

10,000 TENS



WHY SLOW, STEADY, ROOTED GROWTH IS BETTER FOR EVERYONE

HOW MANY DOES YOUR STADIUM HOLD? How many showed up for church this morning? How many played in your tournament? These are the questions of our time, begging one common response: impress me with numbers.

Everyone will admit that bigger isn't always better. Romantic dinners, walks on the beach, an evening reading a good book—you don't want a crowd for these. But when it comes to common measures of success, numbers tops the list. "Sails up" may be a great way to spend a weekend afternoon, but "sales up" is what gets the heart pumping in the board room of most any organization.

It's easy to march down this line of thinking when it comes to ministry. More in the door means more who hear the message. The more who hear the message, the more will turn to Jesus. And that's a good thing, right? Well, maybe. Let's hold on to that thought for bit.

In Deuteronomy 7, Moses the prophet was revealing a pastor's heart when he prepared the people of God to enter the Promised Land. This was the moment they had been

waiting forty years for. Now was the time when God's plan would be enacted. Surely he would have them storm the land, raid the cities, and take over in the countryside in one climactic sweep. Not so.

Moses told the people, "The Lord your God will drive out those nations before you, little by little. You will not be allowed to eliminate them all at once, or the wild animals will multiply around you." Moses was repeating the plan God had revealed to him in Exodus, and that plan would be enacted *little by little*.


Any corporate leader who has led a surge in franchise development will tell you that there are dangers in growing too fast. You may not have the infrastructure you need, or you may not properly anticipate the variations from one market to the next. God was sending his people the same message as they prepared for this long-anticipated change in the community landscape: Go too fast and you won't be able to handle the troubles you encounter.

At Links Players, the core of what we do is developing local Links Fellowships. These are Bible studies planted in and around the places where people play golf. They are put in the ground, so to speak, one at a time.

We told you to hold on to the thought of large numbers. Now consider if our goal were to impact 100,000 people for Jesus. We could hope to go about this in two ways:

**build TEN groups of 10,000, or
build 10,000 groups of TEN.**

We would choose the latter every time. In the graphic at the right, we list several reasons why. But the most important reason of all may be that we are fallible, prone to mistakes in judgment and in practice. We trust God to override our poorer efforts, but we also trust the wisdom of his ancient words. Take it slow. Raise up leaders in every "tribe." Settle into strong communities.

This is a hyper-local approach, and it may not look "big" in any one place. But we can assure you that 10,000 TENS equals 100,000 well-rooted men and women of God. That's the excitement and the impact we're looking for! 

What we like about developing 'many smalls'



People know people. *The bigger your groups, the less of chance there is for the leaders to really know them. 10,000 TENS mean people really get to know each other. And in a hyper-local setting, these people are praying for each other face-to-face and speaking the Scriptures directly into one another's lives.*



Leaders and the Lord. *Think about how many God-seeking, God-hearing leaders are needed when you have TEN groups of 10,000. That's right, you need ten such leaders. But when you have 10,000 groups of TEN, you need 10,000 such leaders (at least!). That means you have 1,000 times more leaders seeking God and waiting to hear from him, all on behalf of their small group of people who are able to closely see this seeking modeled for them. That's how disciples are built.*



Impact through nimbleness. *While bigger ships may be more impressive, they still take a long time to turn. When groups are small, they are better equipped to respond to the needs of each other and needs around them. And when these groups are spread across many locales, they each have a sharper sense of how to get the job done where they are.*

LINKS PLAYERS

facilitates the planting of Bible studies where people play golf, that many may be transformed by Jesus Christ.

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