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Central Florida District Church of the Nazarene

# Pastor to Pastor

A note from your District Pastor, Dr. Larry Dennis



Monday, December 17, 2012

Dear Pastor,

Church attendance in America is the highest by far at Christmas.\* For many, it will sadly remain a mere annual tradition. Our good friend Russ Bredholt recently sent me an article entitled: **7 Reasons America Has Not Been Reached for Christ** by Greg Stier. Needless to say it grabbed my attention. I've taken the liberty of reducing it down to seven bullet points, in the hopes that it interests you enough to read the entire post ([full article link here](#)). I must admit my heart is convicted and personally shamed . . . let me know how you responded.

**Mission Area Blitz, January 2013:** Earlier this month I sent you a letter with the details, dates and locations of our upcoming January Mission Area Blitz meetings. Your participation along with your leadership is extremely important. An email to all Team Central lay leaders will be sent this Wednesday.

Here again are the dates:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Mission Area</u>	<u>Location</u>
Tuesday, Jan. 8 @ 7pm-9pm	Tampa & Northwest	Tampa Cross Pointe
Thursday, Jan. 10 @ 7pm-9pm	Lakeland	Lakeland Eastside
Tuesday, Jan. 15 @ 7pm-9pm	Orlando North & Northwest	Metro West
Thursday, Jan. 17 @ 7pm-9pm	Space Coast	Rockledge
Tuesday, Jan. 22 @ 7pm-9pm	West Coast	Clearwater
Thursday, Jan. 24 @ 7pm-9pm	Orlando South	St. Cloud

**Pensions & Benefits:** I wanted to share with you a recent letter I received from Director, Don Walter. It included a helpful list of answers to frequently asked questions ([click here](#)).

**Save the Date:** **2013 Pastor's Soul Retreat** will be March 5, 6 & 7. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Tim Green, Dean of Trevecca's Millard Reed School of Theology & Christian Min. and Professor, Old Testament Theology & Literature

Warm Christmas Blessings,



## **"7 Reasons America Has Not Been Reached for Christ"**

### Summary Notes:

Virtually every city in the United States has an abundance of Bible-believing faith communities. Millions upon millions of Christians attend these churches and, yet, this country is not reached for Christ yet. Why?

1. **We have outsourced the work of evangelism.** We have delegated, relegated and abdicated our outreach efforts to those who have the "gift" of evangelism. We wait for the next festival or outreach to come to town before we even think about this God-given duty. After all evangelism is the domain of the greats like Graham, Palau and Laurie, not common people. Right? Wrong!
2. **We have lost our sense of urgency.** Take hell out of the equation and evangelism seems like a nice, but not necessary, activity. Put hell back in and suddenly everything changes. Suddenly souls are at stake and time is a wastin'. We start to reach out like there is no tomorrow...because there may not be for those who don't know Jesus.
3. **We are ashamed of the gospel.** I believe that many Christians are secretly ashamed of this catalytic "narrow minded" message. We live in an inclusive culture that values every path so when we proclaim Jesus to be the only path it can lead to mockery, marginalization and mayhem. And nobody likes being mocked...so most keep their mouths shut when it comes to evangelism.
4. **Many Christians can't explain the gospel.** Put a microphone up to the face of most church-going Christians and you'll discover that most can't clearly explain the gospel message in a simple way. (*For a simple way to share the good news go to [www.dare2share.org/gospeljourney](http://www.dare2share.org/gospeljourney).)*
5. **Church leaders are not leading the way.** They may pull off an outreach every now and again. Ask your pastor or youth leader . . . to tell you the people they are currently engaged in an evangelistic conversation with and you may be surprised...and disappointed. If the spiritual teachers in the church aren't sharing their faith personally then why would we be shocked if their students are failing at Evangelism 101.

6. **We have forgotten how to pray.** When church services spend more time in announcements than intercessory prayer then you know something is broken. If we want to reach every person in this nation with the good news of Jesus we need God to act on our behalf. We need Him to soften harden hearts and open closed doors. We need to pray like we mean it.
7. **Churches don't mobilize their young people to share the gospel.** The vast majority of those who come to Christ do so by the age of 18. So why aren't more churches discipling their youth to engage evangelically with their peers? We know that the demographic most likely to believe our message is young people. But, a quick look at most church budgets tells us that isn't where our money is being invested

Read more at <http://www.christianpost.com/news/7-reasons-america-has-not-been-reached-for-christ-86004/#63m3qpdmqG8fKPST.99>

\* USA Today/Gallup Dec. 10-12, 2010

*'I have never met an effective pastor with an ineffective prayer life'*



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