Before he died, Jesus prayed to His Father that He would not take His disciples out of the world. Instead, He said, “send them into the world” ([John 17:15, 18]). We should mix with humanity.

Spiritual Insiders

In my travels I have noticed that some Adventist churches appear to be somewhat introverted and focus primarily on their “insiders.” But church members also need to become “insiders” with organizations in the community—just as the salt mixed inside the banana bread dough transforms it.

1. The Church in the City. This refers to the location of a church. Usually the members are not from the community. The church has little or no involvement in the community.

2. The Church in the City. This church serves its responsibility to do something for the community. It depends on the community to meet its needs. It does not consult the community about its perceived needs. It then invites the community to the church. There is a risk that the community will not be interested in what the church thought it needed.

3. The Church with the City. This church seeks to make the church a community. It consults with the community leaders to find the issues that are important to the community. The church is an integral part of the community. The church is like a water spinach that is not just added to the stew, but is a vital part of the dish.

4. The Church by the City. The church is a community of believers who are committed to the community. They are not just a church that happens to be in the community, but are an integral part of the community.

Thus, the church is a community of believers who are committed to the community. They are not just a church that happens to be in the community, but are an integral part of the community.