

# Mission of the church: dimensions and effects

JAIR WALTER PATRÍCIO RIBEIRO

Instituto Paracleto

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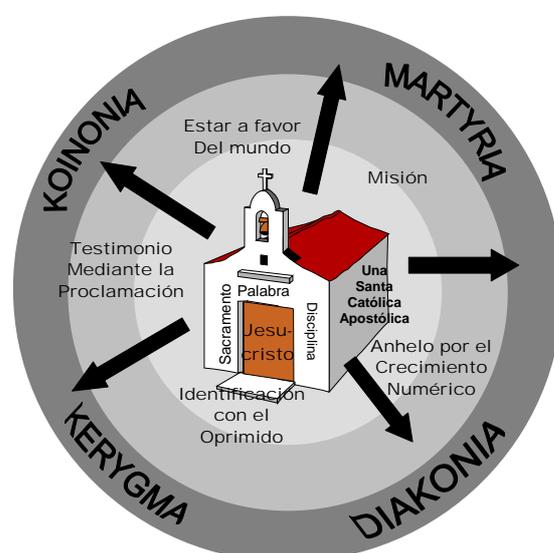
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## 1 PREFACE

This work presents a model to evaluation of churches as function of their dimensions of Mission.

The original model was based in teaching of doctor Carlos Van Engen about missionary vision of local church. Van Engen, is coordinator of PRODOLA (Programa doutoral latino-americano). He noted that many churches evaluate inside local context with structures and activities. They don't include expressions as impact in family, workplace and community. In his book, *Povo missionário, povo de Deus*, Van Engen shows the dimensions in missionary function of the church.



- The consistent growth of Brazilian church, above population growth since 80's, enforces a need of restructuring of local churches to attend more people seeking answers and opportunities. The leadership has found new ways of government, resource management and alliances;
- Evaluation tools have been used to support strategic planning in many churches;
- The Brazilian society has called the Brazilian church to dialogue and more cooperation because of its localization and influence above poorest segments of population.

## 2 FUNDAMENTATION

**John Stott** wrote in *'Signs of live church'*:

... Luke indicates four signs of church full of the Holy Spirit. These are characteristics in whole church opened to presence and Power of Holy Spirit.

- Apostolic teaching
- Communion and mutual helping
- Reverent and warmful worship
- Persistent evangelization

He forgot the apostolic mission because He follows Bishop Ignatius when he said: "I don't give order or commandment as to do Peter and Paul, because I'm not apostle to condemn men".

**Millard Erickson**, in his work *Introduction to Systematic Theology* list following functions of church:

- Evangelization
- Edification
- Worship
- Social Action

He identifies communion as way of edification and teaching for discipleship purpose. The Apostolic mission focus only to provide needs of poorest people.

Looking outside of church mission, Moody resume the mission in three special aspects: "as martyria (evangelism), diakonia (service) e koinonia (communion)".

"The evangelism is the Center of church's mission in every situation". This evangelism include the narrative about Jesus Christ and his work, as well appropriated application of Christ message in whole ministry. The evangelism is done partially through service and Christian relationship context. The three-fold target of mission is resumed to share gospel of Jesus including the discipleship process.

**Howard Snyder**, writer of *Vinho novo e odres novos*, says “...the church of New Testament enjoy a life of worship, communion and evangelism. These functions are showed by NT words as leitourgia ("service" or "worship", from latin word "liturgia"), koinonia ("communion" or "relationship") e martyria ("evangelism" or "testimony"), from expression martyrdom when ancient Christians were sacrificed because their testimonies about faith in Jesus Christ. The church is a community or brotherhood of shared life, a koinonia. The church gives testimony about God action in Jesus Christ and his experience, can its testimony (martyria) leave to martyrdom. Above all, church develops the worship service (leitourgia) to God, not only by expressions and songs, but through a entire life of worship.

