

# CHURCH REVITALIZATION NETWORK

TRAINING & COACHING GUIDE

by Tim Strickland



## Welcome to the FEB Central

# CHURCH REVITALIZATION NETWORK TRAINING GUIDE

### ***Intended Outcome***

- It is intended that the network will equip and support pastors in beginning revitalization in the local church. *The network utilizes a combination of Bible study, teaching, reading, coaching and peer support to achieve this goal.*

### ***Network Format***

- A cohort of 5-10 church leaders seeking to lead revitalization in their churches.
- 10 monthly meetings; approximately half in-person and half via a virtual platform, with a final in-person meeting where participants present a Revitalization Plan for their church. *Each meeting will run for about 3 hours, including time for refreshments and interaction.*
- 10 monthly one-on-one coaching calls in between each network meeting with an experienced church leader.

### ***Monthly Meeting Content***

- A devotional focused on Church Revitalization.
- Teaching focused on one step in the Church Revitalization Change Process.
- Discussion of the devotional, teaching content as well as selected readings.
- Discussion of specific situations in your church related to revitalization.

### ***Monthly Coaching Content***

- One-on-one discussion about applying revitalization principles in your church.
- Prayer and encouragement.

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Thank you to Bob Flemming for encouragement, support, and inspiration in starting the Church Revitalization Networks.

Thank you most of all to the Lord, who is always building His church!

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# SESSION 1

## START WITH PRAYER, CONFESSION AND TRUST IN GOD

### Today's Agenda:

Welcome & Introductions (30min)

Devotional: God Expects Leaders to Lead (30min)

Network Overview: The Church Revitalization Change Process (30min)

Break (15min)

Teaching: Step 1 – Start with Prayer, Confession and Trust in God (45min)

Exercise (30min)

Finish

### Readings, Assignments & Coaching

Please complete the following readings before the next meeting and come prepared to share some reflections on each.

1. Nehemiah 1; Exodus 33:12-34:8; Psalm 56-57
2. *Re:VISION* by Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, pp. 36-51
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 25-39
4. *Prepare for Pain and Suffering*, Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland
5. *From Missionary Sending to Missional Church*, Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland

### Welcome & Introductions

Welcome to our first FEB Central Church Revitalization Network meeting!

#### • Personal Introductions

#### • Why I am passionate about Church Revitalization:

1. Many people need to hear the gospel in their communities and will not hear it unless a local church is revitalized.
  - a. Many churches are plateaued or declining and need revitalization.
  - b. There are many valuable facilities and ministry assets waiting to be utilized.
2. I've experienced the challenges of church revitalization personally, and I want to teach others to avoid the same problems and heartache
  - a. For a while I wondered what was wrong with me as a pastor, until I understood that the problems many churches face are repeated and systemic, and they must be addressed.

## Devotional: *God Expects Leaders to Lead*

*“That the leaders took the lead in Israel, that the people offered themselves willingly, bless the LORD! ...My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel who offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless the LORD.”<sup>1</sup>*  
Deborah & Barak, Judges 5:2,9

### God Expects Leaders to Lead

- At first this seems like an obvious statement, but many church cultures and structures are designed to prevent leaders from leading.
- Leaders who try to lead may be viewed as proud or unspiritual, and not as servant leaders

*“A great deal of research over the last sixty years has focused on the issue of church revitalization... In all the research completed through these years, one aspect stands out: the importance of leadership, especially pastoral leadership. In order for the church to be revitalized, the pastor is the key.”<sup>2</sup>*  
Gary McIntosh

### What does the Bible Teach us about Leaders and Leadership?

- God’s pattern throughout Scripture is to call and empower leaders to lead:
 

Abraham	Moses	Joshua
The Judges	David	Nehemiah
John the Baptist	Peter	Paul
Jesus, our ultimate example of a leader		
- There are no significant examples in Scripture of leadership by committee, yet that is how many churches are led.

*“Leadership was rated as the number one factor by churches that experienced revitalization. Leadership and vision are major keys to any type of turnaround churches...On the surface, leadership seems to be more of a secular emphasis or reality than a spiritual endeavor. However, the Bible reflects the fact that God calls people and uses them to fulfill is purposes. There is no denying that leaders like Moses, Joshua, David, Nehemiah, Gideon, Jesus, Peter, Paul, Deborah, Priscilla and many others in the Bible were leaders. So maybe leadership is truly as much of a spiritual factor as renewed belief, servanthood, and strategic prayer. ...Leaders matter for church revitalization...By leadership we do not mean just the pastor. But it does start with the pastor. Pastors have to be leaders and have to develop others to lead.”<sup>3</sup>* - Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>2</sup> Gary McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 26.

<sup>3</sup> Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2007), 34 35.

God calls leaders to accomplish his purposes and He expects them to lead. Churches will not be revitalized unless the pastor and other key leaders commit to leading.

*“As important and central as is the ministry of the Word of God, the thoughtful pastor/elder/overseer will devote time and energy to casting a vision, figuring out the steps for getting there, building the teams and structures needed for discharging ministry and training others, building others up, thinking through the various ways in which the gospel can be taught at multiple levels to multiple groups within the church, how to extend faithful evangelism and church planting, how to engage the surrounding world as faithful believers, and much more. Just because a person is an able preacher does not necessarily make him an able pastor/elder/overseer. Indeed, if he shows no propensity for godly oversight, then no matter how good a teacher he may be, he is not qualified to be a pastor/teacher/overseer.”<sup>4</sup> - D.A. Carson*

Q: Can one be a strong leader and a servant leader at the same time?

- Yes, of course!
  - Moses – great leader, and the meekest man (Numbers 12:3)
  - Jesus – the ultimate model of servant leadership
  - Peter – Shepherd the flock, exercising oversight, clothed with humility (1 Peter 5:1-5)
  - Faithful servants receive greater leadership authority (Mark 9:35)

Q: What about leadership accountability?

- Leaders need to be held accountable for their leadership<sup>5</sup>, however in committee-led churches, they often are held accountable for the decisions of others<sup>6</sup>
- Leaders need to have responsibility, authority and accountability<sup>7</sup>

*“Missions are led, not managed or orchestrated by committees....we have found that established, dying congregations are not transformed without strong leadership. ...Let me hasten to add that strong leadership is not dictatorship. Rather it is the marriage of responsibility with authority while demanding rigorous accountability of the leader.”<sup>8</sup>*

- Paul Borden

<sup>4</sup> D. A. Carson, Some Reflections on Pastoral Leadership, *Themelios* 40, no. 2 (2015): 197, accessed May 10, 2016, <http://themelios.thegospelcoalition.org/article/some-reflections-on-pastoral-leadership>.

<sup>5</sup> John Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012), 70-78.

<sup>6</sup> I think I learned this concept from Paul Borden, or possibly John Kaiser, but I have not been able to locate the source in their books.

<sup>7</sup> John Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012), 71.

<sup>8</sup> Paul Borden, *Make or Break Your Church in 365 Days* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012), 42-43.

## Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process*

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step *Church Revitalization Change Process*, that I have developed based on the research of church health and revitalization experts<sup>9</sup> and the change process developed by change author John Kotter.<sup>10</sup> We will focus on one step in the change process at each meeting.

### The Church Revitalization Change Process:

1. **Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God**
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality
4. Build Credibility
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
6. Develop a Vision
7. Communicate the Vision
8. Implement Changes
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparatory steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparatory steps.

Note also that the steps are not always linear. For example you are always building credibility (step 4) and always praying, confessing and trusting God (Step 1).

### **What is the Timeline for the Change Process?**

You are learning the steps in the Church Revitalization Change Process faster than you will be able to implement them. You should anticipate the change process lasting **anywhere from two to five years**, and possibly longer. Each church setting is different, with some churches being more ready for change than others. If your church faces an imminent crisis, the leadership will be more open to try significant changes quickly, than if your church is in a long, slow decline.

Your coach can help you to discern when it is time to move forward with key steps in the change process and when it is time to wait. A critical turning point is when your new dominant coalition has developed enough strength and depth to support you in leading change. It can take a few years for that new coalition to develop. We will talk more about the dominant coalition in Step 5.

<sup>9</sup> These experts include Paul Borden, John Kaiser, Gary McIntosh, Aubrey Malphurs, Gordon Penfold, Thom Rainer, Nelson Searcy, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson. They are referenced frequently in the footnotes.

<sup>10</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 22-27.

**Teaching: Step 1 - Start with Prayer, Confession and Trust in God**

Church Revitalization starts with spiritual preparation. **Gary McIntosh** advocates for spiritual preparation when he writes, *“Start by reading the Bible, asking God to show you what he wants for your church. Contemplate God’s priorities. In your prayers, ask God specifically to make you alert to what he desires for your church.”*<sup>11</sup>

**a. Prayer**

- Personal and corporate prayer is essential throughout the church revitalization change process
- Begin to pray and ask God what He wants your church to become
- Ask what barriers are in the way, call out to him for help
- You may want to go on a personal spiritual retreat
- Write down ideas and thoughts that come to you as you are praying
- Build a prayer team<sup>12</sup> to pray for the church and for you personally

*“We must begin where everything Christian begins – with prayer. We must bathe the entire process in constant prayer. In the case of vision development, it is envisioning prayer.”*<sup>13</sup> *“...we must prepare our churches spiritually for the process. Spiritual preparation includes such practices as confession of sin, righting wrongs, addressing gossip, seeking and offering forgiveness, dealing with anger, addressing grievances, and other similar practices.”*<sup>14</sup>

- Aubrey Malphurs & Gordon Penfold

**b. Confession**<sup>15</sup>

- Examine your heart for sin you need to confess to God
- Examine your church for sins that need to be confessed to God
  - Some might be blatant such as sexual sin, gossip, and division
  - Many plateaued and declining churches need to confess the sin of disobedience in failing to do the Great Commission locally
- Like Nehemiah (ch1), personally confess your church’s sins to God
  - You may decide to invite the whole church to confess sin and pray
- You may need to personally address specific people and specific sins
  - You will gain credibility for doing hard things that are right

**Paul Borden** suggests a time of congregational confession, for having *“believed an urgent message but lived for itself, making few, if any, new disciples and failing to fulfill the mission that Jesus had designed for his Church.”*<sup>16</sup>

**c. Trust in God**

- You must trust the Lord to revitalize your church right from the beginning and throughout the process.

<sup>11</sup> Gary McIntosh, *There’s Hope for Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 76.

<sup>12</sup> Paul Borden, *Direct Hit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 71-73.

<sup>13</sup> Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, *Re:Vision* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2014), 157.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

<sup>15</sup> Gary McIntosh, *There’s Hope for Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 76.

<sup>16</sup> Paul Borden, *Direct Hit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 56.

**Exercise: Step 1 - Start with Prayer, Confession and Trust in God**

1. What personal spiritual steps do you need to take to prepare to lead church revitalization?

2. What spiritual steps do you need to lead your church to take to prepare for church revitalization?

3. Have you ever taken a vision retreat to pray and seek the Lord for what He might want for your church? What would you do on a vision retreat?

### Network Coaching

Coaching is an essential part of the Church Revitalization Network. You will be matched with an experienced pastor who will coach you each month on applying the monthly network teachings to leading revitalization in your church.

You will need to plan a coaching call/FaceTime/Zoom/face-to-face meeting once each month for approximately one hour. You are welcome to meet more often if you and your coach are available.

There will be a few possible discussion points provided in each coaching session to get you started. However, you can choose whatever challenge you are facing (normally it will be related to the monthly network topic) to discuss with your coach.



# SESSION 1 COACHING GUIDE

## START WITH PRAYER, CONFESSION AND TRUST IN GOD

### Content Summary

- I. Introduction: The Church Revitalization Change Process
- II. Devotional: God Expects Leaders to Lead
- III. Teaching: Step 1: *Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God*

### Coaching Discussion Starters

The discussion points below are meant as suggestions to help your conversation, but you are not required to use them. Please feel free to discuss whatever topics are most applicable to the coachee's ministry situation.

- a. *Introductions:* Spend a bit of time getting to know one another and learning about your ministries.
- b. *General:* Is there a topic that arose from the first network meeting that you would like to discuss further, with a focus on applying it in your church?
- c. Do you view yourself as a leader? How do you exercise leadership in your church?
- d. What do you think are your strengths and weakness as a leader in church revitalization?
- e. Do you view exercising leadership and exercising humility as being in conflict? Discuss.
- f. What spiritual preparation steps do you need to take personally to prepare to lead church revitalization?
- g. What spiritual preparation steps do you need to lead your church to take to prepare for church revitalization?
- h. Have you ever taken a vision retreat to pray and seek the Lord for what He might want for your church?

### The Church Revitalization Change Process

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step **Church Revitalization Change Process**. We will focus on one step each month in the Church Revitalization Network.

1. **Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God**
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
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9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparation steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparation steps.

## SESSION 2

# PREPARE FOR PAIN AND SUFFERING

### Today's Agenda:

- Welcome & Introductions (15min)
- Network Overview: The Church Revitalization Change Process (15min)
- Devotional: *Missionary Leadership in the Church* (30min)
- Reflections on Readings (15min)
- Break (15min)
- Teaching: *Step 2 – Prepare for Pain and Suffering* (60min)
- Exercise (30min)
- Finish

### Readings, Assignments & Coaching

Please complete the following readings before the next meeting and come prepared to share some reflections on each.

#### Readings for Today:

1. Nehemiah 1; Exodus 33:12-34:8; Psalm 56-57
2. *Re:VISION* by Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, pp. 36-51
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 25-39
4. *Prepare for Pain and Suffering*, Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland
5. *From Missionary Sending to Missional Church*, Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

#### Readings for Next Time:

1. Nehemiah 2; Psalm 13
2. *Make or Break Your Church in 365 Days* by Paul Borden, pp. 33-48
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 41-57
4. *From Missionary Sending to Missional Church*, Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

Also, please arrange your first coaching meeting with your coach between now and the next meeting. If you have not yet been assigned a coach, you will be connected to one soon.

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### **What is the Timeline for the Change Process?**

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Your coach will receive this training guide which includes a coaching page at the end of each section. The coaching guide includes discussion points to get you started. However, you can choose whatever challenge you are facing (normally it will be related to the monthly network topic) to discuss with your coach).

<sup>1</sup> These experts include Paul Borden, John Kaiser, Gary McIntosh, Aubrey Malphurs, Gordon Penfold, Thom Rainer, Nelson Searcy, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson. They are referenced frequently in the footnotes.

<sup>2</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 22-27.

### Devotional: *Missionary Leadership in the Church*

#### Introduction: Our God is a Missionary God

“Our God is a missionary God,”<sup>3</sup> whose vision is to bring people from every tribe and nation to Himself.

#### Revitalization Pastors are Missionaries

Christianity has declined in Canada to the point where many communities have few evangelical churches and believers.

As a revitalization pastor, you must think and act like a missionary to your community.<sup>4</sup> You must view your church as a missionary enterprise, rather than an established Christian parish.

*“As for you, always be sober-minded, **endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.**”*  
2 Timothy 4:5 (ESV)<sup>5</sup>

*“Due to the dissolution of the old Christendom, churches in the West now find themselves in a situation where they must witness to a society that can no longer be regarded as Christian. This shift has led to a renewed understanding of the church as a missionary community.”<sup>6</sup>*

- Jepp Bach Nikolajsen

#### Prioritizing Outreach

Jesus’ Great Commission commands us to go and make disciples, which involves both evangelism and discipleship.

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*  
Matthew 28:19-20

Theologically, we can argue that we should give equal weight to evangelism and discipleship. But in practice, you must prioritize evangelism over discipleship to achieve that balance.<sup>7</sup>

#### Why?

- Most of us are better at teaching and discipleship of Christians than evangelism of people outside the church—*it is easier for us to disciple than to evangelize.*
- The people outside the church *will not complain* that you are not evangelizing them, but the people inside *will complain* that you are not discipling them.
- Churches in decline have programs that are for Christians, not unbelievers
  - o It takes *more energy* to start evangelizing than continue discipling

<sup>3</sup> Paul Borthwick, *A Mind for Missions* (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1987), 23. Borthwick is quoting John Stott.

<sup>4</sup> Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, (Nashville, B&H Publishing, 2008, 56.

<sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>6</sup> Jepp Bach Nikolajsen, “Beyond Christendom: Lesslie Newbigin as a Post Christendom Theologian,” *Exchange* 41, no. 4 (2012): 367.

<sup>7</sup> John Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 25-27.

## Selected Scriptures on the Missionary Call of God

*“Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonours you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”* Genesis 12:1-3

*“Declare His glory among the nations, His marvellous works among all the peoples! For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens.”* Psalm 96:3-5

*“I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”* Isaiah 49:6

*“And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?”* Jonah 4:11

*“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”* Matthew 28:18-20

*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”* Acts 1:8

*“As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”* 2 Timothy 4:5

### Quotes:

*“World Evangelism is the imperative of the New Testament. ...We are moving within the centre stream of the New Testament when I assert that the principal task of the church is to communicate intelligibly and effectively a divine message to the world in order to bring man to a living relationship with Christ by faith.”<sup>8</sup>* - George Peters

*“If we say that we will serve both groups equally, you may be sure that our congregation will wind up hopelessly focused inward. How so? Because the needs of those inside the congregation are the ones that will always be in your face. ...no one will ever march down the street from the neighborhood, pound on the pastor’s office door, and demand, ‘Why haven’t you started making disciples of Jesus Christ on my block?!’ If we fail to put both intention and resources behind the mission of serving others before serving ourselves, we will not escape the gravitational force of inwardness.”<sup>9</sup>* - John Kaiser

<sup>8</sup> George Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions* (Chicago: Moody, 1972), 199, 209.

<sup>9</sup> John Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 26-27.

**Teaching: Step 2 - Prepare for Pain and Suffering**

It is important to understand that there is a personal cost to leading revitalization, as the quotes below indicate:

**Hans Finzel:** *“Much of leadership seems to have to do with managing change, yet nothing is more hazardous to your leadership health.”<sup>10</sup>*

**Paul Borden** wants revitalization leaders that people in the church will *“...make attacks on our integrity, our spouse, and our family. If they can cost us our jobs or negatively affect our employment, they will do so out of self-interest. ...part of the pastor’s preparation is to work at developing a support system for the family as well as to develop personal habits that are healthy and disciplined. ...The price of change will be high. The more prepared the pastor is to pay that price, the better.”<sup>11</sup>*

**Gary McIntosh:** *“Leading a church through a period of revitalization takes a great toll on a pastor’s emotional well-being. Remaining whole emotionally, spiritually, and physically is a fundamental necessity for those leading churches in fresh directions. Spiritual disciplines of prayer, rest, and quietness are prerequisites for lasting spiritual health. Pastors leading a church in revitalization will find their emotional lives taxed to the limit. Quiet reflection and trust in God will sustain the revitalization leader through times of discouragement and suffering.”<sup>12</sup>*

What might people do to you in the process of revitalization?

