

This section, again made up of five-minute lessons, discusses the important topic of „the church in the context of a spiritual movement“. In this first lesson, I present a small overview of what the whole section is about. (An essential contribution to the idea of **movement** is also the section called „**God’s Heart and the Four Fields**„.)

Development of the **official census in the Czech Republic** over the last few decades clearly shows a significant increase in the number of **spiritual seekers who do not join** the institutionalized church. I don’t know what your experience is, but our long-term contact with non-believers and especially with new believers clearly confirms this trend of our people moving away from the organized church.

Let’s also take it from the other side. How do the believers perceive their church environment in relation to non-believers. Let’s say you had a good spiritual conversation with an unbelieving neighbor. Would you be happy to invite him to your church? Only a few Christians will quickly say, yes! By perceiving the invitation of an „unprepared“ non-believer to your church as somehow „inappropriate“, you confirm the trend from our census! And the „inappropriateness“ of inviting someone from outside to ordinary church activities is often one of the important reasons why believers **do not share** about the Lord Jesus at all!

Main parts of section G. The Church as a movement

a. **STORIES (G02 - G05)**

The first few lessons in this section summarize the **stories** we have experienced with people who have just believed. If we really care about salvation of the spiritually lost and about development of God’s kingdom in our country, I take these stories as one of the starting points, why we should once again deal with the topic of „church and movement“ in a very practical way and look for usable ways in God’s word with a view to completely new believers and at the same time to unconverted seekers. (It is clear, I hope, that I am not dealing with the reconstruction of existing congregations.)

b. **BIBLICAL BASIS (G06 - G11)**

The second set of lessons in this section brings substantial **biblical foundation**. For example, how the **term** translated by the word „church“ is used in the New Testament or the **images** by which the church is represented in the Scriptures, then the biblical

functions of the church and who should perform those functions, and also the observation of the New Testament church as a movement and what to imagine I the word movement . And other biblical stimuli.

c. **PRACTICAL APPLICATION (G12 - G18)**

The third group of lessons brings the **practical application** of the biblical foundation. We go through the proven elements of so-called simple church **meeting**, which any disciple of Jesus can start and guide after a little practice. In simplicity, there is a way of passing it on to other disciples, without lacking depth.

It may be useful for you that you can test all the functions of a simple church in advance, for example with a mission team or a small group of Christian co-workers. Especially if you are just starting to connect with non-believers and there is a small group, please do not overlook the lesson on the church as a network. Some sincere believers have become so focused on their own ministry that they have become lost in solitude or even burned out. A network of co-workers and small churches is often an important prevention here! If you have no other option, we would consider practical „network“ support also for you too!

Who is this section for?

To be sure, I emphasize **who this section is intended for**. I am creating the entire Bridges to People project for Christians who want to learn tried-and-tested approaches to Czech non-believers. This **section on the church as a movement** will mainly serve:

- a. to those who have gone through the Bridges to People training or have carefully watched and **PRACTICE** the principles from the previous sections and are looking for ways for new people that they have won for Jesus or that they are looking at with the hope that they will soon believe.
- b. The principles from this section can also be very useful for those who are going to start something new **IN A NEW PLACE** with people from outside.
- c. Our strongest motive for this section on the church is a huge **DESIRE FOR A MOVEMENT**. We want to see the Czech Republic and Slovakia covered with new simple churches, with which new disciples you can start! In our country, we are still



looking forward to the movement, but we are watching its realization from afar in a number of countries, even in the so-called Western world.

I've sent my preparation for the key parts of this section to about 25 Czech and Slovak church leaders, who actively serve unbelievers: several pastors, elders and leaders of youth or other ministries. I have gratefully incorporated their suggestions into these lessons, and it is likely that more lessons will be created gradually.

Lord Jesus, I thank You for the external freedom in which we live now. That we can share your Good news without limitations and create new communities. Please change the attitudes of your followers so that we may use this great freedom diligently and effectively while it is available to us...