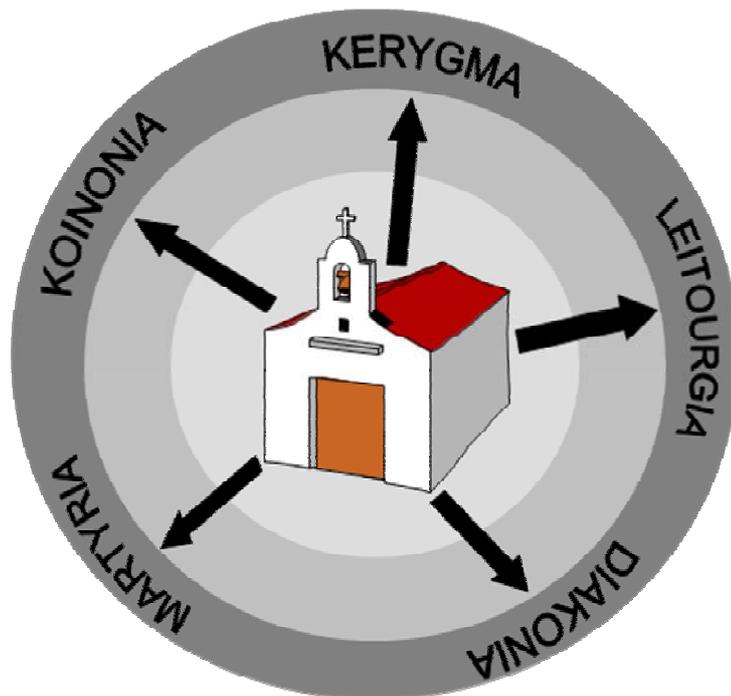


The model above, that Snyder call “ecology of church’s life”, shows key-points in testimony of church are evangelism, service and justice. He adds, “... In biblical ecology, evangelism and service merge with prophetic testimony of church to Justice Improvement, renewing community and pointing to Kingdom of God.

Snyder includes discipline, sanctification and spiritual gifts as components of ecology of church’s community life. “The purpose of whole function is edification of God’s family by the way that it can to live to worship of Grace’s Glory. (Ef 1.6)”

Snyder declares: “The worship deliver the church for God’s Kingdom. We don’t praise God only He has done, but for that He will yet. By faith, we preview and celebrate

the Day when will sing: the kingdom of world turn of our Lord and His Christ (Ap 11.15). “In worship, we celebrate God’s economy (oikonomia) and His Kingdom.” He identifies a teaching as segment of worship when bring church to hear God’s voice through Scripture read, taught or talked of different ways. “In worship, the movements of celebration and instruction are action of Holy Spirit and the Scripture.”



### **3 INTERVENTION**

- These works seek to develop an evaluation tool with focus in Church Mission. A survey strategy was created to divide the Mission in five dimensions that are mentioned by many writers and leaders;
- Every church will randomly distribute questionnaires seeking to include each generation. These groups will answer five assertions in every dimension. Overall, there will be 25 questions;
- The data will be computed and analyzed to build a radar graph that shows strong dimensions and their interactions with other characteristics.
- The final report shows if strong dimensions combine with perception of participant's survey.

### **SCALE**

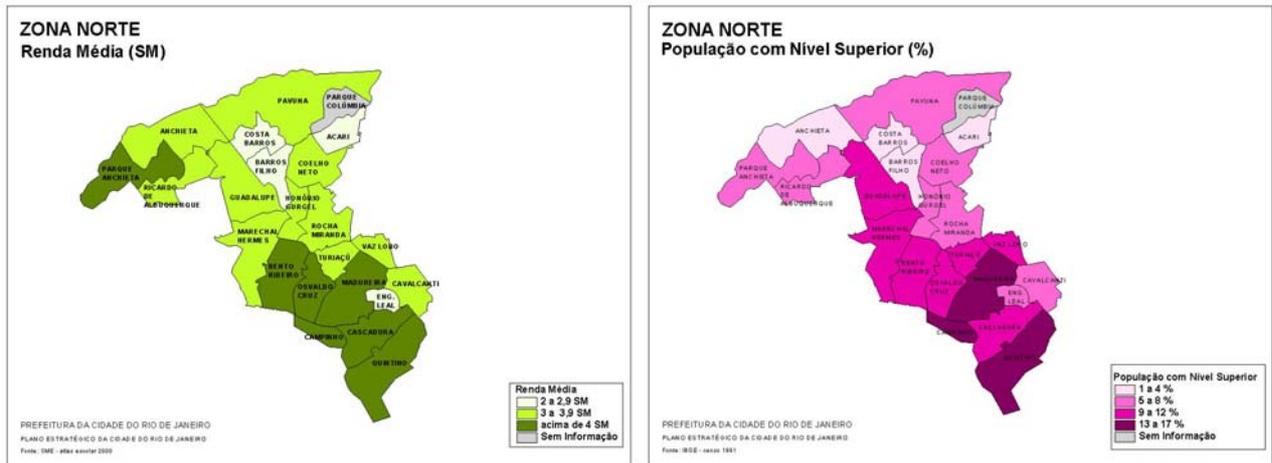
- There are different ways to qualitatively measure: Likert scale and Guttman scale. We use in this work Likert scale.
- Represents a group of variables expressed in an assertion to which ask participant mark his choice among five answers. Each answer is linked to numerical value.
- In Likert scale, answers to each assertion modulate as intensity graduation. These Scales present categories (dimensions) balanced and with same answers available to participants questionnaire.
- Overall, four to seven categories are used. In our case, we use five standard answers: 1- never, 2- little, 3- sometimes, 4- enough, e 5-much.

