and dead weight must be dragged along. ... If we are going to be honest in our plea for restoration it is time that we begin to revolutionize our thinking so that every soldier will don the armor and every child of God will be active in ministering.

Our greatest source of power is not in the pulpit but in the lives of those in the pews. We must meet the challenge of making every man of God a man of might. We must use our meetinghouses, not for parading profound pulpiteers, but for training soldiers in spiritual combat. We have moved the battlefield into the mess hall and our brethren spend their time fighting each other.

Excerpts from [The House Church Movement](#) by Lorin Smith

"I do not believe that buildings as sacred places of worship are Biblical," Krupp maintains. "That is a part of the old economy. When Christ came, he did away with the old economy. The New Testament tells us that we, as the people of God, are now the temple of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told the woman at the well in John 4 that the time was coming when the worship of God would no longer be confined to or connected with a [sacred] place (i.e. The Temple in Jerusalem). Our whole lifestyle is to be an act of worship."

"We talk about the church building when we go to the church; they spoke of the congregation that met in someone's house. {See Romans 16:5, 1 Corinthians 16:19, Colossians 4:15 and Philemon 2). Spared both the expense and concern of erecting and maintaining a building, they were soon involved in expending all available funds in loving service to the widows and orphans. Charity was not the incidental, fractional percentage of the budget. It was the budget." - Calvin Guy, from [Pilgrimage Toward The House Church: Controls That Limit the Spread of the Gospel](#)

"I see three basic phenomena as to why people are exiting the institutional church: After years of starving in the institutional church, they leave to find New Testament realities. People study their Bibles and come to perceive a huge chasm between the New Testament and the traditional church and often they leave after the institutional church disregards their pleas for change." Jon Zens, editor of the quarterly publication, [Searching Together](#)

A number of observers suggest that the movement back to the simplicity and intimacy of New Testament Christianity is a part of God's overall plan to prepare the church for difficult days ahead.

"If persecution erupts in America, the house church model could suddenly be very common, as churches that require immense weekly overhead to operate could fold virtually overnight." - Jon Zens

"We are witnessing the beginning of the Underground Church in America - a church that will take lessons from the brethren who have survived in other countries where Faith has been and is still persecuted. If we in the West think we will escape what our brethren have suffered for centuries merely because we trust that 'things like that can never happen in America,' we are closing our eyes to reality. The persecution will come from our own households and from the churches themselves." Al Dager, from [Media Spotlight](#)

It's amazing that a practice that is so clearly revealed in the New Testament has today been vilified by Christians, who react more out of fear and a sense of loyalty to tradition than a commitment to Biblical truth. Christians in the Greco-Roman world of the first century met in homes and Paul's letters in the New Testament were addressed to house churches. In fact, the very first church established on European soil was in the town of Philippi in the home of Lydia, a successful businesswoman from Thyatira. (Acts 16:15) Paul, in his epistles to the Christians in Rome, Corinth and Colossae exhorts them to greet churches that met in the homes of fellow believers. (Romans 16:3-5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15)

"The home church movement, of course, is not monolithic," Zens pointed out. "I have no idea where it will go in the next five years. But I know this, no movement will prosper long if it does not center on exalting Jesus Christ and obeying His Word."

Excerpts from [15 Theses](#)

(From the forward of Wolfgang Simsons book, [Houses that Changed the World](#))

God is changing the Church, and that, in turn, will change the world. Millions of Christians around the world are aware of an imminent reformation of global proportions. They say, in effect: "Church as we know it is preventing Church as God wants it." A growing number of them are surprisingly hearing God say the very same things. There is a collective new awareness of age-old revelations, a corporate spiritual echo. In the following "15 Theses" I will summarize a part of this... For some, it might be the proverbial fist-sized cloud on Elijah's sky. Others already feel the pouring rain.

1. Church is a Way of Life, not a series of religious meetings

Before they were called Christians, followers of Christ [were] called "The Way". One of the reasons was that they have literally found "the way to live." The nature of Church is not reflected in a constant series of religious meetings led by professional clergy in holy rooms especially reserved to experience Jesus, but in the prophetic way followers of Christ live their everyday life in spiritually extended families as a vivid answer to the questions society faces...

