

Devotional: How Many Baptists Does It Take To Change A Light Bulb?

I. Read Revelation 2:1-7.

When you read a Bible passage, after you've prayed for understanding and before you try to "figure it out", it's usually good to first simply make observations of the passage. Be like Sherlock Holmes and take note of what's going on, and what's being said. Come up with a dozen or so observations of these verses:

What do you think happened to this once vibrant church?

What changes does it need to make to recover its strength?

II. Thoughts About Change

1. How is change good?

2. How is change bad?

3. How is change hard?

4. Read 1 Corinthians 9:20-23. How would you summarize Paul's 'theology of change' here? (What is he willing to change? What is he not willing to change?)

5. How do you think Paul knows what to change and what not to change?

Your Assignment for Next Week:

Read through Revelation 2 and 3, and do a self-study of the Seven Churches. Analyze the threats they faced, how they responded to the threats, and what Jesus told them they had to change to recover their vitality.

New Wine

In the crushing in the pressing
You are making new wine
In the soil I now surrender
You are breaking new ground
(You are breaking new ground)

So I yield to You and to Your careful hand
When I trust You I don't need to understand

*(So) Make me Your vessel
Make me an offering
Make me whatever You want me to be
(God) I came here with nothing
But all You have given me
Jesus bring new wine out of me*

Jesus bring new wine out of me
Jesus bring new wine out of me

'Cause where there is new wine
There is new power
There is new freedom
And the kingdom is here
I lay down my old flames
To carry Your new fire today

Review Of The Church Assessment

I. Assumptions

1. Abundant accurate information makes us good stewards of God's grace.
2. It's natural for a church to grow and when it isn't, we ought to pause and ask why.
3. The future God has in store for us is not simply an extension of our past.
4. We cannot continue to do what we've always done and expect a different result.

II. Note From The Survey

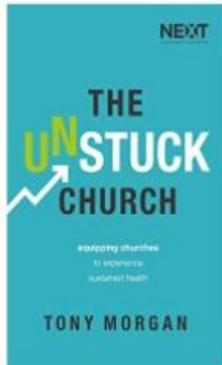
1. 75% of the people have some role, which is good. But where and how the energy is placed should be examined.
2. The majority of the survey were both long term members and older. The danger to be aware of is the tendency to want to recreate yesterday.
3. Over 160 "oikos connections" were identified as friends but not yet Christ-followers. This would be the easiest place to start revitalization.
4. The website is not compelling. New people are often first drawn to a church through its media resources.
5. Growing churches are praying churches and the survey shows awareness that this needs to be strengthened.
6. A third of the church is involved in regular community engagement. But remember: community engagement is not missional engagement.
7. Only 10% can accurately state the vision/purpose of the church. The primary failure of many organizations is ambiguity of purpose.
8. Most of the respondents are not aware of any process for developing leaders and don't know of any leaders who have been trained.
9. It appears that most of those involved in leadership roles are on committees. When a church begins to substitute administration for ministry, committees grow beyond what it needed or healthy, and power gets "siloed", which leads to a "culture of no" (where leaders become resistant to change, to guard their tradition or "turf".)
10. Many say they want to grow. But wanting to growing much be accompanied by applying the principles of health and growth, and also paying the price required (which is usually not monetary.)
11. A majority believe that the church has a great future but there is considerable resistance to change. These two ideas are incompatible. Mission, not methods, is what matters.

III. 10 Qualities Of Healthy Churches

1. A love for Christ and a joyful surrender to his leading.
2. A commitment to Biblical authority demonstrated in a desire to know and live Scripture.
3. Have an outward focus and visionary leadership.
4. Marked by God-exalting and engaging worship.
5. Provide a clear and effective discipleship pathway.
6. Marked by relationships of love, support and unity within the church.
7. Are actively serving those outside the church.
8. Are led by empowered and appropriate government/management.
9. Show a humility which recognizes the need for ongoing learning and growing faith.
10. Pursue Kingdom-partnerships with sister churches and other Christ-centered churches and organizations.

IV. Recommendations

Moving Forward Concept 1: Recognize where you are on the lifecycle pattern of churches.



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by Tony Morgan | May 16, 2017

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Moving Forward Concept 2: Rediscover your mission and repair the governance of the church.

You are perfectly designed to get the results you are getting.