## 4. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT

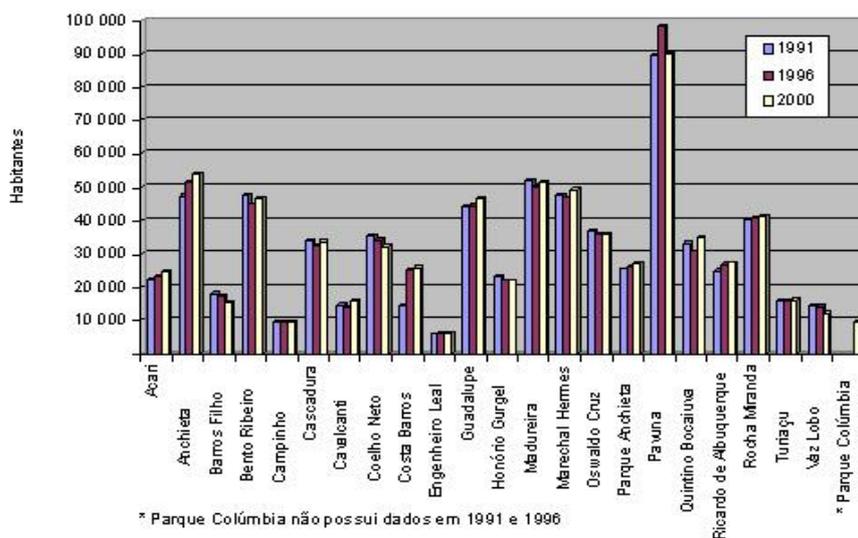
The North Region of Rio de Janeiro city has in area of 6.185 hectares, where live 725.833 habitants, as Census 2000. It is the second region most populous of city.

The average income of workers of Region (about US\$ 1,000.00 per month) is insufficient and represents the half of average income of worker's city.

The people with High Education represent near 8% that show less of half of education grade people's city (about 18%) and it is much less than South Region (43,8%).



### ZONA NORTE Evolução da população 1991/1996/2000, por bairro (Hab.)



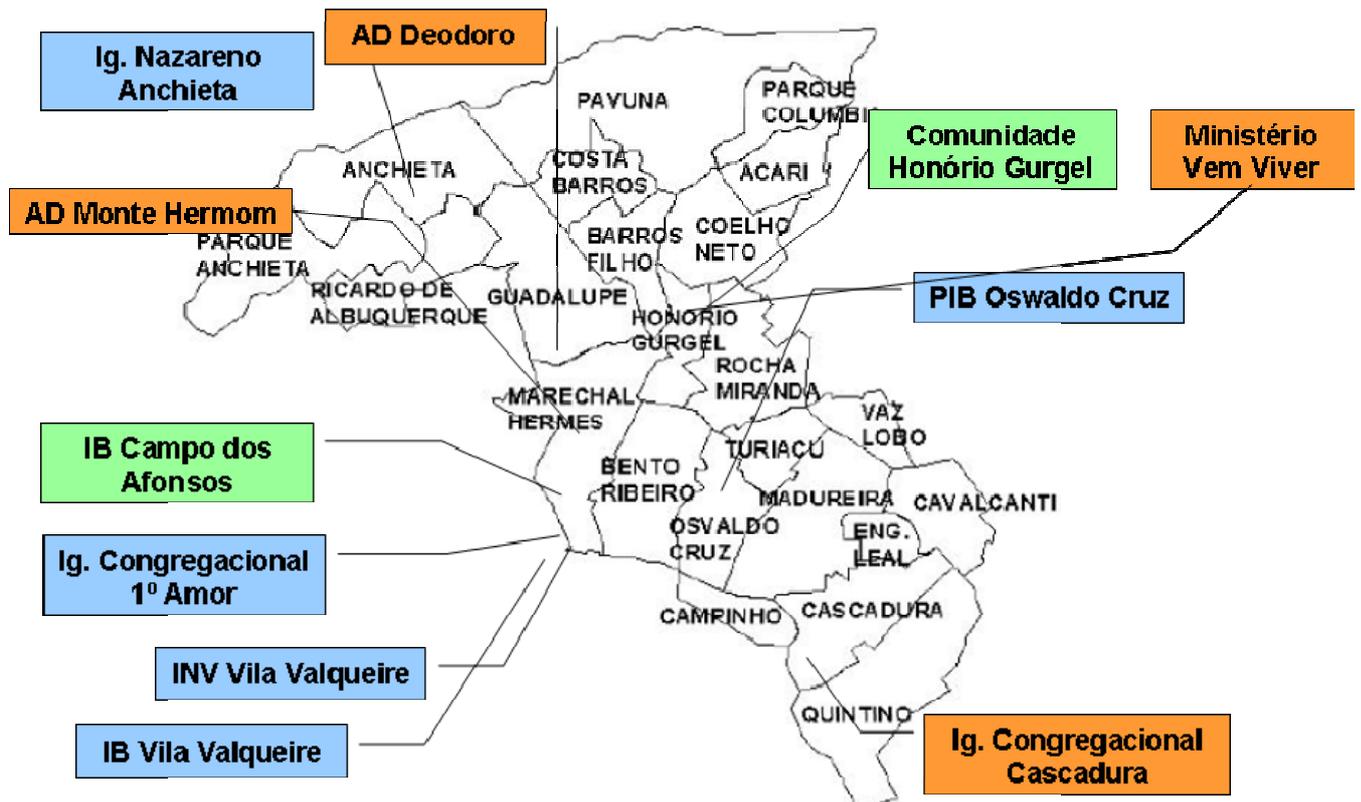
PREFEITURA DA CIDADE DO RIO DE JANEIRO  
 PLANO ESTRATÉGICO DA CIDADE DO RIO DE JANEIRO  
 Fonte: IBGE - Censo 2000, IPP - Anuário Estatístico de 1998