- Attack you personally:
  - Call you a tyrant
  - Say you are a control freak
  - Ascribe evil motives to you
  - Hurt you financially
  - Tell you you’re proud
  - Try to ruin your reputation
  - Gossip about you, slander you
  - Give you bad job reviews
  - Make you want to quit, but you feel trapped
  - Try to get you fired
- Attack your family:
  - Your wife
  - Your kids
- Attack new attendees who support you:
  - Belittle their spirituality
  - Block them from service or leadership
  - Scare unbelievers away
  - Create a scene at meetings

**You must prepare spiritually for the attacks:**

- Ask the Lord for endurance
- Take your Sabbath and holidays to rest
- Trust wholly in Jesus
- Build up your personal savings
- Warn your family
- Walk closely with God (Scripture reading and prayer)
- Remember that following Jesus means walking the path of suffering
- Get outside encouragement and support
- Believe God will bless your efforts

<sup>10</sup> Hans Finzel, *Empowered Leaders* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 99.

<sup>11</sup> Paul Borden, *Direct Hit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 93.

<sup>12</sup> Gary McIntosh, *There’s Hope for Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 38.

### Selected Scriptures on Suffering

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, **who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame**, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. **Consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.**”* Hebrews 12:1-3

*“Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted...”* 2 Timothy 3:12

*“**Share in suffering** as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”* 2 Timothy 2:3

*“Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”* Romans 5:3-5

*“As for you, always be sober-minded, **endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.**”* 2 Timothy 4:5

*“If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.”* 1 Corinthians 12:26

*“For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in Him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.”* Philippians 1:29-30

*“Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will **entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.**”* 1 Peter 4:19

*“**Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.”* Matthew 5:10-11

*“For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know.”* 1 Thessalonians 3:4



## Network Coaching

Coaching is an essential part of the Church Revitalization Network. You will be matched with an experienced pastor who will coach you each month on applying the monthly network teachings to leading revitalization in your church.

You will need to plan a coaching call/FaceTime/Zoom/face-to-face meeting once each month for approximately one hour. You are welcome to meet more often if you and your coach are available.

There will be a few possible discussion points provided in each coaching session to get you started. However, you can choose whatever challenge you are facing (normally it will be related to the monthly network topic) to discuss with your coach.

# SESSION 2 COACHING GUIDE

## PREPARE FOR PAIN AND SUFFERING

### Content Summary

- I. Introduction: The Church Revitalization Change Process
- II. Devotional: Missionary Leadership in the Church
- III. Teaching: Step 2: *Prepare for Pain and Suffering*

### Coaching Discussion Starters

The discussion points below are meant as suggestions to help your conversation, but you are not required to use them. Please feel free to discuss whatever topics are most applicable to the coachee's ministry situation.

- a. *General*: Is there a topic that arose from the first network meeting that you would like to discuss further, with a focus on applying it in your church setting?
- b. *Missionary Leadership*: What is the current balance of evangelism and discipleship ministries in your church? Do you think it is the right balance? How might it need to change?
- c. *Prepare for Pain and Suffering*: Have you experienced significant pain through leading revitalization? How did you handle it? How did it impact your family?
- d. *Prepare for Pain and Suffering*: Were you expecting to experience pain and suffering? Would you react differently if it happened today? If so, describe the difference.
- e. *Prepare for Pain and Suffering*: What steps do **you** need to take to prepare yourself for pain and suffering in leading in church revitalization?
- f. *Prepare for Pain and Suffering*: What steps does your **family** need to take to prepare themselves for pain and suffering in church revitalization?

### The Church Revitalization Change Process

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step **Church Revitalization Change Process**. We will focus on one step each month in the Church Revitalization Network.

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
- 2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering**
3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality
4. Build Credibility
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
6. Develop a Vision
7. Communicate the Vision
8. Implement Changes
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparation steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparation steps.



## SESSION 3

# CREATE URGENCY BY DEFINING REALITY

### Today's Agenda:

- Welcome & Introductions (5min)
- Coaching: How did it go? (15min)
- Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process* (10min)
- Devotional: *Strategic Leadership in the Church* (30min)
- Reflections on Readings (15min)
- Break (15min)
- Teaching: *Step 3 – Create Urgency by Defining Reality* (60min)
- Lifecycle Exercise & Assignment (30min)
- Finish

### Readings, Assignments & Coaching

Please complete the readings for next month listed below, and come to the next meeting prepared to share some reflections on each.

Also, please arrange with your coach for your next coaching meeting between now and the next meeting.

Please complete the “Define Reality” assignment to discuss with your coach. Be ready to discuss any insights you have gained at the next meeting.

#### Readings for Today:

1. Nehemiah 2, Psalm 13
2. *Make or Break Your Church in 365 Days* by Paul Borden, pp. 33-48
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 41-57
4. *From Missionary Sending to Missional Church*, Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

#### Readings for Next Month:

1. Exodus 4:1-9, 27-31; Galatians 1:11-2:10
2. *Make or Break Your Church in 365 Days* by Paul Borden, 49-72
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, 59-72
4. *Build Credibility*, Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

## Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process*

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step *Church Revitalization Change Process*, that I have developed based on the research of church health and revitalization experts and the change process developed by change author John Kotter.<sup>2</sup> We will focus on one step in the change process at each meeting.

### The Church Revitalization Change Process:

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
- 3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality**
4. Build Credibility
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
6. Develop a Vision
7. Communicate the Vision
8. Implement Changes
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparatory steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparatory steps.

Note also that the steps are not always linear. For example you are always building credibility (step 4) and always praying, confessing and trusting God (Step 1).

### **What is the Timeline for the Change Process?**

You are learning the steps in the Church Revitalization Change Process faster than you will be able to implement them. You should anticipate the change process lasting **anywhere from two to five years**, and possibly longer. Each church setting is different, with some churches being more ready for change than others. If your church faces an imminent crisis, the leadership will be more open to try significant changes quickly, than if your church is in a long, slow decline.

Your coach will receive this training guide which includes a coaching page at the end of each section. The coaching guide includes discussion points to get you started. However, you can choose whatever challenge you are facing (normally it will be related to the monthly network topic) to discuss with your coach).

<sup>1</sup> These experts include Paul Borden, John Kaiser, Gary McIntosh, Aubrey Malphurs, Gordon Penfold, Thom Rainer, Nelson Searcy, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson. They are referenced frequently in the footnotes.

<sup>2</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 22-27.

## Devotional: *Strategic Leadership in the Church*

*"Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap."*<sup>3</sup>  
Galatians 6:7 (ESV)

*"...there is a direct correlation between sowing and reaping, which is how God has established matters."*<sup>4</sup>  
- Richard Longenecker, commenting on Galatians 6:7

### Introduction

As pastors we need to be wise in our leadership and make plans, but strategic leaders are sometimes seen as relying on human methods instead of prayer and the Holy Spirit.

Most of us have strategies for how we organize our day, how we plan to retire, etc...  
We would consider it unwise and perhaps unspiritual not to make these plans

We expect our missionaries to utilize strategies appropriate to their culture  
We are missionaries to our communities, and need to utilize effective strategies

Note that the present methods in our churches are someone's strategy  
Choice of musical instruments, stage layout, building layout, wall decorations, staffing configuration, bookkeeping systems, meeting times, etc...  
The question is not if we will or will not use strategies, but whether we will use someone's strategies from the past, or the strategies God inspires in us today

### What does the Bible teach us about strategy?

- God's basic law about how life works is that **"You reap what you sow"**.
  - Galatians 6:7, Jesus' teaching, Proverbs is based on this principle
- To create strategy is to apply God's principle, "You reap what you sow"
- Many Biblical figures used strategies and made plans:
  - **Moses** followed Jethro's wise organizational strategy (Exodus 18)
  - **Nehemiah** is a model of making great plans and trusting the Lord (Nehemiah 4:9)
  - **Jesus'** basic plan for ministry was to travel around Israel in an itinerant ministry of preaching, teaching and healing (Matthew 4:23, 9:35)
  - **Paul's** strategy involved going to key cities and preaching, typically starting off in the local synagogue (Acts 13:14, 14:1, 17:1-2, etc...)
- Human plans and God's guidance work in harmony
  - Acts 16:1-15, Neh. 4:9, Prov. 16:1, 3, 9
  - Make plans, but always look to the Lord for guidance and redirection

<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>4</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians, Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, 1990), 280.

## Selected Scriptures and Comments on Strategy and Planning

*“But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and that the breaches were beginning to be closed, they were very angry. And they all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. And **we prayed to our God and set a guard** as a protection against them day and night.”*  
Nehemiah 4:7-9

*“The celebrated remark ‘we prayed...and set a guard’ reflects the faith of Nehemiah. The partnership of heaven and earth, of trust and good management, is taken for granted as something normal and harmonious...”<sup>5</sup>*  
- Derek Kidner, commenting on Nehemiah 4:9

*“Train up a child in the way he should go;  
even when he is old he will not depart from it.”*  
Proverbs 22:6

*“Proverbs makes a very important argument in favour of the connection between certain behaviours and their outcomes. Wise actions and speech result in positive consequences, and foolish ones have negative consequences.”<sup>6</sup>*  
- Tremper Longman

*“The years of our life are seventy,  
or even by reason of strength eighty;  
yet their span is but toil and trouble;  
they are soon gone, and we fly away.  
Who considers the power of your anger,  
and your wrath according to the fear of you?  
So teach us to number our days  
that we may get a heart of wisdom.”*  
Psalm 90:10-12

When I preached from Psalm 90, my big idea was:

*“When you know your days are numbered, it makes you wise.”*

### **Knowing the brevity of your life will cause you to be strategic in your use of time.**

God expects leaders to be strategic!

*“...the need for better strategies in reaching the lost is tremendous due to the increasingly postmodern, post-Christian world in which the Church in the West finds itself. Second, despite all of its potential misapplication, many forms of strategy and planning are thoroughly biblical. Planning is a divine attribute (cf. Eph. 1:11), and humanity’s ability to create, plan, and strategize is part of what it means to be made in the image of God.”<sup>7</sup>*  
- James Nored

<sup>5</sup> Derek Kidner, *Ezra & Nehemiah* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1979), 91-92.

<sup>6</sup> Tremper Longman, *Proverbs, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 61.

<sup>7</sup> James Nored, *“A Missional Outreach Strategy for the High Pointe Church of Christ”* (Fuller Theological Seminary, 2011), 4.

**Selected Proverbs on Planning**

***Plans backed up by hard work are profitable:***

*“The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance,  
but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.”* Proverbs 21:5

***Seek wise counsel as you plan (Note that God assumes we should plan):***

*“Without counsel plans fail,  
but with many advisers they succeed.”* Proverbs 15:22

*“Plans are established by counsel;  
by wise guidance wage war.”* Proverbs 20:18

***Put the Lord first in your plans:***

*“Commit your work to the LORD,  
and your plans will be established.”* Proverbs 16:3

***The Lord works in and above your plans:***

*“The plans of the heart belong to man,  
but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.”* Proverbs 16:1

*“The heart of man plans his way,  
but the LORD establishes his steps.”* Proverbs 16:9

*“Many are the plans in the mind of a man,  
but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.”* Proverbs 19:21



### Teaching: Step 3 - Create Urgency by Defining Reality

“The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality.”<sup>8</sup>

- Max DePree

A church needs to be sufficiently dissatisfied with its current reality to gain the motivation necessary for change to occur. But many churches do not have an accurate view of their own reality. It is the leader’s job to define reality. Before you can define your church’s reality to others, you have to gain a clear understanding of your church’s reality for yourself.

You can define reality by determining the following:

- Key Statistics about the church
- Key Statistics about the community
- Determining your church’s location on The Church Lifecycle chart

**Key Statistics about the Church:** Determine the following statistics about your church over the past year. Then identify trends over the past decade.

- |               |                                |   |
|---------------|--------------------------------|---|
| • Attendance  | • Leaders                      | • Facility Updates                          |
| • Baptisms    | • Evangelism Efforts           | • Important Events in the Church            |
| • Conversions | • Giving                       | • Other meaningful stats (ie # of children) |
| • Members     | • # of Pastors (last 20 years) |   |

**Community:** Discover key information about your community. You can get some data for free online from Statistics Canada (2011 NHS is the most recent year for Religious Data).<sup>9</sup> <sup>0</sup>

- **What % of your Community that attends an evangelical church?**
  - Add up the average attendance in local evangelical churches and divide by the total population of your community.
- **Community Demographics**

• Avg. Age	• Avg. Income	• Cultural Background
• Family Makeup	• Avg. Education	
- **Community Spiritual Makeup**

• Catholic, Anglican, United etc...	• Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist	• No Religious Affiliation
-------------------------------------	---------------------------	----------------------------
- **Community Interests**

• Sports	• Music	• Business
• Art	• Theater	• The Outdoors

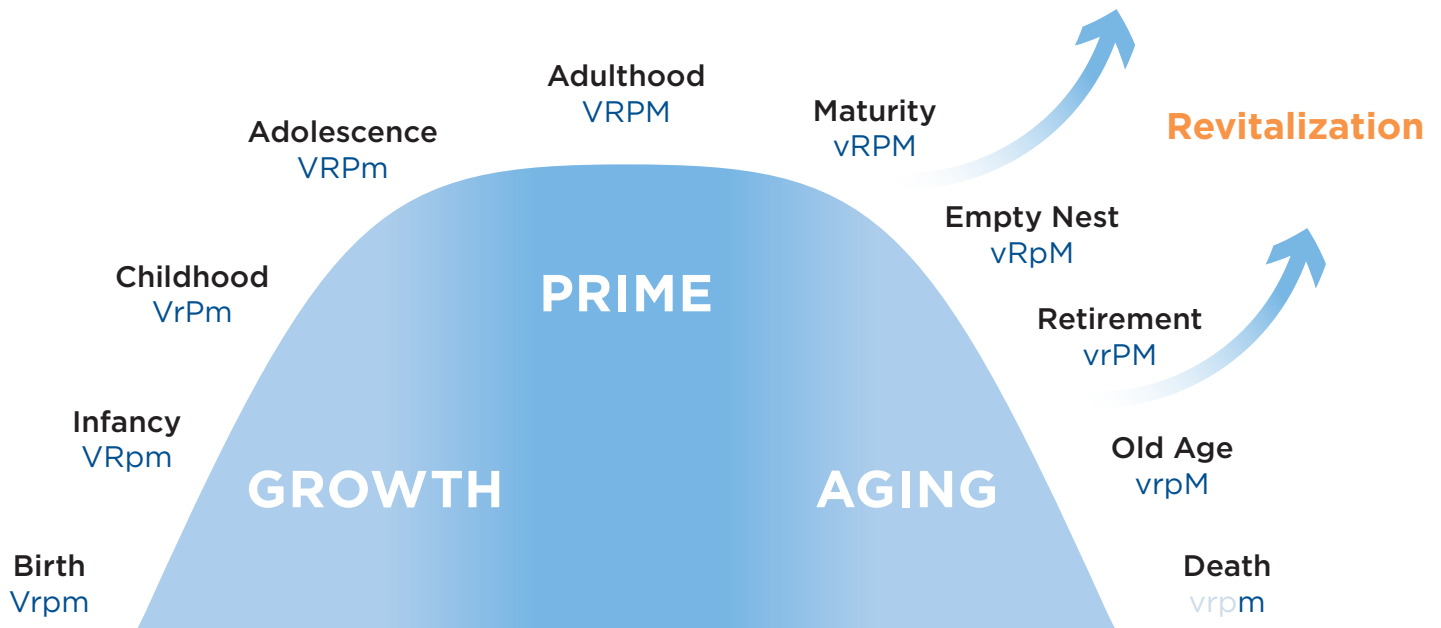
After reviewing your information: If you were to write a missionary support letter to supporters (like your missionaries do for you), what would you tell them about your recent efforts? Would they keep supporting you?

<sup>8</sup> Max DePree, *Leadership Is an Art* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 11.

<sup>9</sup> To find Stats Can info, search the internet for “2011 NHS [insert your community]” You will find an abundance of demographic data. If you search on the page for “Baptist” you will find religious data.

<sup>10</sup> The most recent data on religion comes from the 2011 Census. The 2021 Census will provide updated data.

Where would you place your church on the Church Life Cycle Chart below?<sup>11 12</sup>



V Vision • Leadership • Mission • Purpose • Core Values  
 R: Relationships • Experiences • Discipleship  
 P: Programs • Events • Ministries • Services • Activities  
 M: Management • Accountability • Systems • Resources

	<b>Upside</b>		<b>Downside</b>		
V	= V ision	Birth	Vrpm	Maturity	vRPM
R	= R elationships	Infancy	VRpm	Empty Nest	vRpM
P	= P rograms	Childhood	VrPm	Retirement	vrPM
M	= M anagement	Adolescence	VRPm	Old Age	vrpM
		Adulthood	VRPM	Death	vrpm

"I would place my church at: \_\_\_\_\_ on the Church Lifecycle Chart."

<sup>11</sup> George Bullard, "The Lifecycle and Stages of Congregational Development " Used with permission.

<sup>12</sup> Updated design for the Lifecycle Chart by Henry Alves.

**Assignment: Define Reality about your Church and Community**

Please complete and discuss with your coach prior to our next network meeting

**1. Describe Key Metrics in your Church for the past year** (Estimate where necessary)

Avg. Sun. Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Baptisms: \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Conversions: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Adults:* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Children:* \_\_\_\_\_  
 # of Leaders: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Small Groups: \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Giving: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Over the last 10 years, use the following labels to describe each category:**

*G = Growing/Improving P = Plateaued D = Declining U = Uncertain*

- |                |                      |                                  |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Attendance   | • Leaders            | • Small Groups                   |
| • Baptisms     | • Evangelism Efforts | • Children’s Ministries          |
| • Conversions  | • Facilities         | • Overall Ministry Effectiveness |
| • Discipleship | • Giving             |                                  |

**3. Over the last 20 years, please list:**

Number of Lead Pastors:  
 Average Pastoral Tenure:

**4. Where is your church on the lifecycle chart?**

**5. Describe your church’s local Community below** (Use Stats Canada data, estimate as needed)

Approximately how many people live in your church’s community?  
 Approximately how many attend an evangelical church?  
 Estimate what % of your community attends an evangelical church

Community Demographics (BA=Below Average, A=Average, AA=Above Average)

Average Community Age	Avg. in your Church
Average Family Income	Avg. in your Church
Average Education	Avg. in your Church

3 Largest Cultural Groups

3 Largest in your Church

3 Largest Religious Backgrounds

3 Largest interests/activities

(ie Sports, Art, Music, Theatre, Nightlife, Family Events, Business)

**6. Make three conclusions based on this survey of your church and community.**

# SESSION 3 COACHING GUIDE

## CREATE URGENCY BY DEFINING REALITY

### Content Summary

- I. Devotional: *Strategic Leadership in the Church*
- II. Teaching: *Step 3: Create Urgency by Defining Reality*
- III. Assignment: *Define Reality in Your Church and Community*

The participant should forward you their completed assignment about “defining reality” in their church and community prior to the coaching meeting. You should be able to have a good coaching conversation based on the assignment.

### Coaching Discussion Starters

The discussion points below are meant as suggestions to help your conversation, but you are not required to use them. Please feel free to discuss whatever topics are most applicable to the coachee’s ministry situation.

- a. Where did you place your church on the lifecycle chart? Discuss your reasoning.
- b. Discuss the information that you discovered in your assignment about the realities in your church and community. Did anything surprise you? Does anything stand out to you as strategically important in how you will lead revitalization in your unique setting?
- c. Do you think your board and/or key leaders are ready to complete the exercise/assignment that you have completed? When could you plan to do this exercise with your team?
- d. Are you (or others in your church) concerned that being strategic in your leadership of the church is unspiritual? Is there a biblical character or passage that has helped to change or balance your thinking? Discuss.
- e. Is there a topic that arose from the last network meeting that you would like to discuss further, with a focus on applying it in your church setting?

