



7 Vital Factors for Healthy Churches

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Matt 16:18-19

“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven”

GOD meant His Church to be a conquering church. A church that is taking ground from Satan.

THE CHURCH IN AMERICA 2011

Less than 20% (17.7%) of the population attend church regularly

9.2% Evangelical

5.5% Catholic

3.1% Mainline

Average congregational worship attendance is 124 people

Loss:

3000 congregations a year die

3800 new congregations a year are started

10,000 new congregations a year are required to equal population growth

4 FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS

- Prayer is foundational
- We must face our new reality
- We will need entrepreneurial leadership
- We must become core Value Driven



SEVEN VITAL FACTORS THAT ARE THE FOUNDATION OF A HEALTHY CHURCH:

Jesus talked much about moving from words to actions. If you evaluate what you are doing as a church you will find out what really matters in the life of the church.

Matt 21:28-31 - “There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.' "'I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. "Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go. "Which of the two did what his father wanted?" "The first," they answered.”

1. Laser Focus on the GREAT COMMISSION.

“We believe that lost people matter to God and therefore ought to matter to the church.”

Matthew 28: 19-20 – “Go, win, baptize, disciple, teach”

- What is it going to take to move us from words – to action? From apathy to passion?

The Great Commission has become Great Omission!

2. Congregational HEALTH equals GROWTH

- God made all living things to grow and reproduce. This is God’s Natural Order!
- Healthy churches = growth and reproduction; *unhealthy churches are not growing churches*
- What is keeping your church back from health and eventually growth/reproduction?

7 Vital Factors for Healthy Churches

3. Ruthless ACCOUNTABILITY

- Pastors and churches run from accountability like animals fleeing a forest fire.
- Without accountability there is no lasting change!
- Accountability means greater resources and greater potential for change!



4. Shepherds that LEAD



- Shepherd leaders are willing to lead the charge!
- Leaders not chaplains
- **Born Leader** (20%) vs **Learned Leader** (60%)
- Recruiting and developing people for the harvest. Your volunteers are your staff!
- Pastors need to train their staff, board, key leaders (leadership development)

5. Congregations that INFLUENCE their Communities

- We don't just pastor a small church but the whole community!
- We have community influence for Jesus!
- Speak to the life of the community!
- Influence, respect, spiritual thermostat, presence, and conscience

"The world is my parish" – John Wesley

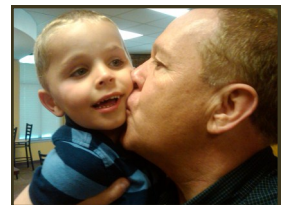


6. Congregations that are becoming a MISSIONAL ENTITY

- God did not design the Church for Christians but for mobilization of Christians to attack the gates of hell. Most Christians believe the opposite!
 - If the Church is a missional entity then many of the things churches fight over is out the window.
 - Missionaries study culture, language, history, and customs to they can better communicate Jesus!
- Each pastor is a missionary and each church a missionary station!***

7. REPRODUCTION is the bottom line

I love being a grandfather! My and Shelley's dreams: Have boys, school them, teach them, win the to Jesus, Leaders of other men, great education, marry, produce grandchildren who do the same for next generation!



Likewise, the dream of the church should be raising up another generation of leaders: LBA, teachers, etc.

Dr. George Hunter – United Methodist audience – Asbury Seminary "Thousands of our churches are analogous to mules – which are creatures that are so genetically compromised that they are incapable of reproduction... Don't expect much vitality, much less reproduction. There is not much vitality or reproduction anywhere the gospel is in absentia."

CHALLENGE:

1. Start a new venue, new service, new congregation within your building this year! YES!
2. At least 1 person saved this year and 1 person baptized this year (4 Evangelism Sundays) YES!