## 5. SURVEY AND SAMPLE

- We established the following sample using a classification of churches as function of members or regular adherents (adapted of Uma igreja de alto impacto, Linus Morris):
  - 4 small churches (< 250)
  - 4 medium churches (> 250 e < 750)
  - 2 large churches (> 750 e < 2.000)
- Otherwise, we distribute surveys in more than 30 churches located in North Region of Rio de Janeiro, previewing delays in responses or cancel of survey maybe after bad results.



Until now, the survey was finished at the following churches. We sent a preliminary report after insert answers in Excel spreadsheet and analyze graph with impressions. After commentaries of pastor or leader, we can to create a presentation and final report.



## QUESTIONÁRIO

- The model is built when variables get numerical values associated to answers “much”, “good” or “enough” allowing the vision of best dimensions.
- The basic principle was to work with churches of same region among many denominational branches.
- The Survey has 25 questions or assertions distributed on following way:
  - A abstract about principles and purpose;
  - 25 questions or assertions answered by attendees of church. If possible, according to percentage of age, genre and
  - 1 questionnaire about member’s growth, generation division, government style, etc. It will be answered by pastor or some leader.

## 6. CASES

From 2009 to 2011, we completed 10 church surveys. The survey process is simple, informal, with little intrusion and appropriated assertions to build a confident dimension graph.

The Survey presents graduated variables from “never” to “much” show combination among dimensions. The questionnaire has 25 closed answers, built as following:

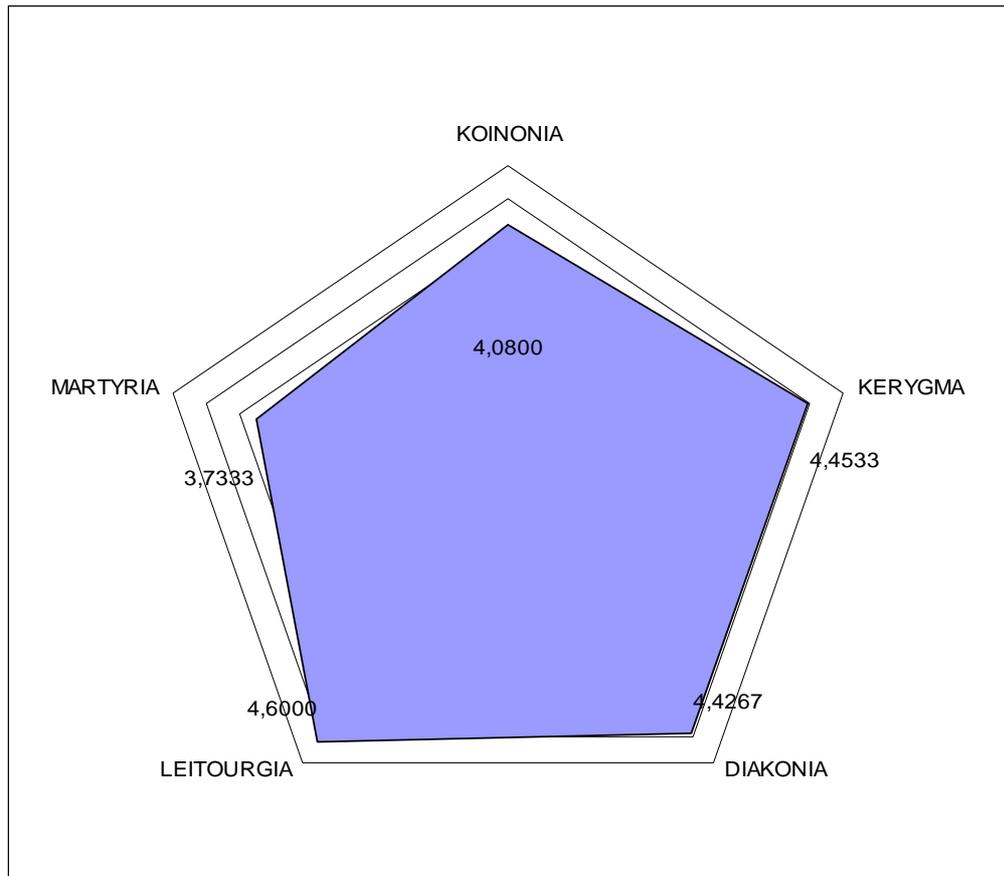
- Each assertion seek to detail the dimensions into five variables as table below:

