



# ***Church Jumpstart:***

## ***A 10-Week Journey Towards Reviving Our Church***

### ***Session 2: Look Up***

*“No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.” Luke 5:36-38*

### ***Devotional: New Wine Into Old Wineskins***

#### **1. Why does God continually have to do new things with us? Why do we “lose our first love?”**

- Because we start preferring **rituals** to **the reality**. (See Luke 5:33-35; cf. Luke 11:1-4)
- Because we start clinging to **our methods** and forget the **mission**. (2 Cor.9:20-22)
- Because we start exchanging the **truth** for our **traditions**. (See Matthew 15:1-7)
- Because we become content with **religion** and stop seeking the **relationship**. (See 2 Samuel 5:17-25)

#### **2. Why are we like this?**

*“Our hearts are idol factories.” ~ John Calvin*

#### **3. What’s the way back home to a revived faith?**

1. Look **up**. *Unless we begin our journey by seeking the Lord in a fresh way, we will fail.*
2. Look **back**. *By remembering how God blessed us in the past, we can draw new inspiration for the future. We can also learn lessons of what NOT to do.*
3. Look **around** us. *By looking around us at our community, and asking God to help us see things through his eyes, we’ll see the difference the gospel can make.*
4. Look **within** us. *By examining how God has “SHAPED” us, we can learn how we can make a difference.*
5. Look **ahead**. *Now we’re better equipped to think strategically in planning the future.*

## Look Up...And Fall In Love With Jesus Again

*"...you have abandoned the love you had at first." ~ Rev.2:4*

### *I Love Jesus Because...*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### *My 30-Second Testimony:*

Paul had a 30-Second Testimony. Read Acts 26:9-18.

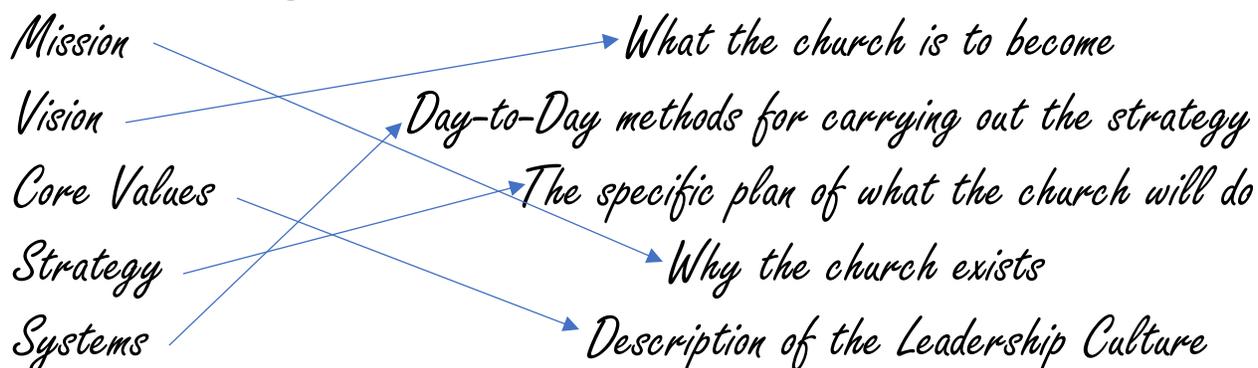
Here's one of PBC's 30 Second Testimonies:

*I've always said that faith without art is dead because art was so pivotal in me coming to Jesus. I remember as a child my mother reading to me from a children's Bible that her mother read to her. Its pictures of Jesus life gripped my young imagination. At the age of 11 I gave my life to Christ after watching a Billy Graham movie. And after drifting for a few years in high school, it was another movie that I watched as a freshmen in college, "Ben-Hur" that brought me back once and for all. I love Jesus because he is a Beautiful Savior like the song says, the source of all beauty and creativity.*

It doesn't have to just be your conversion story. You can write a 30-second testimony about how Jesus...

## Look Up...And Rediscover Our Mission As A Church

Connect the following to their best definition:



Jesus went about his work with clear ideas in mind for each of these things. For each of the verses below, write out which of the five it best represents.

*“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” ~ Luke 19:10*

This represents Jesus’ sense of his mission.

*“And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world.”*

*Matthew 24:14*

This represents Jesus’ sense of his vision.

*“The Twelve Jesus sent out with the following instruction: ‘Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, preach this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven is near.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons...Do not take along any gold...Take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic...” ~ Matthew 10:5-10*

This represents Jesus’ sense of his strategy.

*“But [the Samaritans] did not receive [Jesus]...When His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” But He turned and rebuked them, and said, “You do not know what kind of spirit you are of.”*

*Luke 9:51-55*

This represents Jesus’ sense of his core values.

*“And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him.” ~ Luke 22:30 / “Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor.” ~ John*

*13:29*

This represents Jesus’ sense of his system.

For a church to be healthy, each of these things must be in its spiritual DNA, so deeply that every member of the church knows them and attempts to live them out.

But it begins with recovering our sense of mission, our understanding of why we exist as a church.

