

## A Big Step of Faith By Roy Goodlet

In Florida I was the minister at the Grove Park Christian Church for 14 years. During that time I was able to see what other churches in the area were doing. There were two churches in our county that seemed to be what I would call dysfunctional. They would have good times and bad times. Ministers were coming and going every few years. In my own mind I said, "I would never want to be the minister of either one of those churches." After my 14 years at Grove Park I was asked if I would come and take on a part-time position at one of those churches. About 10 years ago I was asked to be the interim minister at the other church. And who ever said God doesn't have a sense of humor?

Let me tell you how the first church went from dying to growing. The leadership took a bold move to step out on faith, and to say it was accepted by everyone would not be the truth, but that bold move saved the church, and today it is a growing church with a sense of vitality. They sold their church building. They changed their name. They rented a large area in a strip mall, because they did not have the money to build on the property they owned. To summarize what they did, they buried the old church and birthed a new one.

The purpose of any church is not to enjoy what you have, or to be content with the ways things are, but to rebuild walls of ministry to a lost and dying world. And, it may take a huge step of faith to do so.

We can summarize the ministry of any church with 5 words that start with the letter "P." Property, the Purposes of God, Programs, Personnel and Prayer. In what order of importance would you put these subjects so your church can be all God would have it to be? I believe you would agree with me that the first two would be the Purposes of God and Prayer. After that Personnel and Programs are important, and I believe the least important is Property. I am not saying we should not put an importance on having our church Property look nice and fully functional, but many churches cannot move forward when they make Property their number one issue of importance. They love their Property so much that they would put it before the Purposes of God.

This reminds me of the new preacher in a church of about 200 people. His prayers were, "God get the obstacles that hinder us from growing out the way." They immediately fell to 100 people, and then the church grew to about 2000. I am not saying you should weed out people whose faith is not as strong as others in any church family, but I am saying that any church needs to keep its eyes on the purpose of the church.

By the way, the second church is presently making a similar bold move of faith.

*Roy Goodlet is a retired minister and a member of Murphy Church of Christ. Email him at [royfcc@yahoo.com](mailto:royfcc@yahoo.com).*