### The Church Revitalization Change Process

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step **Church Revitalization Change Process**. We will focus on one step each month in the Church Revitalization Network.

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
- 3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality**
4. Build Credibility
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
6. Develop a Vision
7. Communicate the Vision
8. Implement Changes
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparation steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparation steps.



## SESSION 4

# BUILD CREDIBILITY

### Today's Agenda:

Welcome (5min)

Devotional: *The Sources of David's Leadership Credibility* (25min)

Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process* (10min)

Discussion: Coaching & *Defining Reality* Assignment (20min)

Reflections on Readings (15min)

Break (15min)

Teaching: *Step 4 – Build Credibility* (60min)

Reflect: *How can I Build Credibility as a Leader?* (30min)

Finish

### Readings, Assignments & Coaching

Please complete the readings for next month listed below, and come to the next meeting prepared to share some reflections on each.

Also, please arrange with your coach for your next coaching meeting between now and the next meeting. I would encourage you to focus with your coach on developing a plan for areas where you can build credibility in your leadership.

#### Readings for Today:

1. Exodus 4:1-9, 27-31; Galatians 1:11-2:10
2. *Make or Break Your Church in 365 Days* by Paul Borden, 49-72
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, 59-72
4. *Build Credibility*, Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland
5. *Every Pastor's First 180 Days* by Charles Stone, 131-137, 155-165

#### Readings for Next Month:

1. Find/recall two passages of Scripture where new leadership had to be established (or current leaders needed a change of heart and mind), in order for God's people to move forward with God's plans.
2. *Direct Hit* by Paul Borden, 68-79
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, 83-93
4. *Build a New Dominant Coalition*, Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

## Devotional: *The Sources of David's Leadership Credibility*

Leadership credibility was built in the Bible using divine and human activities.

*“He chose David his servant  
and took him from the sheep pens;  
from tending the sheep he brought him  
to be the shepherd of his people Jacob,  
of Israel his inheritance.  
And David shepherded them with integrity of heart;  
with skillful hands he led them.”*

Psalm 78:70-72 (NIV)<sup>1</sup>

### The Divine Component (Psalm 78:70-71)

God chose David and raised him up as a leader to do his work with his people.

*“He chose David...and took him...he brought him to be the shepherd...”*

David's leadership credibility was established by God's sovereign choice and work in his life.

### The Human Component (Psalm 78:72)

David carried out the leadership role that God had given him to do, with two main features:

1. “David shepherded them with integrity of heart”
2. “with skillful hands he led them”

David's leadership credibility also was established by his personal integrity and skill in leading.

*Note:* David lost leadership credibility when he lacked integrity and led foolishly in his sin with Bathsheba and the cover-up.

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## Leaders Who Built Credibility in the Bible

**Paul built personal credibility by going up to Jerusalem to meet with the “Influential” leaders of the church: Peter, James and John (Galatians 2:1-10).**

*“Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain. But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery—to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you. And from those who seemed to be influential (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those, I say, who seemed influential added nothing to me. On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised (for he who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry to the circumcised worked also through me for mine to the Gentiles), and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.”*

Galatians 2:1-10 (ESV)<sup>2</sup>

**Paul built Epaphras’ credibility by sharing about his labour in the gospel on behalf of his fellows Colossians (Colossians 4:12-13).**

*“Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.”*

Colossians 4:12-13

### Biblical Figures who developed leadership credibility:

- Moses
- Joshua
- Ruth
- Gideon
- David
- Solomon
- Peter
- Paul
- Mark
- Timothy

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

### Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process*

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step *Church Revitalization Change Process*, that I have developed based on the research of church health and revitalization experts<sup>3</sup> and the change process developed by change author John Kotter.<sup>4</sup> We will focus on one step in the change process at each meeting.

#### The Church Revitalization Change Process:

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality
- 4. Build Credibility**
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
6. Develop a Vision
7. Communicate the Vision
8. Implement Changes
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparatory steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparatory steps.

Note also that the steps are not always linear. For example you are always building credibility (step 4) and always praying, confessing and trusting God (Step 1).

### What is the Timeline for the Change Process?

You are learning the steps in the Church Revitalization Change Process faster than you will be able to implement them. You should anticipate the change process lasting **anywhere from two to five years**, and possibly longer. Each church setting is different, with some churches being more ready for change than others. If your church faces an imminent crisis, the leadership will be more open to try significant changes quickly, than if your church is in a long, slow decline.

Your coach can help you to discern when it is time to move forward with key steps in the change process and when it is time to wait. A critical turning point is when your new dominant coalition has developed enough strength and depth to support you in leading change. It can take a few years for that new coalition to develop. We will talk more about the dominant coalition in Step 5.

<sup>3</sup> These experts include Paul Borden, John Kaiser, Gary McIntosh, Aubrey Malphurs, Gordon Penfold, Thom Rainer, Nelson Searcy, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson. They are referenced frequently in the footnotes.

<sup>4</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 22-27.

## Teaching: Step 4 - Build Credibility

“What we found in our investigation of admired leadership qualities is that more than anything, people want to follow leaders who are credible. Credibility is the foundation of leadership.”<sup>5</sup>  
 - James Kouzes and Barry Posner, Leadership Researchers

**“Credibility is the foundation of leadership.”**

It is *essential* for a leader to build credibility in preparation for leading change.

Kouzes and Posner’s research indicates three criteria which determine a leader’s credibility, and I have added a fourth based on the example of Biblical leaders:

- **Trustworthiness:** We must believe “that their word can be trusted.”<sup>6</sup>
- **Expertise:** We must believe “that they have the knowledge and skill to lead.”<sup>7</sup>
- **Dynamism:** We must believe “that they’re personally passionate and enthusiastic about the work that they’re doing.”<sup>8</sup>
- **Evidence of God’s Work in and through them:** the Lord sovereignly establishes leaders and gives them credibility through his work in their lives.

**How can a Church Leader Build Credibility?**

**1. Ask the Lord to Establish your Credibility**

The Lord can establish your credibility through many means. His basic principle is that He exalts those who are *humble, servants, and faithful with little* (Luke 19:17, 22:26, 1 Peter 5:6).

**2. Do the “Expected” Tasks well**

Do the tasks that your congregation expects a pastor to do. Some of these tasks will be chaplaincy work rather than visionary leadership work, but they will help you build credibility for leading change.<sup>9</sup> The list below will vary from church to church, but all churches “expect” their pastor to do some things such as:

- a. Leading groups or studies
- b. Attending committee meetings
- c. Visitation
- d. Other tasks unique to your church

**3. Preach Quality Sermons**

You are perceived to have expertise as a pastor when you preach consistently good sermons. Even if you are not naturally “charismatic” in your preaching style, you can learn to be more dynamic and interesting. I suggest three main rules for preaching:

1. Do be Biblical.
2. Do be Spiritual.
3. Don’t be Boring.

<sup>5</sup> James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2007), 37.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Paul Borden, *Direct Hit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 84.

*Tip:* Many sermons are Biblically sound, but not logical or engaging. A sermon needs to take people on a logical journey that flows out of the text and into their lives. You engage people by raising the tension presented in the passage and showing how the text resolves the tension.

*Tip:* If you have never watched a recording of yourself preaching, do so, and ask yourself if you would attend your church a second time, based on your preaching. Honestly critique your message and delivery. Ask a pastor who you think is a good preacher to review and kindly critique your message and delivery. If you are humble and can take it, you will learn a lot!!

*Note:* Heritage Seminary<sup>10</sup> offers a *Graduate Certificate in Biblical Preaching*. Many pastors have had their preaching strengthened significantly through this program.

#### 4. Create (Early) Wins

Paul Borden interviewed pastors who had lead revitalization in their churches, and asked them what they did when they first came to the church. From these interviews, he suggests thirteen areas where a pastor can have some early wins. Although many of us are not in our first year at a church, we can still learn from Borden's list.

Let's spend some time discussing these areas together:

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Learn the congregation       | <i>Stats, personal contacts, previous pastors</i>  |
| 2. Learn the community          | <i>Stats, personal contacts, walk/drive around</i> |
| 3. Develop a first-year plan    | <i>Include some of items 1-13 in your plan</i>     |
| 4. Gather people                | <i>Who? How?</i>                                   |
| 5. Create big events            | <i>Pre-evangelism and evangelism events</i>        |
| 6. Improve curb appeal          | <i>What? How? \$?</i>                              |
| 7. Energize worship             | <i>Preaching, worship, service order, other</i>    |
| 8. Communicate (Vision)         | <i>Preaching, one-on-one, groups</i>               |
| 9. Recruit leaders              | <i>Who? How?</i>                                   |
| 10. Be present in the community | <i>Connect in positive ways</i>                    |
| 11. Evangelize                  | <i>Who? How?</i>                                   |
| 12. Address Money               | <i>Money issues – systems, reports, spending</i>   |
| 13. Pray <sup>11</sup>          | <i>Prayer for the church's vision</i>              |

Borden notes that a pastor should “**select three, four, or five things to do, driven by the ministry context in which you find yourself.**”<sup>12</sup> The pastor will need to choose the areas that are most needed, and most attainable. However, Borden reports that, “In all the interviews pastors identified one common denominator during their first year: building congregational attendance.” Focussing on a few of the fifteen areas listed above can help you achieve this goal of building congregational attendance.

**Additional Note:** Charles Stone's book *Every Pastor's First 180 Days* is filled with practical leadership principles that will help a pastor build credibility. I highly recommend it!

<sup>0</sup> For more about Heritage Seminary, please visit [discoverheritage.ca](http://discoverheritage.ca)

<sup>11</sup> Paul Borden, *Make or Break Your Church in 365 Days* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012), 52-70.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

**Reflect: *How can I Build Credibility as a Leader?***

*Do I have leadership credibility with my people?*

*How can I build leadership credibility?*



# SESSION 4 COACHING GUIDE

## BUILD CREDIBILITY

### Content Summary

- I. Devotional: *David's Leadership Credibility* (pp. 2-3 of the handout)
- II. Teaching: Step 4: *Build Credibility* (pp. 5-6 of the handout)

*Four sources of leadership credibility were discussed:*

1. **Trustworthiness:** We must believe "that their word can be trusted."<sup>1</sup>
2. **Expertise:** We must believe "that they have the knowledge and skill to lead."<sup>2</sup>
3. **Dynamism:** We must believe "that they're personally passionate and enthusiastic about the work that they're doing."<sup>3</sup>
4. **Evidence of God's Work in and through them:** the Lord sovereignly establishes leaders and gives them credibility through his work in their lives.

*Four steps were suggested to build credibility:*

1. Ask the Lord to Establish your Credibility
2. Do the "Expected" Tasks Well
3. Preach Quality Sermons
4. Create (Early) Wins - 13 Ideas

### Coaching Discussion Starters

The discussion points below are meant as suggestions to help your conversation, but you are not required to use them. Please feel free to discuss whatever topics are most applicable to the coachee's ministry situation.

- a. How much leadership credibility do you think you have with your people?
- b. What has built your leadership credibility with your people?
- c. What has reduced your leadership credibility with your people?  
*Note: Accurate answers to the three questions above depend on the coachee's self-awareness and emotional intelligence. Your discussion can help give them a more accurate assessment of themselves and their people's perception of them.*
- d. *Steps for Building Credibility:* What steps from this month's teaching do you need to take to grow your leadership credibility with your people?
- e. *Strategic Leadership:* Is there a change in your church that you have been thinking about making? Do you think you have the leadership credibility to lead your people in this change? Discuss.
- f. *General:* Is there a topic that arose from the last network meeting that you would like to discuss further, with a focus on applying it in your church setting?

<sup>1</sup> James Kouzes and Barry Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2007), 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

## SESSION 4 COACHING GUIDE

### BUILD CREDIBILITY

#### The Church Revitalization Change Process

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step **Church Revitalization Change Process**. We will focus on one step each month in the Church Revitalization Network.

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality
- 4. Build Credibility**
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
6. Develop a Vision
7. Communicate the Vision
8. Implement Changes
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparation steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparation steps.



# SESSION 5

## BUILD A NEW DOMINANT COALITION

### Today's Agenda:

- Welcome (5min)
- Devotional: *How God Changes Us - Ephesians 4* (30min)
- Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process* (10min)
- Coaching Review (15min)
- Reflections on Readings (15min)
- Break (15min)
- Teaching: *Step 5 – Build a New Dominant Coalition* (60min)
- Reflect: *The Long View - Who should be in my new Dominant Coalition* (30min)
- Finish

### Readings, Assignments & Coaching

Please complete the readings for next month listed below, and come to the next meeting prepared to share some reflections on each.

Also, please arrange with your coach for your next coaching meeting between now and the next meeting. Be sure to discuss who your current dominant coalition is, who it needs to be in the future, and how to get there.

#### Readings for Today:

1. Find/recall two passages of Scripture where new leadership had to be established (or current leaders needed a change of heart and mind), in order for God's people to move forward with God's plans.
2. *Direct Hit* by Paul Borden, 68-79
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, 83-93
4. *Build a New Dominant Coalition*, Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland
5. *Every Pastor's First 180 Days* by Charles Stone, 131-137, 155-165

#### Readings for Next Month:

1. Ezekiel 37:1-14, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:6-8, Acts 10:1-22, Revelation 4:1-11, Genesis 15:1-5.
2. *Re:Vision* by Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, 146-165
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, 73-82
4. *Direct Hit* by Paul Borden, 45-52
5. *Develop a Vision*, Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

**Devotional: *How God Changes Us***

*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.*

*They are darkened in their understanding,  
alienated from the life of God  
because of the ignorance that is in them,  
due to their hardness of heart.*

*They have become callous  
and have given themselves up to sensuality,  
greedy to practice every kind of impurity.*

*But that is not the way you learned Christ!*

*— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him,  
as the truth is in Jesus,  
to put off your old self,  
which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through  
deceitful desires,  
and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,  
and to put on the new self,  
created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Ephesians 4:17-24 (ESV)<sup>1</sup>

**God's Change Process (Ephesians 4:20-24)**

Paul assumes every Christian was taught this process - *"the way you learned Christ"*

Step 1: *"to put off your old self"*

Step 2: *"to be renewed in the spirit of your minds"*

Step 3: *"to put on the new self"*

**Multiple Examples:** Ephesians 4:24-31 gives multiple examples of God's change process in action. The way we learned Christ is also the pattern by which He sanctifies us.

v25

Step 1: Put off: Falsehood

Step 2: Renew your mind: We are members of one another and should be honest

Step 3: Put on: Speaking the truth to one another

vv26 -27

Put off: Lingering Anger

Renew your mind: Lingering anger gives the devil a foothold

Put on: Anger that dissipates quickly

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

v28

Put off: Stealing

Renew your mind: Hard working people are able to be generous with those in need, which eliminates the need for theft

Put on: Honest Work

v29

Put off: Corrupting Talk

Renew your mind: The purpose of our speech is to give grace to others

Put on: Speech that benefits others

v30

Renew Your Mind: All of these sins grieve the Spirit who sealed you as Christ's eternal possession.

vv31-32

Put off: Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour and slander

Renew your mind: You must forgive others as God has forgiven you.

Put on: kindness to one another, tenderheartedness, forgiveness

### **All Three Steps are Needed**

You need all three steps in God's change process.

If you neglect putting off the old self, you will not make much progress.

If you put off the old self but do not put on the new self, you create a vacuum and will fall back into your old ways.

If you put off the old self, put on the new self, but do not renew your mind, the changes will not stick, because your thinking is not aligned with your actions.

The same is true for any change process. Without renewing the mind, change stalls as the old way of thinking resists the new way of acting. Many pastors have learned this lesson the hard way when they tried to make changes without renewing the mind of the church's leadership. You cannot make changes that stick unless the collective mind of key church leaders is renewed.

In the Church Revitalization Change Process, "Build a New Dominant Coalition" is the step where the mind of church leadership is renewed. The fundamental thought process of the leadership is transformed to be ready for the new life that God is breathing into the church. When the mind of leadership is renewed, the church's thinking will align with her actions, enabling the church to put off old ways that need to change and put on new ways.

## Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process*

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step *Church Revitalization Change Process*, that I have developed based on the research of church health and revitalization experts<sup>2</sup> and the change process developed by change author John Kotter.<sup>3</sup> We will focus on one step in the change process at each meeting.

### The Church Revitalization Change Process:

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality
4. Build Credibility
- 5. Build a New Dominant Coalition**
6. Develop a Vision
7. Communicate the Vision
8. Implement Changes
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparatory steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparatory steps.

Note also that the steps are not always linear. For example you are always building credibility (step 4) and always praying, confessing and trusting God (Step 1).

### What is the Timeline for the Change Process?

You are learning the steps in the Church Revitalization Change Process faster than you will be able to implement them. You should anticipate the change process lasting **anywhere from two to five years**, and possibly longer. Each church setting is different, with some churches being more ready for change than others. If your church faces an imminent crisis, the leadership will be more open to try significant changes quickly, than if your church is in a long, slow decline.

Your coach can help you to discern when it is time to move forward with key steps in the change process and when it is time to wait. A critical turning point is when your new dominant coalition has developed enough strength and depth to support you in leading change. It can take a few years for that new coalition to develop. We will talk more about the dominant coalition in Step 5.

<sup>2</sup> These experts include Paul Borden, John Kaiser, Gary McIntosh, Aubrey Malphurs, Gordon Penfold, Thom Rainer, Nelson Searcy, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson. They are referenced frequently in the footnotes.

<sup>3</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 22-27.

**Teaching: Step 5 - Build a New Dominant Coalition**

*“For your church to be revitalized, you must form your own dominant coalition.”<sup>4</sup>*

- Gary McIntosh

*“Many will talk of the need for change while doing everything in their power to inhibit it. This is particularly true of those who brought in the pastor to lead the congregational change. When they realize that real change means a loss of their influence, they quickly turn and become the pastor’s adversary.”<sup>5</sup>*

- Paul Borden

**Key Influencers and Leading Change**

When a pastor wants to make a change, it is most effective to start by persuading the church’s key influencers, rather than the whole church body. For when the key influencers support changes, the rest will be more apt to follow. Conversely, if they do not support the changes, the rest will also not support the changes. So a pastor must quickly identify the key influencers in the church, and then determine their openness to changes the pastor is proposing.

**Who is Your Church’s Dominant Coalition?**

The “Dominant Coalition” is the formal and informal group of key influencers in your church. If you’re not sure who they are, just think of the people whose explicit or implicit permission you need to make major changes. Most struggling churches have one or two long-term families/matriarchs/patriarchs who fill this role. In a struggling church, these people do not know how to lead the church to health, for if they did, they would have done so already. Some will be open to changes and some will not.

You need to develop a new Dominant Coalition, composed of:

- New influencers with new thinking
- Long-term influencers with renewed thinking

You must identify the people who will become your new Dominant Coalition and support their appointment/election into key leadership positions. Be sure to learn and understand your church’s election and appointment systems and be sure to exercise influence in who is appointed into leadership. Building a new Dominant Coalition will take time - possibly years, so get started as soon as you can.