2. Time to change the system

...Luther [reformed] the content of the gospel, but left the outer forms of "church" remarkably untouched; the Free-Churches freed the system from the State, the Baptists then baptized it, the Quakers dry-cleaned it, the Salvation Army put it into a uniform, the Pentecostals anointed it and the Charismatics renewed it, but until today nobody has really changed the superstructure. It is about time to do just that.

4. From Church-Houses to house-churches

Since New Testament times, there is no such thing as "a house of God". At the cost of his life, Stephen reminded unequivocally: God does not live in temples made by human hands. The Church is the people of God.

5. The church has to become small in order to grow big

Most churches of today are simply too big to provide real fellowship. They have too often become "fellowships without fellowship." The New Testament Church was a mass of small groups, typically between 10 and 15 people. It grew not upward into big congregations between 20 and 300 people filling a cathedral and making real, mutual communication improbable. Instead, it multiplied [sideways], like organic cells... Then, if possible, it drew all the Christians together into citywide celebrations ... The traditional congregational church as we know it is, statistically speaking, neither big nor beautiful, but rather a sad compromise, an overgrown house-church and an under-grown celebration, often missing the dynamics of both.

6. No church is led by a Pastor alone

The local church is not led by a Pastor, but fathered by an Elder, a local person of wisdom and reality. The local house-churches are then networked into a movement by the combination of elders and members of the so-called five-fold ministries (Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Evangelists and Teachers) circulating "from house to house," whereby there is a special foundational role to play for the apostolic and prophetic ministries (Eph. 2:20, and 4:11.12). A Pastor (shepherd) is a

very necessary part of the whole team, but he cannot fulfill more than a part of the whole task of "equipping the saints for the ministry," and has to be complemented synergistically by the other four ministries in order to function properly.

7. The right pieces - fitted together in the wrong way

8. God does not leave the Church in the hands of bureaucratic clergy [except he did]

No expression of a New Testament church is ever led by just one professional "holy man" doing the business of communicating with God and then feeding some relatively passive religious consumers Moses-style. ...

To enable the priesthood of all believers, the present system will have to change completely. Bureaucracy is the most dubious of all administrative systems, because it basically asks only two questions: yes or no. There is no room for spontaneity and humanity, no room for real life. This may be OK for politics and companies, but not the Church...

9. Return from organized to organic forms of Christianity

The "Body of Christ" is a vivid description of an organic, not an organized, being. Church consists on its local level of a multitude of spiritual families, which are organically related to each other as a network, where the way the pieces are functioning together is an integral part of the message of the whole. What has become a maximum of organization with a minimum of organism, has to be changed into a minimum of organization to allow a maximum of organism. Too much organization has, like a straightjacket, often choked the organism for fear that something might go wrong...

10. From worshipping our worship to worshipping God

...Since this regular performance-oriented enterprise called "worship service" requires a lot of organizational talent and administrative bureaucracy to keep going, formalized and institutionalized patterns developed quickly into rigid traditions. Statistically, a traditional 1-2 hour "worship service" is very resource-hungry but actually produces very little fruit in terms of discipling people, that is, in changed lives. Economically speaking, it might be a "high input and low output" structure. [wow, this isn't an observation I usually hear]

Traditionally, the desire to "worship in the right way" has led to much denominationalism, confessionalism and nominalism. This not only ignores that Christians are called to "worship in truth and in spirit," not in cathedrals holding songbooks, but also ignores that most of life is informal, and so is Christianity as "the Way of Life." Do we need to change from being powerful actors to start "acting powerfully?"

11. Stop bringing people to church, and start bringing the church to the people

The church is changing back from being a Come-structure to being again a Go-structure. As one result, the Church needs to stop trying to bring people "into the church," and start bringing the Church to the people. The mission of the Church will never be accomplished just by adding to the existing structure; it will take nothing less than a mushrooming of the church through spontaneous multiplication of itself into areas of the population of the world, where Christ is not yet known.

13. From Denominations to city-wide celebrations

... Jesus simply never asked people to organize themselves into denominations. In the early days of the Church, Christians had a dual identity: they were truly His church and vertically converted to God, and then organized themselves according to geography, that is, converting also horizontally to each other on earth.