### From *The Unstuck Church*

**“The mission statement should express to your congregation, your staff, your volunteers, and your community what your church is all about...Your simple mission statement (typically 12 words or less) is the foundation for everything else...It makes it clear whether people should join your mission or not. “**

**“Your statement should say, “This is who we are. Do you want to join us on this big mission?” When you land on a clear statement, it will become the rallying cry that encourages people to take the next step in engaging in what you do.”**

**“Hopefully many, many people will be captivated by your mission statement and want to join you and add their gifts and abilities, their time, their prayer support, their money.”**

So if you haven't yet completed your work on the Church Mission Statement Project, now is the time to do it. This is your chance to get on board. Take 5 minutes and finish this work.

## **Look Up...And Rediscover What It Means To Be A Healthy Church**

Without looking at the notes from the chapter, let's make a list of all the items we can think of which would be qualities or characteristics of healthy churches:

*Here's a list that Transformation Ministries has compiled:*

### **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.

*Here's a list that Tony Morgan shared in chapter 4 "Sustained Health":*

### **Characteristics Of Churches Experiencing Sustained Health**

#### **1. They are growing over time.**

When a church is healthy, it grows. It's what we see in the book of Acts. Healthy things grow. Naysayers might say, "The church won't grow because of this or that." (*It's in the Northeast. It's too rural.*) Morgan tells the story of a church in Paradise, Texas (p. 99) and Atlanta (pp. 99-100) which grew despite challenging circumstances.

We are not suggesting however that the size of a church is a reflection of health. There are many "mega-churches" that are very unhealthy. And Morgan concedes that there are "pruning" seasons, when growth comes after a time of shrinking. Sometimes decline must happen before an increase can come. But if your church has plateaued and that trend goes on for months to years, shifting from a temporary setback to the norm, it could very well be a sign that your church is not healthy.

## 2. They are unified.

Churches should be united around the following.

- Doctrine – every church should have a Statement of Faith.
- Mission – there should be one sentence defining why the church exists.
- Vision – there should be an agreement on what the church is planning and praying for in the future.
- Strategy – leadership must have agreement on how that vision will be accomplished.
- Values – there should be agreement are the key values shape the culture.

In these areas there should be full alignment, particularly at the leadership level. If there is not alignment, you need to respond with immediate conversation and coaching. If there's any hint of division with people who have influence over others, that needs to be addressed immediately.

It's amazing to me how churches take such a hard line on some sins but not others. Creating division in the church is a sin. I've seen too many church leaders shy away from tough conversations because they didn't want to upset the wrong person.

## 3. They are bearing good good fruit. (i.e. new believers/disciples)

Primarily, I'm looking to see new disciples of Jesus developed. With sustained health, we see baptized and teaching of new disciples.

Based on his work, Morgan can testify that God blesses many different strategies, from "Seeker Models" to "Purpose Driven models" to "Cell-Based models" to "Missional". Regardless of the strategy, one sign of health is *the fruit it produces*.

A church of thousands may not be healthy if it's not reproducing new disciples. A church where most are connected to small groups isn't healthy if new disciples aren't being made. So don't celebrate your strategy. Celebrate the good fruit it produces.

Morgan tells the story of the church with the **365 Campaign**: the strategy of praying for 365 conversions, and lighting a lightbulb in the lobby when someone was saved.

#### 4. The ministry is **multiplying**.

*“And what you have heard from me...entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” ~ 2 Timothy 2:2*

This is one of the definitive marks of a church that’s reached sustained health: the ministry is mobilized beyond the walls of the church. The footprint of the church’s mission expands beyond its current territory. That’s when the mission becomes a movement. Paul developing Timothy wasn’t the win. The win was seeing him disciple others. That’s multiplication.

We get so focused on our ministry programming to keep churchgoers busy that we lose sight of the fact that we are supposed to be mobilizing people to take new territory. We are not good at raising up leaders, pouring into them, and then encouraging them to take bold steps to multiply the gospel reach.

#### 5. They embrace **new**.

They expect change. They believe Christ is renewing his people, and so the church must be renewed as well. New wine needs new wineskins.

None of us likes change. We drift toward what is comfortable. But the Bible encourages new dreams (Ecc.7:10; Isaiah 43:18-19; Ps.96:1; Mark 2:22; 2 Cor.5:17)

Churches can’t have new influence without giving up old ways. They can’t reach new people without surrendering their old methods.

**Without question, one of the factors that drives momentum and health for a church is adaptability.** So when people think the worship services have become stale, healthy churches adapt. When ministry environments become packed and impersonal because of growth, healthy churches adapt and look for ways to cultivate intimacy.

Healthy churches have a willingness to change methods ingrained in their culture that no longer work.

#### 6. They are **generous**.

There’s an abundance mindset because generous churches have learned that God provides.

#### For next week:

- Continue your work on your “I Love Jesus Because...” and 30-Second Testimony projects.
- Read through Chapter 5, “Maintenance: It’s Time To Embrace A New Vision” in “The Unstuck Church.”