*“If you have a nominating committee, be sure to gain influence or control of that committee. At least as the pastor, you should have veto power over who is selected for any board, committee, or church position. This is no time to be modest or to take a backseat in nominating procedures. Do what is possible to bring new leaders into positions where they can make a difference in the church’s long-term ministry.”<sup>6</sup>*

- Gary McIntosh

<sup>4</sup> Gary McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 86.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Borden, *Direct Hit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 20).

<sup>6</sup> McIntosh, *There s Hope for Your Church*, 91-92.

**Who to Recruit:**

*“The number one criteria is a belief in the new vision, but the number two criteria is chemistry with the rest of the team....Recruit people who respect you. People buy into your vision when they buy into you. Again, invite people into the coalition only if they show loyalty to you and the office of pastor.”<sup>7</sup>*

- Gary McIntosh

Note that the vital leadership roles in many churches are Lead Pastor, Board Chair, and Treasurer. There may be other influential roles that are unique your church. When the people in these three roles are in alignment with the new vision, you have made significant progress in building a new Dominant Coalition.

**When Long-Term Influencers Leave**

Some of your long-term influencers may not be able to make the turn. Some will leave (sometimes quietly, often loudly), and some will stay and oppose (sometimes quietly, often loudly). If a key long-term influencer chooses to leave, **you generally should not chase after them.** Others will pressure you to do chase them, but you must remember that this person is **not** a lost sheep from Luke 15. The lost sheep are the people in your community who you can now try to reach, because the influencer has left and is no longer blocking changes. Spend your time and energy chasing them.

**Call the “Great Commission Bluff”**

One of the strategies you can use with long-term influencers is to call their “bluff” on the Great Commission and see if they mean what they say they believe. Start leading changes that align with their stated evangelistic beliefs. If they work to support you in those changes, then great! If they work against you, it shows members of your developing new Dominant Coalition that they don’t mean what they say, and their influence will be weakened.

**Cautions**

*So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. **And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.***

*2 Timothy 2:22-26*

a) Creating the New Dominant Coalition can take years. **Be patient**, don’t rush it, and trust the Lord to help you make it through the process.

b) There may be certain key influencers who drive you crazy, who you will be tempted to try to push out. There are rare occasions where you have to ask a leader to step down or leave, but most of the time **it is better to let them leave on their own**, so that people can see they chose to leave of their own accord. If you aggressively push them

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 89 90.

out, it can create sympathy for them, but if they leave themselves, it can show others that they were not truly aligned with where God is leading the church.

c) Remember that your preference should be to win people over and have them stay, even if they frustrate you. Their departure should be an option of last resort. You may be surprised as God works in some influencers and moves their hearts to align with the new direction the church is going. Some of them will become part of the new dominant coalition, and some will become supporters in the background, as they let new people take on the key leadership of the church.



**Reflect: Build a New Dominant Coalition**

*Reflect: Who makes up the dominant coalition in your church? Be sure to think not only of people on the board, but also think of influencers who are not as obvious. Do you have the right people in your current dominant coalition?*

*Reflect: How can you start to build a new dominant coalition? How long might it take? (It can take years, so be realistic in your expectations) Are there people in your church who you think should be part of the new dominant coalition? How can you encourage their movement into the new dominant coalition?*

# SESSION 5 COACHING GUIDE

## BUILD A NEW DOMINANT COALITION

### Content Summary

- I. Devotional: *How God Changes Us – Ephesians 4:17-31*
- II. Teaching: *Step 5: Build a New Dominant Coalition*

### Key Points from the Devotional and Teaching

1. Every church has a few key influencers who the rest of the church follows.
2. For a church to be revitalized, there needs to be a renewing of the mind of the key influencers – ie “the Dominant Coalition” in the church.
3. You need to identify and influence the appointment of people to leadership positions who will be part of a “New Dominant Coalition.” Some of them will be newcomers who support the new vision and some will be long-timers whose minds are renewed. Building a New Dominant Coalition is an essential step in church revitalization.
4. Some long-timers will not make the turn and will leave. Don’t chase them.
5. Cautions: Be patient and gentle (2 Tim 2:22-26). Do not try to push problematic key influencers out unless there is some grievous sin. Your preference should be to win people over, but if they need to leave, it is better to let them leave on their own.

### Coaching Discussion Starters

The discussion points below are meant as suggestions to help your conversation, but you are not required to use them. Please feel free to discuss whatever topics are most applicable to the coachee’s ministry situation.

- a. Who are the people in your church who make up the current “Dominant Coalition?” Are they influencing the church positively or negatively (or both)?
- b. What opportunities do you have to influence the appointment/selection of people for key leadership positions in your church? (ie Board, Chair, Treasurer, other key roles). Are you taking those opportunities to influence?
- c. Building a new Dominant Coalition can take years. Do you have a long term strategy for building a new Dominant Coalition? Spend some time together laying out a basic strategy – or make it an assignment to complete for your next coaching meeting.
- d. Are there any people in your church who you think have potential to be key leaders in the future? How are you working to develop them and prepare them to be part of the New Dominant Coalition?
- e. *General:* Is there a topic that arose from the last network meeting that you would like to discuss further, with a focus on applying it in your church setting?



## SESSION 6

# DEVELOP A VISION

### Today's Agenda:

- Welcome (5min)
- Devotional: *God is a God of Vision* (30min)
- Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process* (10min)
- Coaching Review (15min)
- Reflections on Readings (15min)
- Break (15min)
- Teaching: *Step 6 – Develop a Vision* (60min)
- Reflect: *A Vision for your Church* (30min)
- Finish

### Readings, Assignments & Coaching

Please complete the readings for next month listed below, and come to the next meeting prepared to share some reflections on each.

Also, please arrange with your coach for your next coaching meeting between now and the next meeting.

#### Readings for Today:

1. Ezekiel 37:1-14, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:6-8, Acts 10:1-22, Revelation 4:1-11, Genesis 15:1-5.
2. *Re:Vision* by Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, pp. 146-165
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 73-82
4. *Direct Hit* by Paul Borden, pp. 45-52
5. *Develop a Vision* by Tim Strickland, thesis excerpt

#### Readings for Next Month:

1. Nehemiah 2:1-20, Acts 11:1-30
2. *Re:Vision* by Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, pp. 161-165
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 129-140
4. *Direct Hit* by Paul Borden, pp. 49-52
5. *Communicate the Vision* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

**Devotional: God is a God of Vision**

**Let's read and discuss the following passages:**

*"For thus says the LORD:*

*'When seventy years are completed for Babylon,*

*I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.*

*For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD,*

*'plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

*Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.*

*You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*

*I will be found by you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.'" Jeremiah 29:10-14 (ESV)<sup>1</sup>*

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8*

*"And he brought him outside and said, 'Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness." Genesis 15:5-6*

*"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.*

*And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

*And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,*

*'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.*

*He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.'*

*And he who was seated on the throne said,*

*'Behold, I am making all things new.'*

*Also he said,*

*'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'" Revelation 21:1-5*

*"For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper." Deuteronomy 8:7-9*

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

"The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones.  
And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry.

And he said to me,

'Son of man, can these bones live?'

And I answered,

'O Lord GOD, you know.'

Then he said to me,

'Prophesy over these bones, and say to them,  
O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones:

Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.

And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live,  
and you shall know that I am the LORD.'

So I prophesied as I was commanded.

And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone.

And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them.

But there was no breath in them.

Then he said to me,

'Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath,

Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.'

So I prophesied as he commanded me,

and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

Then he said to me,

'Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.

Behold, they say,

"Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off."

Therefore prophesy, and say to them,

Thus says the Lord GOD:

Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel.

And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people.

And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land.

Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it,  
declares the LORD."

Ezekiel 37:1-14

## Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process*

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step *Church Revitalization Change Process*, that I have developed based on the research of church health and revitalization experts<sup>2</sup> and the change process developed by change author John Kotter.<sup>3</sup> We will focus on one step in the change process at each meeting.

### The Church Revitalization Change Process:

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality
4. Build Credibility
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
- 6. Develop a Vision**
7. Communicate the Vision
8. Implement Changes
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparatory steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparatory steps.

Note also that the steps are not always linear. For example you are always building credibility (step 4) and always praying, confessing and trusting God (Step 1).

### What is the Timeline for the Change Process?

You are learning the steps in the Church Revitalization Change Process faster than you will be able to implement them. You should anticipate the change process lasting **anywhere from two to five years**, and possibly longer. Each church setting is different, with some churches being more ready for change than others. If your church faces an imminent crisis, the leadership will be more open to try significant changes quickly, than if your church is in a long, slow decline.

Your coach can help you to discern when it is time to move forward with key steps in the change process and when it is time to wait. A critical turning point is when your new dominant coalition has developed enough strength and depth to support you in leading change. It can take a few years for that new coalition to develop.

<sup>2</sup> These experts include Paul Borden, John Kaiser, Gary McIntosh, Aubrey Malphurs, Gordon Penfold, Thom Rainer, Nelson Searcy, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson. They are referenced frequently in the footnotes.

<sup>3</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 22-27.

## Teaching: Step 6 - Develop a Vision

**Vision Defined**

*“Vision is a clear, exciting picture of God’s future for your ministry as you believe it can and must be.”<sup>4</sup>* - Malphurs and Penfold

Three key points about vision:

1. A vision is a **picture** of the future.
2. A vision is **clear** picture of the future.
3. A vision is clear picture of the future **that the leader passionately believes must happen.**

**With Whom Does the Vision Start?**

A strong Biblical case can be made for the vision starting with the pastor. God consistently gave vision to individual leaders, such as Nehemiah, David, Paul, Peter, etc...

Groups may refine the vision and create the roadmap, but the leader is the compass pointing the direction.

*Vision starts with the pastor. Take a moment and glance through the Bible and notice to whom God gives vision. You’ll find that God gives vision to a single person rather than a group of people. Rarely does God give vision to a committee, a board, or a team of people. These groups are important but the typically serve to help a leader shape and form a vision rather than discover it. So if you are pastor, vision begins with you.<sup>5</sup>* - Gary McIntosh

*...most pastors who arrive to lead congregations that lack vision, hope and morale will find that if they do not generate vision, no one else will. Committees, vision communities, or people exploring vision as a short-term project do not generate visions that produce systemic change. Vision is derived from the passion of a leader who has a prophetic fire burning within the soul to accomplish something significant for God. Groups may take this vision, help produce congregational ownership, and delineate its implementation, but without prophetic fire to begin with, there are no images of preferred futures that produce systemic change.<sup>6</sup>* - Paul Borden

<sup>4</sup> Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, *Re:Vision* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2014), 147.

<sup>5</sup> Gary McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 75-76.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Borden, *Direct Hit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 45.

## Start with a Common, God-Given Mission, Then Develop the Unique, God-Given Vision

*“Every church must have a mission. ...The Savior has already given the church its mission back in the first century. The mission is to make disciples, according to Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; and Luke 24:45-49.”<sup>7</sup>* - Malphurs & Penfold

Note that in most evangelical churches, many people will agree with having a mission rooted in the Great Commission. You can start to lead some change on mission alone, if the change is an attempt to obey the Great Commission.

Sample Mission Statements:

*“Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus, to the glory of God.”*

*“A loving, growing church making disciples of Jesus in our community and beyond.”*

**The Vision** for your church will be **the specific, local outworking of God’s general mission for every church**, as given by Jesus in the Great Commission.

### The Vision Should have Alignment in Three Key Areas

McIntosh and Rainer suggest that the vision should be the intersection of:

1. The Pastor’s gifts and passions
2. The Congregation’s gifts and passions
3. The Community’s needs <sup>8 9</sup>

### Items to Consider for Inclusion in the Vision

Malphurs and Penfold give a helpful list of items that could be in the vision statement:

*There are a number of possibilities that would convey the vision you see.*

*Following are some:*

*the church’s desire to reach its community,*

*its vision for making disciples,*

*its dream for mobilizing the congregation,*

*its vision for staffing,*

*its vision for its future location and facilities,*

*its vision for stewardship.*

*...Some more possibilities are your mission statement, core values, size creativity/innovation, prayer, technology, multicultural goals, social issues, treatment of outsiders, church planting, multisite ministry, missions, various types of ministries, areas of passion and so forth.<sup>10</sup>*

Reread the paragraph above carefully as it suggests many important areas to consider and pray for as you develop a Vision.

<sup>7</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 210.

<sup>8</sup> McIntosh, *There’s Hope for your Church*, 74.

<sup>9</sup> Thom Rainer, *Breakout Churches* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 114.

<sup>10</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 159.

### Length of the Vision

The length of the vision statement may be a single sentence, a page, or a few pages. A longer statement gives more clarity but is less memorable. See Malphur's and Penfold's discussion of vision length in the reading for today, for more detail.<sup>11</sup>

### A Process for Developing the Vision

(see "Develop a Vision" Thesis excerpt for further details)

1. Pray and ask the Lord to give you a Vision for your church.
2. Study the Bible with your prayer for Vision in mind.
3. Find your Passion.  
(You can't lead in fulfilling a vision if God hasn't made you passionate about it.)
4. Study your Community.
5. Study your Church.
6. Allow Time for the Vision to Develop
7. Seek Feedback from Trusted Sources
8. Put it all Together

During this process, you might go on a **personal vision retreat** to seek the Lord's vision.

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<sup>11</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 159-160.

**Reflect: *Develop a Vision***

*Reflect:* Does your church have a mission statement and/or a vision statement? Are you happy with it? Does it align with Scripture? Is your vision statement specific enough to make it different from another church's vision statement?

*Reflect:* How can you begin to develop a vision for your church?

*Reflect:* Based on your prayer, study of scripture and thinking so far, what items do you think will be part of the vision for your church?

# SESSION 6 COACHING GUIDE

## DEVELOP A VISION

### Content Summary

- I. Devotional: *Reflections on passages including Ezekiel 37:1-11*
- II. Teaching: *Step 6: Develop a Vision*

### Key Points from the Devotional and Teaching

1. God is a God of vision, as illustrated in the devotional passages.
2. Vision is a **clear picture** of the future that **the leader passionately believes must happen**.
3. Vision normally comes to the pastor first, and then is confirmed and developed with other key leaders.
4. Every church should have the same mission built around the Great Commission. Vision is the **specific local outworking** of God's general mission.
5. Vision should align with the pastor's gifts and passions, the congregation's gifts and passions, and the community's needs.
6. **A Process for Developing the Vision.**  
Be sure that you discuss this process in your coaching time.

### Coaching Discussion Starters

The discussion points below are meant as suggestions to help your conversation, but you are not required to use them. Please feel free to discuss whatever topics are most applicable to the coachee's ministry situation.

- a. Does your church currently have a mission and/or vision statement? Discuss.
- b. What are your gifts and passions as a pastor?  
What are your congregation's gifts and passions?  
What are the needs of your community?  
*Note that the coachee may have initial answers to these questions, but will need to spend more time thinking, praying and finding these answers.*
- c. What elements do you think should be in your church's vision? Note that today's teaching gives ideas for possible elements.
- d. Review the Process for *Developing the Vision*. Where are you in the process? What do you need to do to develop vision? Are you far enough along in the church revitalization change process to begin focussing on vision?  
*Note that the coachee may want to plan a personal vision retreat or other dedicated time to work on the vision.*
- e. *General*: Is there a topic that arose from the last network meeting that you would like to discuss further, with a focus on applying it in your church?



## SESSION 7

# COMMUNICATE THE VISION

### Today's Agenda:

- Welcome (5min)
- Devotional: *How Will They Know?* (30min)
- Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process* (10min)
- Coaching Review (15min)
- Reflections on Readings (15min)
- Break (15min)
- Teaching: *Step 7 – Communicate the Vision* (60min)
- Reflect and Assignment: *Communicate the Vision* (30min)
- Finish

### Readings, Assignments & Coaching

Please complete the readings for next month listed below, and come to the next meeting prepared to share some reflections on each.

Also, please arrange with your coach for your next coaching meeting between now and the next meeting.

#### Readings for Today:

1. Nehemiah 2:1-20, Acts 11:1-30
2. *Re:Vision* by Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, pp. 161-165
3. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 129-140
4. *Direct Hit* by Paul Borden, pp. 49-52
5. *Communicate the Vision* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

#### Readings for Next Month:

1. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 117-128
2. *Re:Vision* by Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, pp. 211-217
3. *Implement Changes* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland
4. *An Outward, Missionary Focus* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

**Devotional: How Will They Hear?**

Read and discuss the passages below, as they relate to communicating vision. Note especially Acts 11:1-30, where Peter communicates the vision of the gospel going to the Gentiles. Also note that chapter 11 repeats much of the story from chapter 10, utilizing a communication principle of repeating an important message for clarity and emphasis.

*“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”* Romans 10:14-15 (ESV)<sup>1</sup>

*“How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of him who brings good news,  
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,  
who publishes salvation,  
who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns.’”* Isaiah 52:7

*“And the LORD answered me:  
‘Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it.  
For still the vision awaits its appointed time;  
it hastens to the end—it will not lie.  
If it seems slow, wait for it;  
it will surely come; it will not delay.’”* Habakkuk 2:2-3

*Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. <sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, <sup>3</sup> “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.” <sup>4</sup> But Peter began and explained it to them in order: <sup>5</sup> “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. <sup>6</sup> Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. <sup>7</sup> And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ <sup>8</sup> But I said, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ <sup>9</sup> But the voice answered a second time from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, do not call common.’ <sup>10</sup> This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven. <sup>11</sup> And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea. <sup>12</sup> And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. <sup>13</sup> And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter; <sup>14</sup> he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’ <sup>15</sup> As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup> And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>17</sup> If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” <sup>18</sup> When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”* Acts 11:1-18

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

### Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process*

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step *Church Revitalization Change Process*, that I have developed based on the research of church health and revitalization experts<sup>2</sup> and the change process developed by change author John Kotter.<sup>3</sup> We will focus on one step in the change process at each meeting.

#### The Church Revitalization Change Process:

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality
4. Build Credibility
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
6. Develop a Vision
- 7. Communicate the Vision**
8. Implement Changes
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparatory steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparatory steps.

Note also that the steps are not always linear. For example you are always building credibility (step 4) and always praying, confessing and trusting God (Step 1).

### What is the Timeline for the Change Process?

You are learning the steps in the Church Revitalization Change Process faster than you will be able to implement them. You should anticipate the change process lasting **anywhere from two to five years**, and possibly longer. Each church setting is different, with some churches being more ready for change than others. If your church faces an imminent crisis, the leadership will be more open to try significant changes quickly, than if your church is in a long, slow decline.

Your coach can help you to discern when it is time to move forward with key steps in the change process and when it is time to wait. A critical turning point is when your new dominant coalition has developed enough strength and depth to support you in leading change. It can take a few years for that new coalition to develop.

<sup>2</sup> These experts include Paul Borden, John Kaiser, Gary McIntosh, Aubrey Malphurs, Gordon Penfold, Thom Rainer, Nelson Searcy, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson. They are referenced frequently in the footnotes.

<sup>3</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 22-27.

