

ARE YOU COUNTING WHAT MATTERS? A Letter to My Spiritual Family
Bob Young

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, in multiplied churches and places around the world,

Most of you do not need to be reminded that Easter is coming. Many churches, perhaps most, have a plan to attract people and increase attendance for Easter Sunday. An attendance increase is normal—Christians who do not attend regularly will show up, all at the same time, for Easter.

The reminder we do need is this. No matter how many people show up, how many Easter eggs are hunted, how many good things may happen—these are not indicators of how things are going down at the church house. These say nothing about how God is blessing your church. The success of multiplied ministries is not defined by “buildings, bodies, and budgets.”

I have been watching God’s people and our churches for over fifty years. We measure and post numbers—mostly attendance and contribution. If you know what DBR means, you probably also remember that in years past some churches published the number of daily Bible readers.

In my work as evangelist / minister, I kept track of numbers. Churches grew, doubled, and tripled. When I saw an “accountability board” on Facebook recently, I was reminded of things that made a difference in my ministry—numbers I kept track of. (I write about numbers, but numbers represent specific people.) In ministry, the lists and numbers I tracked were a little different than those on the board pictured at left. My goal was to spend at least 25% of my time among non-members, the unchurched, and potential prospects. I noted and tracked these numbers...



MARCH	
VISITORS	97
PROSPECTS	29
COMPASSION CARDS SENT	302
VISITS MADE	95
BIBLE STUDIES	4
BAPTISMS	6

- Spiritual contacts and conversations (non-members and members).
- Visitors to our regularly scheduled classes and assemblies.
- Visits made to non-members; visits made to members.
- Personal evangelistic Bible studies set up and in progress.
- Individual personal evangelistic Bible study sessions.
- Responses: membership, restoration, prayer, baptism.

Jan and I made it our goal to be in the home of every church member during the first year of a new ministry. In subsequent years, we used the printed church membership directory to make certain we maintained personal contacts with all the members—calls, cards, visits, shared activities.

I pray that our church buildings will be filled and overflowing on Easter. I pray that God’s people will do the things most likely to keep the momentum and bring more and more people under the Lordship of Jesus. Remember this truth: “We Measure What Matters to Us.” The more important question is: What Matters to God? God will hold us accountable! A good beginning point would be for us to hold ourselves accountable!