



The 21st Century Church, part 1 of 4—

Helping to Grow a 21st Century Church

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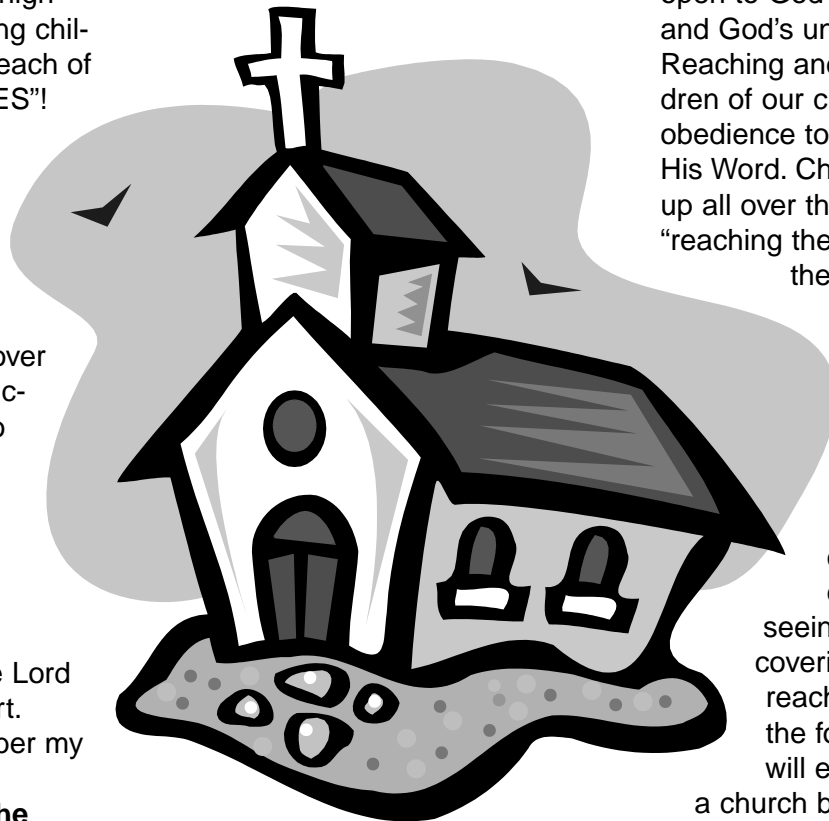
Is reaching children important for growing a 21st century church? Is it really worth the investment of time, talent, and resources to invest in the young families with children in your community? Does God's Word instruct us to place a high importance on reaching children? The answer to each of these questions is "YES"!

In Deuteronomy 6:5-9, God's Word gives three distinct commands to the church. These commands are repeated over and over as key distinctives for the Church to follow if it is to grow, remain healthy, and raise up a godly next generation. These commands are:

- Verse 5: Love the Lord God with all your heart.
- Verse 6: Remember my commands.
- **Verse 7: Teach the children.**

How remarkable it is that God sifted all His commands to the church down to these three commands; remember to love Him, remember His commands,

and teach the children. Of all the important instructions God could have given the church, He chose these three. Teaching the children was vital and still is vital to obeying God's plan for the church today.



Reaching kids has never been more important than it is today. Every rampant sin is targeted toward the world's children, causing our early teen society to be a gun-toting, sexually perverse, and disease-rampant

society. This demands that churches, pastors, and leaders stand up and say, "We will reach the children!"

God knew that children are open to be shaped. They are open to God's Spirit, God's law, and God's unchangeable love. Reaching and teaching the children of our cities is in direct obedience to God's direction in His Word. Churches are rising up all over the country and are "reaching the children"—and they are growing their churches in the process.

Here at the National Children's Ministries Agency of the Assemblies of God, we are seeing churches rediscovering this need of reaching the children. In the following articles we will examine 1) growing

a church by meeting the needs of young families with children, 2) how to invest in children's ministry in your church and the responsibilities of senior pastors in building a quality children's ministry, and 3) the discipleship goals of the Children's Ministries Agency.

Questions For Further Study—

1. What scriptural mandate challenges you to reach and disciple children for the Lord?

2. What issues do children in your community face that would challenge you as a Christian to reach them with the gospel?

3. Name three issues you must address in order to grow a 21st century church.
 - 1)

 - 2)

 - 3)