## Teaching: Step 7 - Communicate the Vision

### Review Step 6: Develop the Vision

Vision is **clear picture** of the future **that the leader passionately believes must happen**. The Vision for your church will be the **specific, local outworking** of God's general mission for every church, as given by Jesus in the Great Commission.<sup>4</sup>

### The Vision Should have Alignment in Three Key Areas

McIntosh and Rainer suggest that the vision should be the intersection of:

1. The Pastor's gifts and passions
2. The Congregation's gifts and passions
3. The Community's needs<sup>5 6</sup>

### Items to Consider for Inclusion in the Vision

Malphurs and Penfold give a helpful list of items that could be in the vision statement:

*the church's desire to reach its community,  
its vision for making disciples,  
its dream for mobilizing the congregation,  
its vision for staffing,  
its vision for its future location and facilities,  
its vision for stewardship.*

*...Some more possibilities are your  
mission statement, core values, size creativity/innovation,  
prayer, technology, multicultural goals, social issues, treatment of outsiders,  
church planting, multisite ministry, missions,  
various types of ministries, areas of passion and so forth.<sup>7</sup>*

### A Process for Developing the Vision

1. Pray and ask the Lord to give you a Vision for your church.
2. Study the Bible with your prayer for Vision in mind.
3. Find your Passion.
4. Study your Community.
5. Study your Church.
6. Allow Time for the Vision to Develop
7. Seek Feedback from Trusted Sources
8. Put it all Together

During this process, you might go on a **personal vision retreat** to seek the Lord's vision.

<sup>4</sup> Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, *Re:Vision* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2014), 147.

<sup>5</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for your Church*, 74.

<sup>6</sup> Thom Rainer, *Breakout Churches* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 114.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

### Step 7: Communicate the Vision

A vision needs to be communicated for it to be effective. So you will need a plan for communicating the vision to your church. Please note that the principles below can be applied to communicating other messages to your church.

As a starting point, you must assume that **no one is paying attention** to your messaging.

- **Everyone is too busy** to give you their attention.
- **Every other organization** out there is trying to communicate their messages to the same people you are, who are not listening because they are inundated with communications and are too busy to give anyone their attention.

With that “encouragement” in mind, here are some basic communication principles:

1. Communication must be **clear**.
2. Communication must be clear and **succinct**.
3. Communication must be clear and succinct and **repeated**.
4. Communication must be clear and succinct and repeated **through multiple communication channels**.

### Internal Church Communication Methods

The following is a sample list of church communication methods and is not intended to be exhaustive. New methods will come and go, and you need to understand which current methods best connect to different people in your church.

#### A. Verbal:

- Announcements
- One-on-one conversations
- Preaching
- Small Group Leaders
- People telling people who heard it first from you

#### B. Physical and Electronic Media:

- Internal Signs
- Social Media
- Email Lists
- Audio & Video
- Bulletin
- Physical mailings
- Banners/Slogan
- Books
- Pamphlets/Flyers
- Screen

#### C. Events:

- Vision Sunday
- Vision Banquet/Event
- Small Group Vision Casting

#### D. Other:

- By Your Example – Living it out. (Don’t underestimate this method!)

**Other Notes:**

- Important Communications should come from the Pastor
  - Communications from the Pastor are more likely to be heard than from someone else
  - Your key leaders should repeat and support the pastor's communications.
- Vision needs to touch the heart
  - Vision communication should consist of a warm, vibrant picture of a preferred future.
- Make Your Titles Count
  - Carefully craft your titles, email headers, and verbal & written introductions, as they may be the only thing some people read or hear.

**A Communication Plan: Methods and Schedule**

You need to pick several communication tools that will connect with different people in your church. For example, a plan for communicating a new vision might include the following:

1. Focus Group Meetings with key lay leaders for feedback and buy-in.
2. Vision Sunday with a Vision Sermon, Brochures, Bulletins, Screen Announcements, Signage, etc...
3. Vision Brochure (printed, website, email, facebook, instagram...)
4. Internal Signage around the church
5. Physical Letter mailed out to your people

Because almost half your people are absent on any given Sunday, you need to keep communicating the same vision message for four to six weeks, and then keep reminding people for months afterward, and refresh them in detail annually.

**Reflect: *Communicate the Vision***

*Reflect:* How do you communicate important messages in your church? How effective is your communication? What percentage of people truly hear the messages you are sending?

*Reflect:* What are the most effective communication tools for reaching the people:  
...in your church?

...in the community outside your church?

*Assignment:* Write out a basic communications plan for communicating the vision to your church. Be sure to include what methods you will use, and a schedule/frequency for their usage.



# SESSION 7 COACHING GUIDE

## COMMUNICATE THE VISION

### Content Summary

- I. Devotional: *Reflections on passages including Acts 11:1-30*
- II. Teaching: *Step 7: Communicate the Vision*

### Key Points from the Devotional and Teaching

1. When communicating to your church, you have to **assume that no one is paying attention.**
2. Communication must be **clear** and **succinct** and **repeated** through **multiple communication channels.**
3. Various **communication methods** were discussed.
4. You need to develop a **communications plan**, using a selection of communication methods that fit your setting.

### Coaching Discussion Starters

The discussion points below are meant as suggestions to help your conversation, but you are not required to use them. Please feel free to discuss whatever topics are most applicable to the coachee's ministry situation.

- a. How do you communicate important messages in your church? How effective is your communication?
- b. What are the most effective communication methods for reaching people:
  - ...in your church?
  - ...in the community outside your church?
- c. What communication methods would you utilize in a plan to communicate your vision? Are there some communication methods you need to develop (email list, Facebook page, streamlined Sunday announcements, etc.)? Is there someone in your church who could help you develop these methods?
- d. Discuss together the outline of a vision communications plan. The coach will be developing and sharing it at the next network meeting.
- e. *General:* Today's topic, *Communicating the Vision*, is about developing a practical plan for communicating vision in your church. However, the communications principles presented are broadly applicable to other church communications.

# SESSION 8

## IMPLEMENT CHANGES PART 1

### Today's Agenda:

- Welcome (5min)
- Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process* (10min)
- Coaching Review (15min)
- Teaching:<sup>1</sup> *Step 8 - Implement Changes, Part 1* (45min)
- Break (15min)
- Reflections on Today's Readings<sup>2</sup> (15min)
- Teaching: *Step 8 - Implement Changes, Part 1* (45min)
- Ministry Evaluation Exercise (30min)
- Finish

### Readings, Assignments & Coaching

Please complete the readings for next month listed below, and come to the next meeting prepared to share some reflections on each.

Also, please arrange with your coach for your next coaching meeting between now and the next meeting.

#### Readings for Today:

1. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 117-128
2. *Re:Vision* by Aubrey Malphurs and Gordon Penfold, pp. 211-217
3. *An Outward, Missionary Focus* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland

#### Readings for Next Month:

Next month we will continue with *Step 8 - Implement Changes Part 2*, looking at Strategies & Systems and Ministry Staff.

1. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 155-168
2. *Implement Changes* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland
3. *The Big Four* Next Level Leadership Teaching by Tim Strickland
4. *Church Size Notes*, compilation by Tim Strickland based on Gary McIntosh's book *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*
5. *Normalize Changes* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland
6. Review the *Church Leadership Reading List* and consider 1-2 books you could read in the next few months.

<sup>1</sup> There is no devotional in today's agenda but the teaching contains devotional content.

<sup>2</sup> As time allows, discuss the Case Study in McIntosh, *There's Hope for your Church*, 125-127.

## Network Overview: *The Church Revitalization Change Process*

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### The Church Revitalization Change Process:

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality
4. Build Credibility
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
6. Develop a Vision
7. Communicate the Vision
- 8. Implement Changes, Pt. 1 & 2**
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparatory steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparatory steps.

Note also that the steps are not always linear. For example you are always building credibility (step 4) and always praying, confessing and trusting God (Step 1).

### What is the Timeline for the Change Process?

You are learning the steps in the Church Revitalization Change Process faster than you will be able to implement them. You should anticipate the change process lasting **anywhere from two to five years**, and possibly longer. Each church setting is different, with some churches being more ready for change than others. If your church faces an imminent crisis, the leadership will be more open to try significant changes quickly, than if your church is in a long, slow decline.

Your coach can help you to discern when it is time to move forward with key steps in the change process and when it is time to wait. A critical turning point is when your new dominant coalition has developed enough strength and depth to support you in leading change. It can take a few years for that new coalition to develop.

<sup>3</sup> These experts include Paul Borden, John Kaiser, Gary McIntosh, Aubrey Malphurs, Gordon Penfold, Thom Rainer, Nelson Searcy, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson. They are referenced frequently in the footnotes.

<sup>4</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 22-27.

### Teaching: Step 8 - Implement Changes Part 1

Once the preparation phase of leading change has reached the point where changes can succeed, it is time to begin implementing the changes. We will discuss **five areas below** where changes will need to be implemented, starting with **the first three in today's teaching**, and continuing with the final two in the next teaching.

1. Sound Doctrine
2. Spiritual Vitality
3. Outward Focus
4. Church Systems
5. Ministry Staffing

#### 1. Sound Doctrine

*“Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.”*  
2 Timothy 1:13-14 (ESV)<sup>5</sup>

*“Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”*  
2 Timothy 4:2-4

If your church has wandered from sound doctrine in its formal teaching or informal beliefs and practices, you will need to lead the church to hold fast to sound doctrine.

1. Preach the Word – Expository Preaching emphasizes the importance of God’s Word and adherence to sound doctrine.
2. Review the Statement of Faith and update as necessary.
3. Teach through the Statement of Faith in a sermon series and/or teach through it in membership class and/or other Bible classes.
4. Review curriculum for children, youth, and small groups, and ensure it is solid and biblical. Require curriculum to be approved by the pastor and/or other designated leaders.
5. Test for adherence to the church’s Statement of Faith for anyone coming into a church leadership role, especially for elders, deacons, board members, teaching roles and other public leadership roles.
6. Ensure the church has a clear, biblical process for church discipline.
7. Invite prospective leaders and other church members to read through a biblical and accessible systematic theology such as Wayne Grudem’s *Systematic Theology* or *Bible Doctrine* (short version). You could run a class using one of these books as curriculum.

<sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

## 2. Spiritual Vitality

*"...there is in my heart as it were a burning fire..."*

Jeremiah 20:9

*"They said to each other, 'Did not our **hearts burn** within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?'"*

Luke 24:32

*"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, **but be filled with the Spirit**, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ..."*

Ephesians 5:18-20

Many churches are sound doctrinally but lifeless spiritually. Revitalization requires a spiritual renewal in the hearts of God's people.

Spiritual vitality requires humility, brokenness, repentance, prayer, faith, and a deep reliance on the Holy Spirit for power in ministry. As a pastor you must preach and model all of these qualities. Your preaching should not only be doctrinally sound, but spiritually passionate. You must preach with authentic emotion to speak to the will and emotions, as well as being logical and accurate to speak to the mind.

It is also vital that your worship leader lead and model an authentic spirituality that is not affected or put on. Worship songs must be chosen not only for doctrinal soundness but for spiritual vitality.

### 3. An Outward Focus

*“As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, **do the work of an evangelist**, fulfill your ministry.”* 2 Timothy 4:5

As we have discussed in previous revitalization teachings, the fundamental shift that happens in a church being revitalized is that it moves from having an inward focus to having an outward focus. A revitalization pastor must implement changes that move the church to have an outward focus.

In his book *Four Chair Discipleship*, Dann Spader suggests an evangelism strategy using the acronym C.P.R. – Cultivate, Plant, Reap. And in his research study, Gary McIntosh indicates that a majority of people come to faith in Christ through conversation with family or friends. McIntosh concludes, “The main methodology that is effective in winning nonbelievers to faith in Christ is simply conversation.”<sup>6</sup>

By combining Spader’s C.P.R. strategy and McIntosh’s conclusions about how people come to faith in Christ, we can develop plans for local church evangelism.

1. Train your people how to have evangelistic conversations with family and friends.
2. Teach people C.P.R., and explain that the soil of people’s hearts is often hard and needs a lot of cultivation to be ready to receive the gospel.
3. Create cultivation events and experiences at your church where people can bring their unbelieving friends. Set a goal for having 4-6 Cultivation events annually (or more if you can).
4. Utilize evangelism tools like Alpha and Christianity Explored, which fit well with the need for cultivation and conversation.

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<sup>6</sup> Gary McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 155.

**Reflect: *Implement Changes Part 1*****Ministry Evaluation Exercise<sup>7</sup>**

Do the exercise below and reflect on your responses.  
Be sure to share and discuss it with your coach.

1. If you were starting your church from scratch:
  - What new and existing ministries would you start today?
  - What existing ministries would you not start?
  
2. List all your church's ministries on post-it notes and stick them on a whiteboard.
  - Write three headings on post-it notes: Evangelism, Assimilation, and Teaching.
  - Put each ministry under one of the headings
  
3. *Reflect:* McIntosh recommends allocating 5% of your church budget to local evangelism and outreach.<sup>8</sup> How much is 5% of your church budget? How would you spend it in your setting?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. *Reflect:* What do your responses to the questions above tell you about your church's current focus?

---

<sup>7</sup> Gary McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 119-122.

<sup>8</sup> Gary McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 124.

# SESSION 8 COACHING GUIDE

## IMPLEMENT CHANGES PART 1

### Content Summary

- I. Teaching: *Step 8: Implement Changes Part 1*
- II. Ministry Evaluation Exercise - Be sure to spend time discussing this exercise.

### Key Points from the Devotional and Teaching

The Meeting 8 and 9 Teachings present five areas where changes will need to be implemented:

1. Sound Doctrine
2. Spiritual Vitality
3. Outward Focus
4. Church Systems
5. Ministry Staffing

The first three areas are covered in Session 8 and are reviewed in the corresponding Coaching Discussion Starters below. The final two areas are covered in Session 9.

### Coaching Discussion Starters

The discussion points below are meant as suggestions to help your conversation, but you are not required to use them. Please feel free to discuss whatever topics are most applicable to the coachee's ministry situation.

- a. Are there any areas of Doctrine that need to be addressed in your church? If yes, how can you begin to address them?
- b. Would you describe your church as spiritually alive? Is your preaching passionate and spiritually challenging, as well as doctrinally sound? Is the worship in your church spiritually vibrant? Discuss how you can help raise the "spiritual passion" in your people?
- c. Review the Outward Focus section of the teaching, especially the four suggestions for increasing your church's outward focus. Discuss which of the four suggestions you should implement in your church.
- d. Review and discuss the Ministry Evaluation Exercise in today's teaching.
- e. *General:* Is there a topic that arose from the last network meeting that you would like to discuss further, with a focus on applying it in your church?



# SESSION 9

## IMPLEMENT CHANGES PART 2

### Today's Agenda:

- Welcome (5min)
- Coaching Review (10min)
- Teaching:<sup>1</sup> *Step 8 - Implement Changes, Part 2* (45min)
- Reflections on Today's Readings (15min)
- Break (15min)
- Teaching: *Step 8 - Implement Changes, Part 2* (45min)
- Discussion: *Step 9 - Normalize Changes*
- Putting it All Together: *The Church Revitalization Change Process* (15min)
- Final Presentation: *A Revitalization Plan for your Church* (15min)
- Finish

### Readings, Assignments & Coaching

Please complete the readings for next month listed below, and come to the next meeting prepared to share some reflections on each.

Also, please arrange with your coach for your next coaching meeting between now and the next meeting.

#### Readings for Today:

1. *There's Hope for Your Church* by Gary McIntosh, pp. 155-168
2. *Implement Changes* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland
3. *The Big Four* Next Level Leadership Teaching by Tim Strickland
4. *Church Size Notes*, compilation by Tim Strickland based on Gary McIntosh's book *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*
5. *Normalize Changes* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland
6. Review the *Church Leadership Reading List* and consider 1-2 books you could read in the next few months.

#### Next Month: Final Presentation

Next month you will present *A Revitalization Plan for your Church* with the group. Please review the Presentation description and come ready to present.

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<sup>1</sup> There is no devotional in today's agenda.

## Teaching: Step 8 - Implement Changes Part 2

Once the preparation phase of leading change has reached the point where changes can succeed, it is time to begin implementing the changes. In the previous teaching we discussed the first three change areas below. Today we will discuss the final two areas:

1. Sound Doctrine
2. Spiritual Vitality
3. Outward Focus
4. Church Systems
5. Ministry Staffing

### 4. Strategies and Systems

#### a. The Big Four<sup>2</sup>

- Quality Preaching
- Quality Worship
- Quality Children's/Family Ministries
- Vibrant Small Groups Ministry

#### b. Church Size Notes<sup>3</sup>

- c. Nelson Searcy suggests that every church should have eight major systems to operate effectively.

<b>The Weekend Service System:</b>	How We Plan, Implement and Evaluate the Weekend Services at Our Church
<b>The Evangelism System:</b>	How We Attract People to Our Church
<b>The Assimilation System:</b>	How We Move People From First-Time Guests to Members
<b>The Small Groups System:</b>	How We Fill and Produce Small Groups at Our Church
<b>The Ministry System:</b>	How We Mobilize People for Significant Ministry
<b>The Stewardship System:</b>	How We Develop Extravagant Givers at Our Church
<b>The Leadership System:</b>	How We Develop Leaders at All Levels of Our Church
<b>The Strategic System:</b>	How We Constantly Evaluate and Improve Our Church <sup>4</sup>

If building and/or changing all of these systems seems overwhelming, then consider starting with the Assimilation System. As you develop your assimilation system, it encourages work on the other systems.

<sup>2</sup> Teaching Notes by Tim Strickland from the Next Level Leadership Network

<sup>3</sup> Compilation by Tim Strickland based on Gary McIntosh's book *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*

<sup>4</sup> Nelson Searcy, *Healthy Systems, Healthy Church* (Nelson Searcy).

## 5. Ministry Staff

*“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...”*

Ephesians 4:11-12 (ESV)<sup>5</sup>

You can use staffing to implement change. Since money is usually tight in church revitalization, you often have to be creative.

*My research has found that churches address this need through several means. For instance, churches use volunteer staff, pay some at below-market wages, hire several part-time staff members, recruit staff members who can pay their own way, ask for financial gifts to cover extra staff, expect staff members to raise support outside the church, and use a number of other creative options.<sup>6</sup>*

Gary McIntosh

### What Staff Should you Hire?

Each situation is unique, but you should consider working towards the following core staff, even if they are part time or volunteers:

1. Lead Pastor
2. Worship Director
3. Ministry Assistant
4. Bookkeeper
5. Children/Youth Director
6. Outreach or Discipleship Pastor (Depending on the gifts of the Lead Pastor or other staff)
7. Tech Director

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<sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>6</sup> Gary McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 141-42.

**Discussion: Step 9 - Normalize Changes**

The final step in the Church Revitalization Change Process is *Normalize Changes*.

This step will not be covered in the same detail as the other steps.<sup>7</sup> The point of this step is to lock in the changes you have implemented so that the new vision and culture become a part of the church's DNA. This way the church will not fall back into the patterns you have worked so hard to change.

*Normalize Changes* is the step where you make structural changes, which may require changes to the church's constitution and bylaws. Many pastors realize that their church's governing documents work against leading revitalization, but it is usually a mistake to try to change these documents at the beginning of the change process. Structural changes will be resisted by the old Dominant Coalition, so you need to do steps 1-8 in the Church Revitalization Change process first, including the key step of building a new Dominant Coalition. Your new Dominant Coalition will be open to supporting structural change that aligns with everything else you have been doing together to move the church forward.<sup>8</sup>

For more on *Step 9 - Normalize Changes*, please see the following readings.

- *Normalize Changes* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland, thesis excerpt
- *Governance Structure* Thesis excerpt by Tim Strickland
- *Re:Vision* by Aubrey Malphurs & Gordon Penfold pp. 166-185

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<sup>7</sup> An additional teaching may be developed for *Step 9 - Normalize Changes*, in a future edition of this curriculum.