<b>Dimensões</b>	<b>Variáveis</b>
Koinonia	Pastoral Caring, Relationships, Proximity, Sympathy, Unity
Kerygma	Inspiration, Knowledge, Maturity, Answers, Motivation
Diakonia	Utility, Activity, Opportunity, Energy, Quality
Leitourgia	Elevation, Frequency, Stewardship, Power, Coherence
Martyria	Boldness, Occasion, Invitation, Conversion, Discipleship

The statistical method takes trust in results after sample tests as deviation standard and variance.

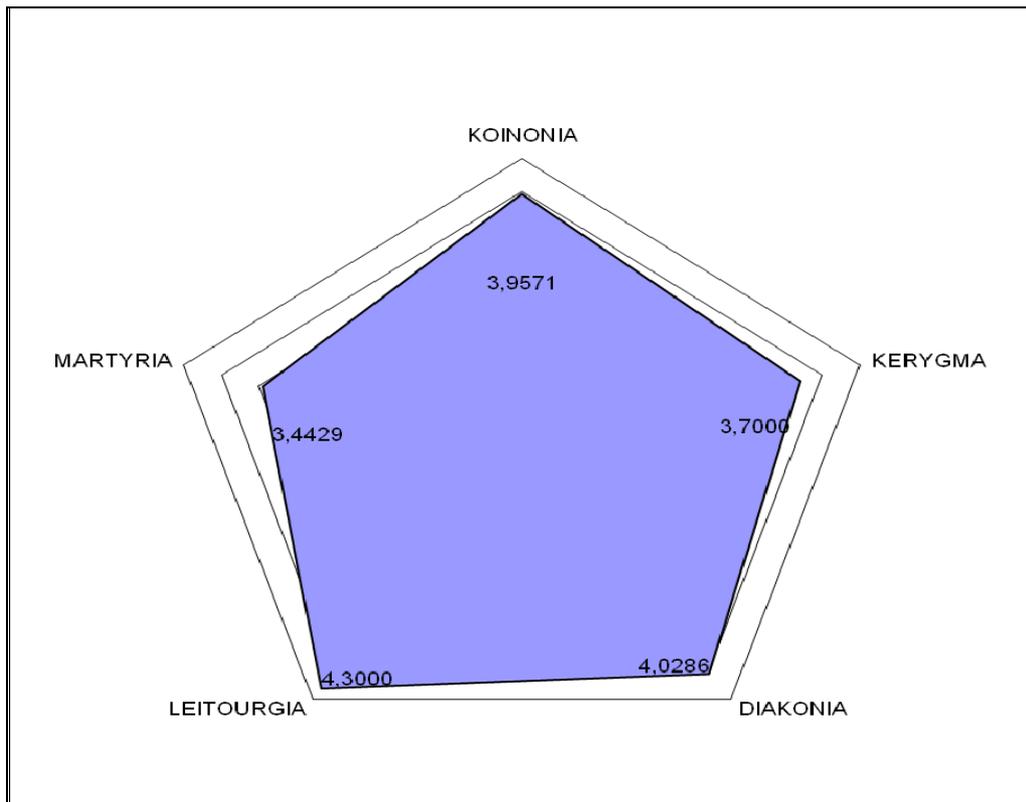
We present some examples of different churches using a classification of churches as function of members or regular adherents:

## Small church



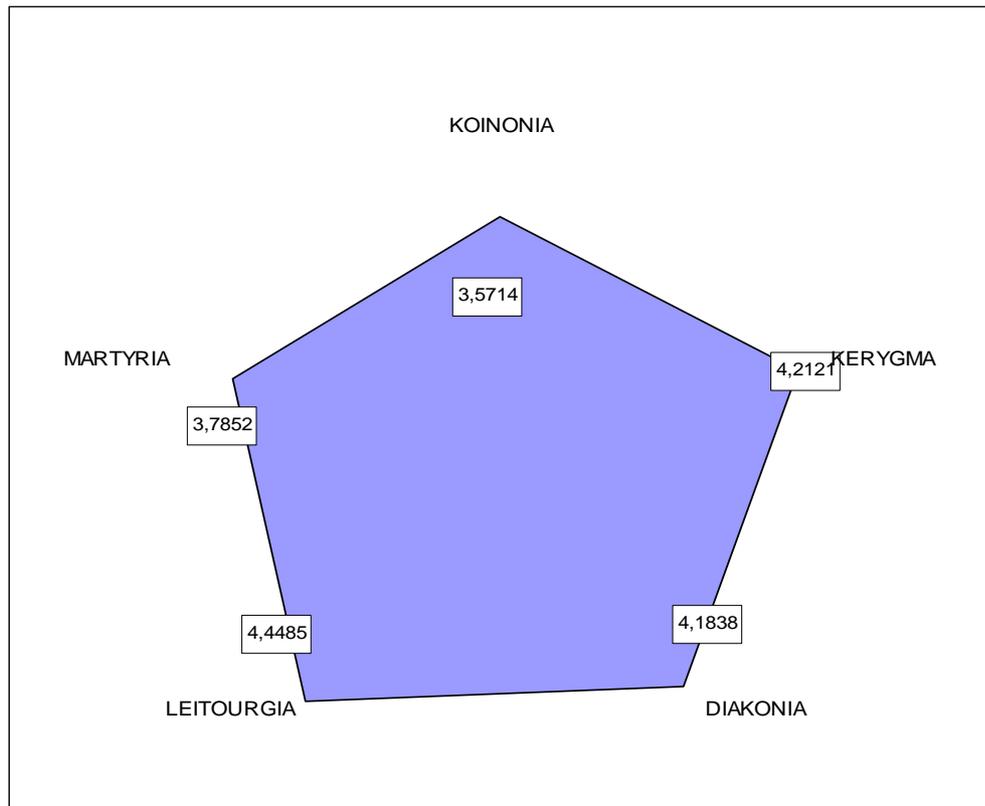
- ✓ 67% came from other evangelical church.
  - ✓ 100% indicate the Word proclamation and teaching as more strong dimension. The worship dimension had the second best value with 53%;
  - ✓ 47% indicate communion as other evident dimension.
  - ✓ The Diakoonia and Martyria weren't marked. They can to be better with spiritual gift orientation and personal evangelism training.
- a) The dimension LEITOURGIA, after insert answers, shows best dimension. The KERYGMA dimension was marked as second place in Graph.
  - b) The dimension KOINONIA could more evident because it is small chuch. Small groups can improve communion and help dimension MARTYRIA;
  - c) The dimension DIAKONIA had a good value. So smaller church less available resources to supply essential needs. But, committed and trained leaders increase this dimension.
  - d) The dimension MARTYRIA presented the worst value, revealing need of action plan to increase results.

## Medium church



- ✓ 36% came from other evangelical church. So, two in each three members had conversion experience in this church;
  - ✓ 29% indicate that residence change influenced decision of transfer to this church;
  - ✓ 64% indicate dimension communion as more strong dimension. Recently, the church starts small groups meetings;
  - ✓ 50% indicate worship as other evident dimension. Recently, the church move to better place with large area and facilities.
  - ✓ The Diakoonia and Martyria dimensions receive fair marked.
- a) The dimensions KOINONIA e LEITOURGIA are very homogeneous, or, show less dispersion after results.
  - b) The dimension LEITOURGIA, after insert answers, shows best dimension.
  - c) The dimension DIAKONIA had a second value. Most members note needs and opportunities in church but transfer and overload leaders and ministry teams;
  - d) The dimensions MARTYRIA e KERYGMA could to be improve because small groups utilization. Some churches have conflict between teaching in small groups and frequency in Sunday biblical school. It affects KERYGMA dimension and attendance in morning service.

## Large church



- ✓ 79% came from other evangelical church.
  - ✓ 60% indicate that worship style and available services influenced decision of transfer to this church;
  - ✓ 76% indicate Word proclamation and teaching as more strong dimension. The worship dimension had the second best value with 72%;
  - ✓ 1/3 indicate communion as other evident dimension showing efforts to improve it.
  - ✓ The Diakoonia and Martyria dimensions receive fair marked. In large churches, most attendees note needs and opportunities in church but don't work in anything;
- a) The dimensions KOINONIA e LEITOURGIA are very homogeneous, or, show less dispersion after results.
  - b) The dimension KOINONIA show worst value. The large churches need events to facilitate new relationships. If small groups strategy is avoided, motivated large groups can supply communion.
  - c) Usually, large churches offer many services and opportunities. So, it had a good value in dimension DIAKONIA;
  - d) The dimension MARTYRIA is showed around worship services and evangelism team. Each member can to be motivated to invite and disciple new Christians.