...Authenticity in the neighborhoods, connected with a regional or citywide corporate identity will make the Church not only politically significant and spiritually convincing, but will allow a return to the biblical model of the City-Church.

14. Developing a persecution-proof spirit

They crucified Jesus, the Boss of all the Christians. Today, his followers are often more into titles, medals and social respectability, or, worst of all, they remain silent and are not worth being noticed at all. "Blessed are you when you are persecuted", says Jesus. Biblical Christianity is a healthy threat to pagan godlessness and sinfulness, a world overcome by greed, materialism, jealousy and any amount of demonic standards of ethics, sex, money and power.

Contemporary Christianity in many countries is simply too harmless and polite to be worth persecuting. ... Coupled with the growing ideologisation, privatization and spiritualisation of politics and economics, Christians will, sooner than most think, have their chance to stand happily accused in the company of Jesus. They need to prepare now for the future by developing a persecution-proof spirit and an even more persecution-proof structure.

15. The Church comes home

Where is the easiest place, say, for a man to be spiritual? Maybe again, is it hiding behind a big pulpit, dressed up in holy robes, preaching holy words to a faceless crowd and then disappearing into an office? And what is the most difficult, and therefore most meaningful, place for a man to be spiritual? At home, in the presence of his wife and children, where everything he does and says is automatically put through a spiritual litmus test against reality, where hypocrisy can be effectively weeded out and authenticity can grow.

Much of Christianity has fled the family, often as a place of its own spiritual defeat, and then has organized artificial performances in sacred buildings far from the atmosphere of real life. As God is in the business of recapturing the homes, the church turns back to its roots, back to where it came from. It literally comes home, completing the circle of Church history at the end of world history.

Excerpts from [Miscellaneous House Church Quotes](#)

"You mistakenly think we conceal what we worship since we have no temples or altars. Yet how can anyone make an image of God? Man himself is the image of God. How can anyone build a temple to Him, when the whole world can't contain Him? Even I, a mere human, travel far and wide. So how can anyone shut up the majesty of so great a Person within one small building? Isn't it better for Him to be dedicated in our minds and consecrated in our innermost hearts - rather than in a building?" Mark Felix in [Octavius](#), 2nd Century A.D.

"When the church was very young, it had no buildings. Let us begin with that striking fact. That the church had no buildings is the most noticeable of the points of difference between the church of the early days and the church of today. In the minds of most people today, "church" means first a building, probably something else second; but seldom does "the church" stand for anything other than a building. Yet here is the fact with which we start: the early church possessed no buildings and carried on its work for a great many years without erecting any." Ernest Loosley in his book, [When The Church Was Young](#)

Reformer Martin Luther wrote in 1526: "The right kind of evangelical order cannot be exhibited among all sorts of people, but those who are seriously determined to be Christians and confess the gospel with hand and mouth, must enroll themselves by name and meet apart in one house, for prayer, for reading, to baptize, to take the Sacrament, and exercise other Christian works. With such order it would be possible for those who did not behave in a Christian manner to be known, reproved, restored, or excluded, according to the rule of Christ (Matt. 18:15). Here also they could, in common, subscribe alms, which would be willingly given and distributed among the poor, according to the example of Paul (2 Cor. 9:1-12). Here it would not be necessary to have much or fine singing. Here a short and simple way of baptism and the Sacrament could be practiced, and all would be according to the Word and in love. But I cannot yet order and establish such an assembly...In the meantime I will call, excite, preach, help forward it, until Christians take the Word so in earnest, that they will themselves find how to do it and continue in it." Quoted by E. H. Broadbent in [The Pilgrim Church](#)

Excerpts from [The Significance of House Church Meetings](#) by Dan Beaty

...Centuries later, the church itself has become the focus... and the kingdom of God that Jesus both established and instructed us to anticipate and pray for has become virtually forgotten.

Individual and corporate spiritual growth is Kingdom growth. House churches, however, find no need to retain each member that grows up in the midst. When the time is appropriate, some of those who have matured can be directed of the Lord to extend the work elsewhere. Since no effort to maintain a huge organizational structure is required, the time and resources can be more efficiently used to build up the redeemed people, who are the church.