<sup>8</sup> Paul Borden, *Direct Hit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 21 22, 112 113, 116 117.

### Putting it All Together: *The Church Revitalization Change Process*

Church Revitalization requires leading change in your church. Below is the nine step *Church Revitalization Change Process*, that I have developed based on the research of church health and revitalization experts<sup>9</sup> and the change process developed by change author John Kotter.<sup>10</sup> We will focus on one step in the change process at each meeting.

#### The Church Revitalization Change Process:

1. Start with Prayer, Confession, and Trust in God
2. Prepare for Pain and Suffering
3. Create Urgency by Defining Reality
4. Build Credibility
5. Build a New Dominant Coalition
6. Develop a Vision
7. Communicate the Vision
8. Implement Changes, Pt. 1 & 2
9. Normalize the Changes

Note that Steps 1-7 are all preparatory steps before actually making changes in Step 8, and normalizing the changes in Step 9. Many church leaders start at step 6, 7, or 8, and the change meets heavy resistance because they have not done the preparatory steps.

Note also that the steps are not always linear. For example you are always building credibility (step 4) and always praying, confessing and trusting God (Step 1).

#### **What is the Timeline for the Change Process?**

You have been learning the steps in the Church Revitalization Change Process faster than you will be able to implement them. You should anticipate the change process lasting **anywhere from two to five years**, and possibly longer. Each church setting is different, with some churches being more ready for change than others. If your church faces an imminent crisis, the leadership will be more open to try significant changes quickly, than if your church is in a long, slow decline. A critical turning point is when your new dominant coalition has developed enough strength and depth to support you in leading change. It can take a few years for that new coalition to develop.

#### **Questions:**

Where are you in the church revitalization process at your church?

What is going well?

What challenges do you face?

<sup>9</sup> These experts include Paul Borden, John Kaiser, Gary McIntosh, Aubrey Malphurs, Gordon Penfold, Thom Rainer, Nelson Searcy, Ed Stetzer and Mike Dodson. They are referenced frequently in the footnotes.

<sup>10</sup> John Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 22-27.

### Final Presentation: A Revitalization Plan for your Church

In the final network meeting, each of you will be presenting a Revitalization Plan for your Church, where you share with the network how you plan to lead revitalization in your church, based on the Church Revitalization Change Process. You will each have 20min.

The format for your presentation is listed below. Please prepare a 1-2 page handout with your presentation. You may not have time to cover every point in detail on your handout, so you can choose the points you want to emphasize. Also, don't hesitate to email or call your network leader with any questions or clarifications.

**Presentation** (20min total = 12 15min presentation plus 5 8min for questions)

1. Describe your church's current situation. (2-3min)

You may want to include key pieces of information such as:

*Church size*

*Sunday Service Style*

*Your Role, How long have you been there?*

*Signature Ministries*

*Is the church more outwardly or inwardly focused?*

*How much is revitalization needed?*

*Lead Pastor's degree of leadership freedom*

*Board Structure*

*Community Summary Description (local or regional area from where you draw people)*

2a. Describe the fundamental change you think needs to take place for your church to be revitalized. (2min)

2b. Describe 3-4 important additional changes that are needed. Include both cultural and practical aspects for each. (2-3min) *(For example, culturally you may need to be more focused on leadership development. Practically you may need a board nomination process that only allows qualified leaders to be appointed.)*

3. Describe how you would apply the Church Revitalization Change Process to lead revitalization in your church. (7-10min)

4. Questions

# SESSION 9 COACHING GUIDE

## IMPLEMENT CHANGES PART 2

### Content Summary

- I. Teaching: *Step 8: Implement Changes Part 2*
- II. Final Presentation: *A Revitalization Plan for your Church*

### Key Points from the Devotional and Teaching

The Meeting 8 and 9 Teachings present five areas where changes will need to be implemented:

1. Sound Doctrine
2. Spiritual Vitality
3. Outward Focus
4. Church Systems
5. Ministry Staffing

Please note that the first three areas were covered in in the previous session, and the fourth and fifth are covered in Session 9 and the Coaching Discussion Starters below.

### Coaching Discussion Starters

The discussion points below are meant as suggestions to help your conversation, but you are not required to use them. Please feel free to discuss whatever topics are most applicable to the coachee's ministry situation.

- a. Review the Church Strategies and Systems. Discuss the eight systems listed and focus on one or two where work is needed. For many churches, The Assimilation System is a great place to start.
- b. Review *The Big Four*. How strong are each of them in your church? Discuss.
- c. Discuss the Church Size Notes and how they relate to your church. Did you gain any key insights relating to church size and your church?
- d. Review the Ministry Staff section. Discuss your current staff mix and what staff roles may be needed to help your church move forward. How can you plan towards hiring someone for this role?
- e. \*Discuss the Final Presentation: *A Revitalization Plan for your Church*. Ask the coachee to share what they are planning for the presentation.
- f. *General*: Is there a topic that arose from the last network meeting that you would like to discuss further, with a focus on applying it in your church?

**\*Be sure to leave enough time in your coaching meeting to discuss the Final Presentation: *A Revitalization Plan for your Church*.**



# SESSION 10

## REVITALIZATION ASSIGNMENT PRESENTATIONS

### Today's Agenda (3hrs)

Welcome and Greetings (5min)

Devotional: *Believe God Can Revitalize Your Church* (15min)

Presentation 1 (20min)

Presentation 2 (20min)

Presentation 3 (20min)

Break (15min)

Presentation 4 (20min)

Presentation 5 (20min)

Presentation 6 (20min)

Presentation 7 (20min)

Network Feedback (10min)

Finish

### Revitalization Assignment Presentations

Today's session is a highlight of the network as you hear from one another and interact together on how you plan to apply the Church Revitalization principles in your church.

Note that it is important to watch the time and for each presenter to limit their presentation to twenty minutes. If there are more than seven presenters, the schedule can be adjusted to give everyone enough time.

**Devotional: Believe that God can Revitalize your Church**

*I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

~Jesus, Matthew 16:18 (ESV)<sup>1</sup>

*I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. <sup>7</sup> So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. <sup>8</sup> He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. <sup>9</sup> For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building. <sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. <sup>11</sup> For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

~Paul, 1 Corinthians 3:6-10

**Church Revitalization is challenging, and at times you will feel like giving up.**

Your part is to:

- Be a leader who leads
- Be a leader who is strategic
- Think and act like a missionary to your community

You must:

- Pray and trust the Lord to give you the results
- Persevere and don't give up

**Remember that Church Revitalization is a work of God.  
Believe that God can Revitalize your Church!**

**Church Revitalization Theological Themes**

God Expects Leaders to Lead

God Expects Leaders to be Strategic

Missionary Leadership in the Church

Believe that God can Revitalize your Church

**The Church Revitalization Change Process**

Step 1: Start with Prayer, Confession and Trust in God

Step 2: Prepare for Pain and Suffering

Step 3: Create Urgency by Defining Reality

Step 4: Build Credibility

Step 5: Build a New Dominant Coalition

Step 6: Develop a Vision

Step 7: Communicate the Vision

Step 8: Implement Changes

Step 9: Normalize Changes

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

**Final Presentation: A Revitalization Plan for your Church**

In the final network meeting, each of you will be presenting a Revitalization Plan for your Church, where you share with the network how you plan to lead revitalization in your church, based on the Church Revitalization Change Process. You will each have 20min.

The format for your presentation is listed below. Please prepare a 1-2 page handout with your presentation. You may not have time to cover every point in detail on your handout, so you can choose the points you want to emphasize. Also, don't hesitate to email or call your network leader with any questions or clarifications.

**Presentation** (20min total = 12-15min presentation plus 5-8min for questions)

1. Describe your church's current situation. (2-3min)

You may want to include key pieces of information such as:

*Church size*

*Sunday Service Style*

*Your Role, How long have you been there?*

*Signature Ministries*

*Is the church more outwardly or inwardly focused?*

*How much is revitalization needed?*

*Lead Pastor's degree of leadership freedom*

*Board Structure*

*Community Summary Description (local or regional area from where you draw people)*

2a. Describe the fundamental change you think needs to take place for your church to be revitalized. (2min)

2b. Describe 3-4 important additional changes that are needed. Include both cultural and practical aspects for each. (2-3min) *(For example, culturally you may need to be more focused on leadership development. Practically you may need a board nomination process that only allows qualified leaders to be appointed.)*

3. Describe how you would apply the Church Revitalization Change Process to lead revitalization in your church. (6-8min)

4. Questions (5-7min)

**Network Reflection and Feedback****Part A: Application of Network Principles**

1. What theological principle(s) of church revitalization have you been able to apply that you learned in the network? (List up to 3)

2. What practical principle(s) of church revitalization have you been able to apply that you learned in the network? (List up to 3)

3. How confident do you feel about leading revitalization in your church? (Select One)

Not confident at all   Slightly confident   Somewhat confident   Confident   Highly confident

**Part B: Coaching**

What parts of the coaching were most helpful to you?

What would you add, omit, or change about the coaching?

**Part C: Overall Network**

What parts of the network were most helpful to you?

What parts of the network were least helpful to you?

What would you add, omit, or change about the network?

What books/readings were most helpful? Least helpful? Why?

Do you have any other comments or feedback? Please write them below:

Overall, how helpful was the network to you? (Select One)

Not helpful at all   Slightly helpful   Somewhat helpful   Helpful   Highly Helpful

**Part D: Additional Training**

What additional training could FEB Central offer that would be helpful to you?

Would you be interested to participate in a future FEB Central leadership network? (Select One)

Not interested at all   Slightly interested   Somewhat interested   Interested   Highly interested

## FROM MISSIONARY-SENDING TO MISSIONAL CHURCH

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

Many Western evangelical churches are familiar with the Biblical command to be outwardly focused. They have adopted a culture of supporting foreign missionaries in prayer, correspondence for encouragement, and financial contributions.<sup>2</sup> This culture was born out of a strong desire to obey Jesus' Great Commission and take the gospel to every nation. This foreign missionary support model was designed in the era of Christendom, where the local culture was primarily Christian and the evangelistic impulse was to take the gospel to people living in foreign countries who had not heard it. For example, consider missionary statesman Oswald J. Smith's twentieth century missionary slogan: "Why should anyone hear the gospel twice before everyone has heard it once?"<sup>3</sup> The assumption of the time was that most people in a missionary-sending country had already heard the gospel, or at least had easy access to it, while many people around the world had no access to the gospel, and must be reached. Jeppe Bach Nikolajsen describes this era of missions when he writes,

In simplified terms, 'mission' and 'church' became two separate entities, responsible for two distinct tasks: the former responsible for the proclamation and spread of the gospel in foreign countries, while the later (*sic*) supported the mission in foreign countries, but was primarily responsible for upholding and maintaining the church in the Christian West.<sup>4</sup>

Many churches found themselves deeply committed to robust foreign missionary programs, while viewing local evangelism as different from missionary work. Local evangelism assumed people had a basic understanding of a Christian worldview. For example, Carson writes of the style of content in popular twentieth century evangelism tools, such as *Evangelism Explosion* or *The Four Spiritual Laws*:

There is nothing intrinsically wrong with this pattern, as long as most of the people to whom it is presented have already bought into the Judeo-Christian heritage. A generation

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church Revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 69-71.

<sup>2</sup> The researcher grew up in and was eventually ordained by The Peoples Church in Toronto. Peoples was founded in 1928 and became well known for its world missions emphasis, sharing in the annual support of up to five hundred missionaries and national workers. The founder of The Peoples Church, Dr. Oswald J. Smith, was a noted missionary statesman who helped to popularize the Faith Promise method of giving towards missions. Many evangelical churches were influenced by Peoples and by Oswald J. Smith, and the foreign missionary supporting culture at Peoples has been replicated in thousands of evangelical churches across North America.

<sup>3</sup> Oswald Smith, *The Challenge of Missions* (Burlington: Welch, 1984), 125.

<sup>4</sup> Nikolajsen, "Beyond Christendom: Lesslie Newbigin as a Post-Chresendom Theologian," 366-67.

ago, the overwhelming majority of Americans enjoyed at least *some* knowledge of the pattern “creation/fall/ten commandments/Christ/ judgment.”<sup>5</sup>

The evangelism styles and tools of much of the twentieth century were designed to evangelize people living in Christendom, who held to a basic Christian worldview. Many churches believed in local evangelism, but did not practice it as cross-cultural missionaries, since there was not a large culture gap to cross between Western believers and unbelievers. But during the past fifty years Western culture has changed dramatically, while many churches continue to minister as if the cultural transformation had not happened. Nikolajsen writes that, “Due to the dissolution of the old Christendom, churches in the West now find themselves in a situation where they must witness to a society that can no longer be regarded as Christian. This shift has led to a renewed understanding of the church as a missionary community.”<sup>6</sup> Leaders in church revitalization must lead their churches to make the shift to being a missionary community that Nicolajsen describes. This shift requires the church to think of herself as a missionary outpost rather than an established parish. Decisions about programs and spending should be made from the viewpoint of the church as a missionary to the community rather than the church as a religious service provider to Christians. This does not mean that the church neglects the discipleship of existing believers. Rather discipleship must be done, keeping in mind the ever present mission of reaching unbelieving family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers, who may not share a Christian worldview and require cross-cultural, missionary evangelism.

This shift is doable, even for long-established congregations, because in their theology they are often fully committed to cross-cultural evangelism and have done it for decades. Church goers need to be taught that they are living in a cross-cultural mission field, and need to apply the same fervor locally that they already show for overseas missions. They need to realize that they are now not only missionary supporters, but they are also frontline missionaries in their own city.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> D.A. Carson, *The Gagging of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 501-502.

<sup>6</sup> Nikolajsen, "Beyond Christendom: Lesslie Newbigin as a Post-Chresendom Theologian," 367.

<sup>7</sup> The researcher found it helpful to share statistics with local church members that show there are a higher percentage of believers in many of the countries where the church supported missionaries, than in the church's own Toronto neighbourhood. The purpose was not to encourage a decrease in missions support, but to encourage an equal zeal for local outreach. The information was eye-opening and well received, and helped the church to embrace her role as a missionary outpost in Toronto.

## PREPARE FOR PAIN AND SUFFERING

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

Church revitalization authors are consistent in their warnings for church revitalization leaders that there is a personal cost associated with leading church revitalization. Leaders attempting to lead such change often experience pain and personal attacks. In describing leaders of breakout churches, Rainer tells about "...the high cost these leaders paid to move their churches to new levels of excellence."<sup>2</sup> He reviews stories of "...leaders who were dismissed, stressed-out leaders who found themselves in the hospital, leaders who face the wrath of those who were once supporters. Unfortunately, difficulties are commonplace in churches that move to greatness."<sup>3</sup> Rainer goes on to express that he did not expect this result in his research, and did not want to include it in his book for "fear that many leaders may be dissuaded from leading churches to greatness once they read these stories of conflict and pain."<sup>4</sup> These stories of pain and conflict are real, and they are also the norm for leaders in church revitalization. It is important that these leaders know what they are getting into so that they are not surprised and discouraged when it happens to them. Borden echoes Rainer when he warns revitalization leaders that people in the church will "...make attacks on our integrity, our spouse, and our family. If they can cost us our jobs or negatively affect our employment, they will do so out of self-interest."<sup>5</sup> Borden continues, "...part of the pastor's preparation is to work at developing a support system for the family as well as to develop personal habits that are healthy and disciplined. ...The price of change will be high. The more prepared the pastor is to pay that price, the better."<sup>6</sup> The cost of leading change in a church is well reported, so pastors must be prepared. The spiritual preparation described in the section above becomes all the more important, in light of the painful experiences that may come. According to McIntosh,

Leading a church through a period of revitalization takes a great toll on a pastor's emotional well-being. Remaining whole emotionally, spiritually, and physically is a fundamental necessity for those leading churches in fresh directions. Spiritual disciplines of prayer, rest, and quietness are prerequisites for lasting spiritual health. Pastors leading

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 129-131. <sup>2</sup> Rainer, *Breakout Churches*, 86.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>5</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 92-93.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 93.

a church in revitalization will find their emotional lives taxed to the limit. Quiet reflection and trust in God will sustain the revitalization leader through times of discouragement and suffering.<sup>7</sup>

McIntosh tells us that personal and spiritual preparations are necessary due to the difficult times that will inevitably come. A leader in church revitalization must be willing to face this pain if the church is to be revitalized. “No church is revitalized without someone suffering. If you are willing to suffer the pain, your church can be revitalized. If you are unwilling to suffer pain, the church cannot be revitalized.”<sup>8</sup> These are sobering words, yet they also bring hope, knowing that many revitalization leaders have paid the price but have also received the reward of seeing their church revitalized. For any who think this promise of conflict and pain is unfair, Borden’s words are fitting. “We must also remember that if Jesus died for the Church, which he established, then we as his followers must expect conflict when directing the Church to act like the missionary culture that Jesus requires.”<sup>9</sup> Leaders in church revitalization must enter the process with their eyes wide open, and be ready to pay the price in pain and suffering.

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<sup>7</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 38.

<sup>8</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 38.

<sup>9</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 92.

## BUILD CREDIBILITY

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

It is essential for a leader in church revitalization to build personal credibility early in the change process. For people to be willing to follow a leader in significant change, a leader needs to be credible. Leadership researchers Kouzes and Posner write about what makes a leader credible. “What we found in our investigation of admired leadership qualities is that more than anything, people want to follow leaders who are credible. *Credibility is the foundation of leadership.*”<sup>2</sup> Kouzes and Posner’s studies have found that credibility is based “on three criteria: their perceived *trustworthiness*, their *expertise*, and their *dynamism*. Those who are rated more highly on these dimensions are considered to be more credible sources of information.”<sup>3</sup> They expand on these three criteria, saying, “Above all else, we as constituents must be able to believe in our leaders. We must believe that their word can be trusted, that they’re personally passionate and enthusiastic about the work that they’re doing, and that they have the knowledge and skill to lead.”<sup>4</sup> A leader in church revitalization will be leading in new directions that cause people in the church to fear. If people are going to follow, the leader must be credible. But how does a leader build this credibility in the church? Certainly the pastor must be known as a trustworthy individual, and avoid actions that will damage trust. The suggestions below will focus on expertise and dynamism.

A leader can build credibility, or at least not lessen it, by doing a good job in accomplishing duties that are expected by a congregation. Paul Borden writes, “Pastors who are preparing for a major change down the road cannot afford to lose any influence with the congregation... The basics must be covered. ...the pastor must strive not to lose influence through failing to accomplish expected ministries during the process of preparing for systemic change.”<sup>5</sup> Many churchgoers have expectations of what a pastor should do, which may be good things, but may not lead the church to revitalization. However, if a pastor fails to do them, credibility will be lost, making it hard to lead needed changes. These expectations usually require

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church Revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 135-138.

<sup>2</sup> Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 37.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 84.

activities that look more like those of a chaplain than a transformational leader.<sup>6</sup> As time goes on, the pastor can develop care workers to ensure that pastoral care by the pastor changes to become congregational care by the Body of Christ.<sup>7</sup> But initially, the pastor needs to do these basics personally. Doing chaplain work successfully means that the congregation feels cared for, and will see their pastor as having expertise in doing pastoral work. This perception of expertise supports the pastor's credibility.