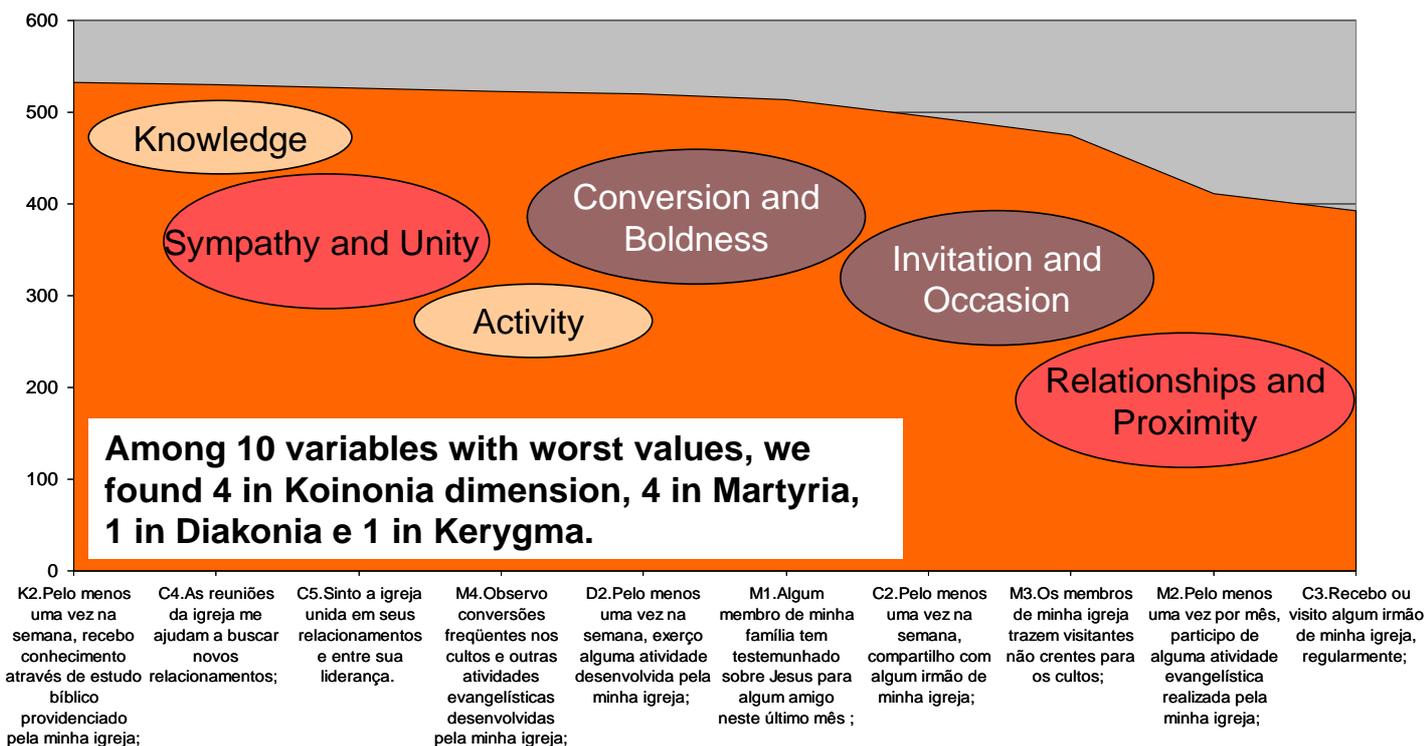
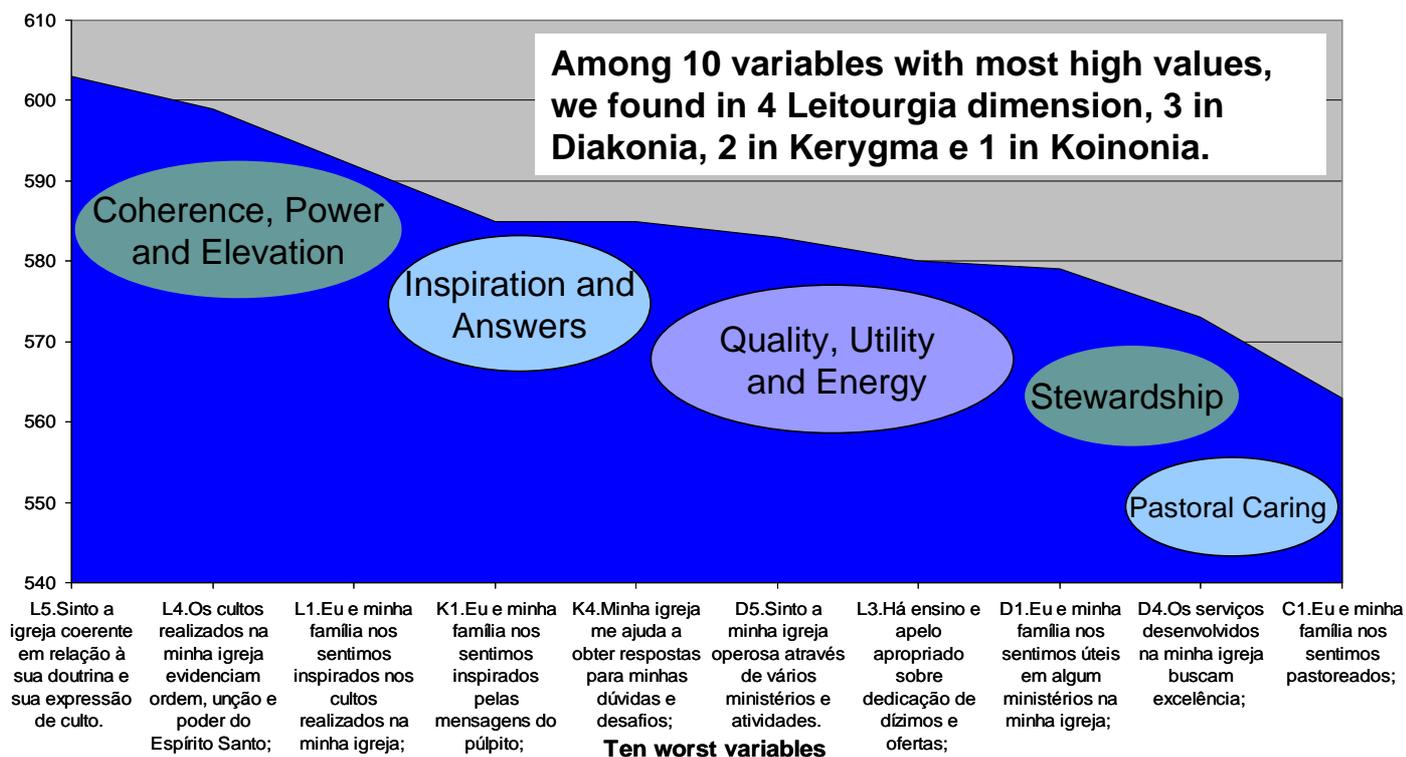
## 7. CONCLUSIONS