A second way the pastor can build credibility is through being a good preacher. Not all pastors are naturally good speakers, but they can improve. When the researcher taught preaching to aspiring pastors at Prairie Bible College, he emphasized two principles: "Do be Biblical" and "Don't be Boring."<sup>8</sup> If a pastor is seeking to revitalize a church to be a Great Commission church, that pastor likely believes in the importance of being biblical, and is motivated to do so. However, a pastor also needs to be motivated to preach sermons that are interesting. Sam Storms bluntly writes, "**Boring preaching is a sin.** It's not simply a matter of one's personality or gifting (or the lack thereof). To explain and expound and apply the Word of God in a monotone, lifeless, joyless manner is sin."<sup>9</sup> Preaching is a key leadership role for a pastor. A pastor who is competent as a preacher communicates both expertise and dynamism, which builds credibility.<sup>10</sup> Every pastor can improve their preaching, making it not only biblical but interesting as well.

A third way the pastor can build credibility is through a series of early wins. Paul Borden emphasizes the importance of a pastor gaining credibility in the first year at a church.<sup>11</sup> He writes, "The first year also establishes the leader's credibility. People are looking for leadership and expect the leader to lead. Everyone is waiting to see whether the pastor will lead, how the

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 51, 84.

<sup>7</sup> Borden, *Hit the Bullseye*, 21-23.

<sup>8</sup> Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, Second Edition ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001). Robinson is cited here as a general reference, but numerous preaching authors and preachers have contributed to these two principles.

<sup>9</sup> Sam Storms, "Expository Exultation: Or, Why Boring Preaching is a Sin," *Sam Storms*, August 22, 2014, accessed 2016, <http://samstorms.com/enjoying-god-blog/post/expository-exultation:-or-why-boring-preaching-is-a-sin>.

<sup>10</sup> In 2011, the researcher took a class in Denver Seminary's D.Min. Program titled, "Leading through Preaching/Communication," taught by Dr. Sid Buzzell. This class drove home the linkage between preaching and pastoral leadership.

<sup>11</sup> While Borden's focus is on a revitalization pastor in the first year of ministry, it would seem that his findings could be applied at other times by a pastor who has decided to become a revitalization pastor.

pastor will lead, and whether the pastor possesses the wisdom and courage to lead well.”<sup>12</sup>

Borden interviewed pastors who had gone on to lead revitalization in their churches, and asked them what they did when they first came. From these interviews, he suggests fifteen areas where a pastor can have some early wins.

Learn the congregation	Learn the community
Develop a first-year plan	Gather people
Create big events	Improve curb appeal
Energize worship	Communicate
Recruit leaders	Be present in the community
Evangelize	Address Money
Pray <sup>13</sup>	

Borden notes that not all of these can be implemented in the first year, but that a pastor should “select three, four, or five things to do, driven by the ministry context in which you find yourself.”<sup>14</sup> The pastor will need to choose the areas that are most needed, and most attainable. However, Borden reports, “In all the interviews pastors identified one common denominator during their first year: building congregational attendance. ...Each pastor produced this phenomenon of growth in a different way, but every one developed a strategy to make it happen.”<sup>15</sup> By seeing early wins in these key areas, a revitalization pastor builds credibility through displaying both expertise and dynamism.

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<sup>12</sup> Borden, *Make or Break your Church in 365 Days*, 52.

<sup>13</sup> Borden, *Make or Break Your Church in 365 Days*, 52-70.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.



## BUILD A NEW DOMINANT COALITION

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

A leader in church revitalization needs to build a team to lead the change. If a leader goes it alone, that leader will not succeed. Borden views church revitalization as warfare. He writes,

When pastors come to most established congregations and desire to lead change, they must realize that they are signing up to lead not just a few battles but an all-out war. Most pastors fail in this war because their army is too small when the conflict is engaged. They have too few officers. They are usually outsmarted by better generals who are fighting on their home turf.<sup>2</sup>

Borden observes you can't win a war if your army isn't big enough. When you try to change a church, some people will fight you, "tooth and nail," every step of the way. It is essential to understand how most churches really work, and build a strong enough team to be able to implement the change. In his book *Diffusion of Innovations*, diffusion scholar<sup>3</sup> Everett Rogers observes that groups are made up of opinion leaders and people who follow them. He writes,

*Opinion leadership* is the degree to which an individual is able to influence other individuals' attitudes or overt behavior in a desired way with a relative high frequency ... Diffusion campaigns are more likely to be successful if change agents identify and mobilize opinion leaders. ... *Change agents success in securing the adoption of innovations by clients is positively related to the extent that he or she works through opinion leaders.*<sup>4</sup>

Rogers' comments suggest that when a pastor wants to make a change, it is most effective to start by persuading the church's opinion leaders, rather than the whole church body. For when the opinion leaders support changes, the rest will be more apt to follow, because they trust the opinion of the opinion leader. Conversely, if the opinion leaders do not support the changes, the rest will also not support the changes. So a pastor must quickly determine who the opinion leaders in a church are, and then determine their openness to changes the pastor is proposing. As the name suggests, a pastor can determine who the opinion leaders are by observing who people

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church Revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 138-141.

<sup>2</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 69.

<sup>3</sup> A diffusion scholar studies how new things are adopted. For example, a diffusion scholar might study the adoption of a new technology in a given population, or the adoption of a new vaccination shot by a given population. Their research helps explain why people adopt things quickly, slowly or not at all. A change in a church can be considered an innovation that is being adopted, with the pastor as the change agent.

<sup>4</sup> Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, Fifth ed. (New York: Free Press, 2003), 388.

in the church listen to the most. Often in a struggling church there are one or a few key opinion leaders who outrank the others, due to being long term members, large donors, or from a founding family. These are often the people who invited the pastor to come to the church, expressing desires for change, but who are not truly willing to support actual changes.<sup>5</sup> McIntosh describes this group as a “dominant coalition.”<sup>6</sup> He writes, “For your church to be revitalized, you must form your own dominant coalition.”<sup>7</sup> The pastor should look for other opinion leaders who have gained formal or informal standing in some other way, who truly want change, but may not realize that the dominant coalition is blocking change. They are open to rallying around a courageous pastor who is willing to lead change, but the pastor needs to approach them and work with them, perhaps inviting them to be a member of a prayer team, a vision team, or an implementation team.<sup>8</sup> There may also be newer people in the church who the pastor observes have the potential to become opinion leaders.<sup>9</sup> With enough of these other opinion leaders supporting the new vision, change can happen as a new dominant coalition forms and grows to be stronger than the old dominant coalition. Ideally this happens without a fight, but that is not the norm. Borden writes, “When such congregations begin to reclaim their God given mission, there will be opposition, often from God’s people, and we must be ready.”<sup>10</sup> He also states, “Many will talk of the need for change while doing everything in their power to inhibit it. This is particularly true of those who brought in the pastor to lead the congregational change. When they realize that real change means a loss of their influence, they quickly turn and become the pastor’s adversary.”<sup>11</sup> McIntosh writes that the pastor should “...train members [of the new coalition] in change management and conflict management practices...Revitalization leaders expect and prepare people for conflict.”<sup>12</sup> This discussion underlines how vital it is for a leader in church revitalization to understand the people and leadership dynamics in a church that must change. As Borden stated above, if the pastor does not recruit an army that is strong enough, the pastor will be outmaneuvered by the current dominant coalition and fail to implement changes.

<sup>5</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 68-69.

<sup>6</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 84.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>8</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 71-79.

<sup>9</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 85-87.

<sup>10</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 83.

<sup>11</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 71.

<sup>12</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 91.

## DEVELOP A VISION

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

For a leader in church revitalization, vision is an essential tool.<sup>2</sup> Bill Hybels calls vision “a leader’s most potent weapon.”<sup>3</sup> He writes, “Vision is at the very core of leadership. Take vision away from a leader and you cut out his or her heart. Vision is the fuel that leaders run on.”<sup>4</sup> Malphurs and Penfold capture the sentiment of many church health and revitalization authors when they define vision as follows: “*Vision is a clear, exciting picture of God’s future for your ministry as you believe it can and must be.*”<sup>5</sup> Andy Stanley describes vision like this: “Vision is a clear mental picture of what could be, fueled by the conviction that it should be.”<sup>6</sup> In his book *The Power of Vision*, George Barna defines vision this way: “Vision for ministry is a clear mental image of preferable future imparted by God to his chosen servants and is based upon an accurate understanding of God, self and circumstances.”<sup>7</sup> Several key elements rise to the surface in these definitions. First, vision is *picture* of the future for a ministry. Second, vision is a *clear* picture, rather than a vague or general idea. Third, the visionary believes passionately that the vision *must* come to happen. Thom Rainer argues this point in *Breakout Churches* when he states, “Without passion there is no vision. We found no churches that had anything resembling a true vision unless the leadership, particularly the pastor, was clearly passionate about something.”<sup>8</sup> So vision is a clear picture of the future that the visionary passionately believes must come to happen.

But who does the vision start with? Is it the pastor, a group, or someone else? Church revitalization authors argue that God normally gives the vision to the pastor. McIntosh states,

Vision starts with the pastor. Take a moment and glance through the Bible and notice to whom God gives vision. You’ll find that God gives vision to a single person rather than a group of people. Rarely does God give vision to a committee, a board, or a team of

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church Revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 141-150.

<sup>2</sup> More could be said about vision than space allows for, and the footnoted references in this section provide a starting point for researching vision development in more detail.

<sup>3</sup> Hybels, *Courageous Leadership*, 29.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>5</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 154.

<sup>6</sup> Stanley, *Visioneering*, 18.

<sup>7</sup> George Barna, *The Power of Vision* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1992), 28.

<sup>8</sup> Rainer, *Breakout Churches*, 124.

people. These groups are important but they typically serve to help a leader shape and form a vision rather than discover it. So if you are pastor, vision begins with you.<sup>9</sup>

Because of the lack of vision in a church revitalization setting, Paul Borden believes that vision needs to start with the pastor, who possesses a prophetic passion for the vision. He writes,

...most pastors who arrive to lead congregations that lack vision, hope and morale will find that if they do not generate vision, no one else will. Committees, vision communities, or people exploring vision as a short-term project do not generate visions that produce systemic change. Vision is derived from the passion of a leader who has a prophetic fire burning within the soul to accomplish something significant for God. Groups may take this vision, help produce congregational ownership, and delineate its implementation, but without prophetic fire to begin with, there are no images of preferred futures that produce systemic change.<sup>10</sup>

Malphurs states, “I believe that the lead pastor should take primary responsibility for both developing and implementing the vision. I like to refer to him as the ‘keeper of the vision.’”<sup>11</sup> These authors agree that in church revitalization, God normally gives the vision to the pastor. This does not mean that others will not help in the refinement of the vision, as McIntosh and Borden note in the quotations above. For example, Borden recommends the pastor build a vision team to help in the development of the vision, made up of “idea people” and people “who are dissatisfied with the status quo.”<sup>12</sup> Malphurs also suggests the involvement of “staff, and a lay team with developing the ministry’s vision.”<sup>13</sup> So the vision may be refined by a group that might include board members, church staff, and others in the congregation, but the vision normally starts with the pastor, as the one to whom God gives it.

The next question to be asked is, “What is the content of the vision?” To develop the content of the vision, a church must first know its mission.<sup>14</sup> The mission statement for a church should be a statement that is based on Jesus’ Great Commission to “make disciples of all nations.”<sup>15</sup> While the wording may differ slightly, this mission will be much the same for every church.<sup>16</sup> In *Transitioning*, a book about leading change in a church, Pastor Dan Southerland,

<sup>9</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 75-76.

<sup>10</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 45.

<sup>11</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 156.

<sup>12</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 73.

<sup>13</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 156.

<sup>14</sup> Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 38-39; Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 210-11.

<sup>15</sup> Matt. 28:19.

<sup>16</sup> Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 38.

using the word “purpose” in place of “mission,” states, “...your purpose statement should fit within the parameters of the Great Commission.”<sup>17</sup> Southerland follows Pastor Rick Warren’s book, *The Purpose Driven Church*, in teaching that the content of your vision starts with understanding your purpose.<sup>18</sup> Malphurs and Penfold write, “Every church must have a mission. ...The Savior has already given the church its mission back in the first century. The mission is to make disciples, according to Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; and Luke 24:45-49.”<sup>19</sup> So the mission of every church must be centered on the Great Commission. The vision will be developed as the specific outworking of the mission in the church’s local context.<sup>20</sup> Thus the core of the vision must picture the church fulfilling Jesus’ Great Commission.<sup>21</sup>

Rainer notes that the visions in Breakout Churches have a threefold alignment of the passion of the leaders, the passion of the congregation and the needs of the local community.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, McIntosh writes, “One way to understand vision is to see it as the intersection of the pastor’s leadership passion, the passion and gifts of the congregation, and the community needs. Where these three concepts intersect is the vision God has for your church.”<sup>23</sup> In summary, the vision is the answer to the question, “How does God want our church to fulfill the Great Commission, in light of our gifts, passions and community needs?” Malphurs and Penfold provide a helpful list of items that could be contained in the vision statement.

There are a number of possibilities that would convey the vision you see. Following are some: the church’s desire to reach its community, its vision for making disciples, its dream for mobilizing the congregation, its vision for staffing, its vision for its future location and facilities, its vision for stewardship. ...Some more possibilities are your mission statement, core values, size creativity/innovation, prayer, technology, multicultural goals, social issues, treatment of outsiders, church planting, multisite ministry, missions, various types of ministries, areas of passion and so forth.<sup>24</sup>

The vision statement will be longer or shorter depending on how many of the items are included and how much detail is given for each. Some think a vision statement should be short and sweet,

<sup>17</sup> Dan Southerland, *Transitioning* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 48.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 45; Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 81.

<sup>19</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 210. Malphurs and Penfold use the word “mission” much like Southerland and Warren use “purpose.”

<sup>20</sup> Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 39.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Rainer, *Breakout Churches*, 114.

<sup>23</sup> McIntosh, *There’s Hope for Your Church*, 74.

<sup>24</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 159.

much like a mission statement. Others think it should be longer, perhaps a page or two.<sup>25</sup> Malphurs and Penfold believe that the length of the vision statement should be the pastor's decision, because "as chief vision caster, he needs to be comfortable with as well as excited about the final vision."<sup>26</sup> The length of the vision statement has implications on communicating the vision, which is the next step in the change process.

With the comments above in mind, the following steps are presented for a revitalization pastor to determine the contents of the vision. The steps need not be linear as many will be done in parallel. Also, there could be several iterations of these steps as the pastor prays, listens, plans and seeks God's vision for the church.

### **Pray**

The first step is to start with prayer. Borden describes a process that he calls praying "cosmically."<sup>27</sup> He encourages the pastor to pray with a growing congregation and a community that is being reached in mind. McIntosh writes, "In your prayers, ask God specifically to make you alert to what he desires for his church."<sup>28</sup> Malphurs and Penfold describe a process of "envisioning prayer."<sup>29</sup> Finding God's vision for a church is a spiritual process that must be saturated with seeking God for vision and guidance in the process.

### **Study the Bible**

Barna encourages a leader who is seeking God's vision to read the Bible to grow in knowledge of God and closeness to him. By knowing God more deeply the leader will be more sensitive to discerning a vision from God.<sup>30</sup> McIntosh states, "Start by reading the Bible, asking God to show you what he wants for your church."<sup>31</sup> He encourages the pastor to keep a journal "and jot down any and all ideas that pop into your mind as you pray and meditate on God's Word."<sup>32</sup> The pastor, having asked God for direction, needs be attentive to what God is saying through Scripture and prayer.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 159-60.

<sup>26</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re: Vision*, 159.

<sup>27</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 47.

<sup>28</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 76.

<sup>29</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re: Vision*, 157.

<sup>30</sup> Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 88-89.

<sup>31</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 76.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

### Find Your Passion

McIntosh and Rainer describe a church leader's passion as a vital component in determining the vision.<sup>33</sup> While seeking God's vision through prayer and Scripture, McIntosh encourages church pastors to reflect on what make them passionate in a journal. He writes, "Allow your own passion to be reflected in your notes. God has put you in this church for this time, and he likely has been shaping his vision in you long before you arrived."<sup>34</sup> A pastor needs to answer the question, "What am I passionate about in ministry?," to help in finding God's vision for the church.

### Study the Community

A pastor also needs to study and understand the community, as God's vision for the church should be designed to impact the community with the gospel. Borden writes that a pastor needs "to exegete the community. ...It means researching everything that reflects the community's values, interests, desires, and aspirations. The pastor interviews people...such as the mayor, council people, community planners...teachers, police and fire personnel..."<sup>35</sup> Barna also encourages a person seeking God's vision to know the local community and speak with "movers and shakers and opinion makers."<sup>36</sup> McIntosh makes similar recommendations about studying the church's community.<sup>37</sup> Knowing the community is an important piece of finding God's vision for the church.

### Study the Church

A pastor also needs to know and understand the church. Barna writes of the importance of "...knowing the history of the congregation and having an accurate sense of the thinking and emotions of the people."<sup>38</sup> McIntosh encourages the pastor as follows: "Be sure to talk to church members and worshipers."<sup>39</sup> He provides five helpful questions to ask of them.<sup>40</sup> He also encourages understanding "the passion and gifts of the congregation."<sup>41</sup> Knowing the church is a vital piece in finding God's vision for the church.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 74-75; Rainer, *Breakout Churches*, 117-18.

<sup>34</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 76.

<sup>35</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 47-48.

<sup>36</sup> Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 85-86.

<sup>37</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 77-78.

<sup>38</sup> Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 86.

<sup>39</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 78.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 74.

## Allow Time

It may take time for a pastor to find God’s vision for the church. Barna suggests that it could take days or months.<sup>42</sup> McIntosh writes, “...allow time to think and let your thoughts ruminate. ...As you read God’s Word, pray, and talk to community and church leaders, allow God time to create thoughts and passions in your mind.”<sup>43</sup> A pastor needs to be patient and wait for God to provide the vision.

## Seek Feedback

As the pastor is seeking God’s vision, the time will come to ask trusted people for feedback. Barna writes, “...they can help you be as certain as possible that you have truly grasped the vision God has prepared for you and have not succumbed to the desire to follow the ways that seem right to you alone.”<sup>44</sup> McIntosh encourages speaking to leaders in the church one-on-one, and then holding a vision retreat with the key leaders to clarify and formalize the vision.<sup>45</sup>

## Put it all Together

The expectation is that as a pastor earnestly seeks God for vision, listens to God for a response, studies the community and church, and seeks feedback from trusted spiritual people, God will bring together the pieces of the vision that will solidify with time.<sup>46</sup> Once the vision is clear in the minds of the pastor and key leaders, it will be time to communicate it more broadly in the congregation.

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<sup>42</sup> Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 93.

<sup>43</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 78.

<sup>44</sup> Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 92.

<sup>45</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 78-80.

<sup>46</sup> Barna, *The Power of Vision*, 93-94; Borden, *Direct Hit*, 48-49; Gary Friesen, *Decision Making and the Will of God* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah, 2004), 115-16, 237; Malphurs and Penfold, *Re: Vision*, 157-61; McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 78-80. Friesen teaches that one should obey God’s revealed moral will in Scripture, but he is cautious regarding “special guidance” from God. Malphurs and Penfold also avoid what could be called “special guidance” in their process for developing vision. The researcher has taught and believed for some time that as one follows God’s moral will, he will reveal specific, personal aspects of his will. Seeking God’s specific vision for a church appears to have some parallels to an individual seeking God’s will. This parallel suggests that a pastor should lead the church to obey God’s mission and be alert for more specific guidance from God.