1. The model “Main Dimensions of Church’s Mission” has support in available bibliography and worldwide church experience;
2. The Survey process reveal itself non-formal, little intrusive e with assertions (variables) appropriated to build the Graph of dimensions;
3. The statistical method takes trust in results after sample tests as deviation standard and variance;
4. The final test of hypothesis and trends will need more churches of many denominations;
5. The shape of organizations have influence in survey process. To much top-centered is structure, less easier to process survey. Many pastors fear results and discussion of church’s evaluation;
6. Usually, small churches show high values of koinonia dimension;
7. Large churches show high values of kerygma e leitourgia dimensions;
8. The diakonia e martyria dimensions show most values of variance in surveyed churches, then, they need more understanding, commitment and leadership;
9. Medium churches show most values of variance in analyzed dimensions;
10. The evaluation tool developed in this work seek to evaluate dimensions including variables of external relationship of church. The purpose isn’t focus the quality of internal process;
11. The expressions and cultural changes in trans-modern world modify the brazilian expression of religiosity. The regular evaluation of Church’s mission can verify these changes after years;
12. It is necessary to develop partnership between churches and non-governmental organizations to reach integral mission. The missionary agencies are a good

example to avoid dispute for resources inside churches to make missions in non-reached peoples or communities;

13. The missionary and intercession activities need more interaction. They have external relationship with the world and how the church seeks non-reached people and to practice warfare theology.

Ten most high variables



## 8. RECOMENDATIONS

The final purpose of this work is to develop and to share a evaluation tool for churches and organizations.

The next step of work can include a evaluation of community around of each surveyed church to measure impact and impressions of the Mission.

We motivate the leadership of church to discuss survey results. This work seeks to find strong and weak dimensions in each church. Following, an action plan can to be assembled to involve whole church.

<b>Dimensões</b>	<b>Ações de Melhoria</b>
Comunhão	
Proclamação	
Serviço	
Testemunho	
Adoração	

## About Author:

### Jair Walter P. Ribeiro

- Married with Sara. Father of Laryssa and Gabriel;
- Mechanical Engineer. He works in Petrobras since 1986;
- Graduated in Haggai, August of 2001;
- MBA in Missiology by FTSA;
- Jair and Sara are deacons in IBCA (Igreja Batista do Campo dos Afonsos, Rio de Janeiro, RJ – Brasil). We are attenders in that church since 1995;
- Director of Instituto Paracleto.



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**[jairwpr@ig.com.br](mailto:jairwpr@ig.com.br)**

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