## COMMUNICATE THE VISION

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

It is not enough to have a vision, or even to have passion for a vision. That vision must be clearly and relentlessly communicated so that it is owned by the congregation, and not just a few key leaders. If a vision is not repeated frequently, people will simply forget and move on. Malphurs and Penfold write,

If you aren't able to articulate the vision, then no one will be able to act on it. You might as well not have one. You must cast the vision if people are going to catch it, and you must cast it regularly and repeatedly. Most vision casters agree that it takes only about a month for people to forget the vision. The general rule is to repeat it over and over every day in a different way. This will be a primary responsibility of the pastor.<sup>2</sup>

There are many ways to communicate the vision. Southerland highlights the following ten methods, many which are echoed by other church health and revitalization authors:

Preaching	Small group vision studies	Purpose statements
Vision phrases	Vision verses	Faith stories
Conferences	Tapes and Books	One on one
Living it out in your own life <sup>3</sup>		

Malphurs and Penfold have a comparable list, adding “Visual Images...Annual Staff Evaluations...Newcomer’s Class...Brochure”<sup>4</sup> to the list.

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church Revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 150-151.

<sup>2</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 161.

<sup>3</sup> Southerland, *Transitioning*, 89-95.

<sup>4</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re:Vision*, 161-64.



## AN OUTWARD, MISSIONARY FOCUS

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

The fundamental shift that a leader in church revitalization must lead is the shift from being inwardly focused to outwardly focused. Instead of asking, “How will this bless us?,” the church should be asking, “How will this bless others?” Decisions, dollars, programs, and prayers need to have an emphasis on reaching out beyond the church walls. Spending months and years working through change processes, adopting new bylaws based on an Accountable Leadership Strategy, launching new ministry programs, and other revitalization activities are all done to ensure the church can reach out effectively.

This fundamental shift is repeatedly emphasized by church revitalization authors. Paul Borden writes, “The whole purpose of congregational transformation is to get congregations once again fulfilling God’s mission.”<sup>2</sup> Using a team sports metaphor for the church, Kaiser writes, “The object of the game for a congregation is the Great Commission: making disciples of Jesus Christ.”<sup>3</sup> Borden and Kaiser recognize that this Great Commission focus will impact behaviors in the pastor and the congregation. Regarding pastors in their judicatory, Borden states, “We asked pastors to forget that they are pastors and think of themselves as missionaries. Behaviors and priorities are changed when the leader sees the culture as ‘pagan’ and opposed to the Gospel message, with the local congregation functioning as a mission outpost designed to reach that culture.”<sup>4</sup> The pastor in church revitalization must shift from viewing oneself as a chaplain primarily giving spiritual care to church members to viewing oneself as a missionary leader who leads the church in sharing the gospel in the church’s community. Stetzer and Dodson echo Borden when they write,

Thus, missional leaders and churches are ones that are thinking and acting like missionaries. They understand their culture, lead biblically faithful and culturally relevant churches, and think in missionary ways about their contexts. ...Just as we’d need to learn the language, culture, context, and accepted avenues through which we could

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church Revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 112-124.

<sup>2</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 57.

<sup>3</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 61.

<sup>4</sup> Borden, *Hit the Bullseye*, 38.

communicate the gospel overseas, we need to adapt our church to the changing culture in which God has placed us.<sup>5</sup>

Leaders in church revitalization need to think and act like missionaries.

Kaiser talks about a similar shift in the congregation when he writes, “In a missional congregation, the members choose to serve newcomers before they serve themselves. The implications of this outward focus include connecting with people who are new to the church, inviting friends who might come to the church, and reaching out to those not yet interested in church.”<sup>6</sup> It is not only the pastor whose ministry orientation must change, but the whole congregation as well. Many congregations do not realize that they need to make this shift to be outwardly focused. Stetzer and Dodson describe the challenge. “Most pastors reading this believe that the church exists, at least in part, to fulfill the Great Commission. . . . But the average person in a church believes that the church exists to meet his or her needs and the needs of the family.”<sup>7</sup> It is a basic task of a leader in church revitalization to lead a change in thinking so that church members believe and behave in ways that reflect the church’s outwardly focused mission.

But what does it mean for a church to be outwardly focused? Rick Rusaw and Eric Swanson wrote their book, *The Externally Focused Church*, to advocate and describe a church that is externally focused. They write, “Externally focused churches are internally strong, but they are oriented externally. Their external focus is reflected in those things for which they staff and budget. Because they engage their communities with the good works and the good news of Jesus Christ, their communities are better places in which to live.”<sup>8</sup> Rusaw and Swanson argue that “good deeds and good news can’t and shouldn’t be separated.”<sup>9</sup> However, while not diminishing the need for evangelism, the clear emphasis of their book is on churches becoming active in good deeds to their community. They recognize that evangelistic opportunities will come through this service. Their emphasis on service has much to offer and reflects many biblical commands to love and care for others. The question becomes, do they have the right

<sup>5</sup> Stetzer and Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, 56.

<sup>6</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 89.

<sup>7</sup> Stetzer and Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, 29-30.

<sup>8</sup> Eric Swanson and Ric Rusaw, *The Externally Focussed Church* (Loveland, CO: Group Publishing, 2004), 17.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

balance in their external focus? Gary McIntosh recently completed a significant evangelism study about how people come to faith in Christ and how they attend church. While not addressing Rusaw and Swanson directly, McIntosh addresses their emphasis on missional service when he writes,

There is less emphasis on evangelism in our churches than there used to be just two decades ago. ...In place of evangelism, churches have adopted a concept of missional outreach, which usually means they do acts of love, mercy, and justice in their communities. Any sort of outreach that affects our communities and families for Christ is good, but it is equally important in today's postmodern society for Christians and churches to proclaim the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ. Good works and deeds do open doors for sharing the gospel, but it is only the message of Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection that has saving power. This is the reason I am writing this book. While it is important in today's postmodern society for Christians to let their light shine through missional acts of service, it is equally important, perhaps more so, to proclaim the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ.<sup>10</sup>

It is important to note that McIntosh published in 2016, while Rusaw and Swanson published in 2004, twelve years earlier. McIntosh writes with the benefit of hindsight, observing how over a decade of missional outreach has impacted evangelism. He states that there has been a noted decrease in evangelism over the past two decades, with missional outreach replacing evangelistic outreach in many churches. McIntosh does not intend to criticize the good deeds that have been done, but he seeks to remind the church of its core purpose: evangelism that brings people to the saving knowledge of Christ. It is interesting to note that McIntosh, Rusaw and Swanson all advocate for both service-oriented outreach and evangelistic outreach. The difference is in their emphasis. McIntosh emphasizes evangelistic outreach while Rusaw and Swanson emphasizes outreach through works of service. Both are biblically mandated, worthwhile activities. Is not the answer simply to be balanced and do both? The researcher believes that a similar dynamic is taking place to one described by Kaiser in *Winning on Purpose*. Kaiser notes the biblical teaching that evangelism and discipleship are both key activities of the church. However he points out that when choices have to be made for what a church is to do first, something has to take priority. He advocates for placing a priority on evangelism, while not neglecting discipleship, because he notes that if a church tries to be balanced, experience shows that

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<sup>10</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 19-21.

evangelism inevitably takes the back seat.<sup>11</sup> It appears that McIntosh has discovered the same dynamic at work in the church over the past two decades, regarding good deeds and good news. While Rusaw and Swanson promoted the church both doing good deeds and sharing good news, the reality was that evangelism received less emphasis. With this concern in mind, the researcher advocates for an externally focused church placing priority on evangelism, while not neglecting missional outreach in the community. The need in the Canadian urban context is for evangelism, as the statistics cited in the opening chapter attest. There are many social and community service needs that the church can and should be involved in. But like Oswald J. Smith noted almost a century ago regarding world missions, no one but the church will care for the evangelization of those without Jesus.<sup>12</sup> If the church does not prioritize evangelism, no one else will.

### Outreach Strategies and Methods

With evangelism as the priority in an outwardly focused church, what strategies and specific methods should a leader in church revitalization employ? It was noted in the previous chapter that Western culture has shifted dramatically, and that strategies and methods of evangelism, which worked in a Christianized culture where people had a basic understanding of Christian values, are now much less effective in an increasingly secularized culture.<sup>13</sup> Evangelism strategies and methods for church revitalization need to consider this new cultural reality. Sonlife Ministries Founder Dann Spader discusses evangelism principles in the new cultural setting when he writes, “Outreach is a process. Many Chair 1 people [unsaved people] will need to hear the good news several times before they are ready to receive it. Few respond to the Gospel the first time it is shared.”<sup>14</sup> Referring to the Biblical farming metaphor for evangelism, Spader teaches a process that he calls “Spiritual CPR. ... ‘C’ stands for Cultivation.

<sup>11</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 25-27.

<sup>12</sup> Ministering in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Oswald J. Smith insisted the church prioritize missionary support above local ministry, as he determined that others would support local needs but no one else but the church would support world missions. The researcher read this information in the past, most likely in one of Smith’s many books, a biography, or other source related to The Peoples Church, Toronto, but was not able to locate the reference.

<sup>13</sup> Keller, *Center Church*, 182-84.

<sup>14</sup> Spader, *4 Chair Discipling*, 61.

... ‘P’ ...stands for Planting. ... ‘R’ stands for Reaping.”<sup>15</sup> He argues that unbelievers are like hard soil, and that the soil needs to be cultivated before the gospel seed can be planted. He states, “Breaking up the hardened ground is the hardest part of the process.”<sup>16</sup> Many churches will want to skip to planting before breaking up the soil. But in this new culture, the cultivation is essential. Next comes planting the word of God in a person’s life. Spader says, “Planting is sowing the seed at the right time, the right depth, and in the right way (Isaiah 28:25-26).”<sup>17</sup> Finally the time comes to reap the results of the cultivation and planting. “Spiritual harvest requires sharing the Good News, clearly and concisely, and calling for a response.”<sup>18</sup> Spader’s Spiritual CPR process gives a framework that both individuals and churches can utilize in contemporary evangelism. Some practical ways to cultivate, plant, and reap will be discussed further below.<sup>19</sup> But first, some recent research on how people become Christians will be presented.

Gary McIntosh’s book, *Growing God’s Church*, contains the results of a survey to determine how people come to faith in Christ, conducted between 2006 and 2010.<sup>20</sup> McIntosh reports that 43% of people were led to Christ by a family member, and 16% by a friend. He also found that 17% came through a church staff member, and 8% through a lay teacher in the church.<sup>21</sup> When the survey results were narrowed down to only include new converts who had trusted in Christ more recently, McIntosh found that 32% were led to Christ by a family member, 23% by a friend, and 23% by a church staff member.<sup>22</sup> McIntosh also investigated the methods that most influenced people to trust in Christ. He found that 39% reported it was a conversation with family, 15% a conversation with friends, and 13% an evangelistic event. In comparison, 4% reported a teaching ministry and 2% a worship service.<sup>23</sup> For new converts, 18% were most

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 61-62.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Spader, *4 Chair Discipling*, 62.

<sup>19</sup> Many evangelism resources are available today and the discussion will not be exhaustive.

<sup>20</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 22-25.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 95. McIntosh’s percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, for simplicity.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 105.

influenced by conversation with family, 23% through conversation with friends, 9% through evangelistic events, 9% through visitation, and 9% through special needs that they had in their own lives. 27% were influenced through numerous other methods.<sup>24</sup> When we review the results of McIntosh’s research, we find that a majority of people come to faith in Christ through conversation with family or friends. McIntosh concludes, “The main methodology that is effective in winning nonbelievers to faith in Christ is simply conversation.”<sup>25</sup>

McIntosh’s findings combine with Spader’s teaching on the evangelism process he calls Spiritual CPR to suggest some important conclusions. First, in light of the importance of cultivation, and the findings that a majority of people come to Christ through conversation with family or friends, leaders in church revitalization must both teach and model building relationships with unbelievers. Spader writes, “Often the hardest part of evangelism is this process of building friendships with the lost so they will be receptive to the seed of the gospel.”<sup>26</sup> Many believers (and pastors!) have few significant friendships with unbelievers, and many unbelievers do not have significant relationships with any believers,<sup>27</sup> and may only have a caricature of what a believer is like. When they meet a genuine believer, and learn that they are not that different from themselves, it provides an opening for them to consider the gospel.<sup>28</sup> McIntosh states,

There is a direct connection between the number of unchurched friends the adult worshippers of your church have and the potential growth of your church. If your adult attendees average only three unchurched friends, your church is likely to decline. If they have an average of six unchurched friends, your church is probably plateaued. However if each of the adults in your church has nine or more unchurched friends, your church is very likely to be growing.<sup>1</sup> The more relationships with non-Christians adults have outside of your church, the greater the potential to see people coming to faith in Christ and to your church.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>24</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God’s Church*, 109.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>26</sup> Spader, *4 Chair Discipling*, 62.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 57-58, 62, 64; Paul Borthwick, *Stop Witnessing...and Start Loving* (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 2003), 119-20.

<sup>28</sup> Keller, *Center Church*, 282-83.

<sup>29</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God’s Church*, 157; Gary McIntosh and Charles Arn, *What Every Pastor Should Know* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013), 25-26. McIntosh references *What Every Pastor Should Know* for the statistics noted by footnote 1 in the quotation.

McIntosh's words drive home the need for believers to develop meaningful relationships with unbelievers. Second, leaders need to train their people how to have evangelistic conversations with unbelievers. McIntosh reports, "*Effective evangelism is the result of training believers to share their faith with others. ...As churches train their members to share their faith, around 12 percent of the family members, friends, and colleagues of those trained come to faith in Christ over a five-year period.*"<sup>30</sup> McIntosh recommends teaching people listening skills and arranging space in the church facilities in ways that encourage conversation.<sup>31</sup> Third, leaders need to plan events that will put people in their church in conversations with friends whom they bring or other people that they meet. McIntosh writes, "Plan church events where your people will feel comfortable bringing their friends, family members and colleagues."<sup>32</sup> He adds, "...churches that effectively reach others for Christ usually offer several events each year for the sole purpose of connecting nonbelievers to the church *before* they accept Christ."<sup>33</sup> Knowing that cultivation of relationships is needed and that spiritual conversation is essential, here are some practical ways to strengthen a church's evangelism.

The Alpha Course has been a popular and successful evangelism program during the last two decades.<sup>34</sup> The course is designed to engage unbelievers in evangelistic conversations on a weekly basis over ten weeks. The meal is a central part of each meeting, which encourages conversations between believers and unbelievers. The gospel is presented through the video teaching, and time is given to discuss it together. A highlight of the course is a weekend retreat where there is even more opportunity for spiritual conversation. In short, the Alpha course is a practical method that combines Spader's cultivation and McIntosh's conversations. Courses such as Christianity Explored, which utilize a similar structure, have also been effective in many

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<sup>30</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 159.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 159-60.

<sup>34</sup> Alpha Canada, "Alpha Canada," accessed August 28, 2016. <https://www.alphacanada.org/>.

churches.<sup>35</sup> Leaders in church revitalization can lead these courses and at the same time train people in their church how to have evangelistic conversations. The pastor or other leader can model how to interact with unbelievers and then give other participants from their church the opportunities to lead and interact in the course.

McIntosh's research suggests that church staff members also have a significant role in leading people to Christ.<sup>36</sup> He recommends that pastors model evangelistic relationships when he writes, "Build relationships with unbelievers and spend at least 10 percent of your time with them outside of church ministries and programs."<sup>37</sup> He also encourages pastors to preach evangelistically and share the gospel regularly as part of their sermons, expecting opportunities for reaping.<sup>38</sup> Andy Stanley and Tim Keller, leading pastors in Atlanta and New York City respectively, both recommend preaching with unbelievers in mind. Stanley echoes Spader's call for cultivation when he writes, "If you are going to create a church unchurched people love to attend, then unchurched people need to *love* the weekend message. Even if they don't love it, they need to engage with it to the point that they want to return the next weekend."<sup>39</sup> He goes on to describe his approach to preaching to unchurched people.<sup>40</sup> Keller also describes preaching to reach unbelievers. He writes, "The challenge for the urban preacher is to preach in a way that edifies believers and engages and evangelizes [sic] nonbelievers at the same time."<sup>41</sup> In listing several ways a preacher can do this he states, "Try to devote one of the three or four sermon points mainly to the doubts and concerns of nonbelievers. Keep in your head a list of the ten or so biggest objections people have to Christianity. More often than not, the particular Scripture text has some way to address them."<sup>42</sup> Resources such as Keller's *The Reason for God*, Christian

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<sup>35</sup> Christianity Explored, "Christianity Explored," accessed August 28, 2016. [http://christianityexplored.org/Groups/276315/CE\\_ORG.aspx?redirected=1](http://christianityexplored.org/Groups/276315/CE_ORG.aspx?redirected=1).

<sup>36</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 95-96.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>38</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 151.

<sup>39</sup> Andy Stanley, *Deep & Wide* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 229.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 229-59.

<sup>41</sup> Keller, *Center Church*, 177.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

philosopher William Lane Craig's *Reasonable Faith*, journalist and pastor Lee Strobel's *The Case for Christ* and his related follow-up books, all can provide helpful content to pastors for engaging nonbeliever's apologetic concerns.<sup>43</sup> In summary, both Keller and Stanley recommend preaching with unbelievers in mind, in such a way that their presence is welcomed and encouraged, yet believers are still built up by the sermon.

Leaders in church revitalization need to utilize and creatively employ other methods for leading their people to engage their community. Community BBQ's, fun fairs, concerts and other events are all practical ways to meet new people in the community and begin the cultivation process. Being a gathering point for food or clothing donations for underprivileged people in the city is another way to connect. Opening the church facility for community groups to use for reasonably priced or free rentals is another way to invite unbelievers to connect with believers.<sup>44</sup> Searcy teaches the idea of hosting a "Big Day" that is designed to attract people from the community who do not normally attend.<sup>45</sup> McIntosh recommends servant evangelism activities such as neighborhood window washing, leaf raking, balloon giveaways or yard cleanup, all as ways to connect with neighbors.<sup>46</sup> All of these ideas provide opportunities for the cultivation of relationships between the church and the community, and between believers and unbelievers.

Leaders in church revitalization must keep the evangelistic mission front and center. This section concludes with a quotation from Gary McIntosh, challenging church leaders to make evangelism a top priority.

Even though God is the one who saves, people are needed to persuade nonbelievers of their need of salvation. Normally people do not come to Christ by accident. Instead, God works through faithful churches that plan, strategize and train their people for evangelism. Left on their own, churches will turn inward, focusing on the people already in attendance instead of reaching out to win new people to Christ. . . . church leaders must work hard to keep evangelism the main thing.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith*, Third Edition ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008); Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God* (New York: Dutton, 2008); Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998).

<sup>44</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 168-69. The researcher has observed that these and other methods are practiced in many churches today.

<sup>45</sup> Nelson Searcy, *Ignite* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009), 26.

<sup>46</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 165-66.

<sup>47</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 158.



## IMPLEMENT CHANGES

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

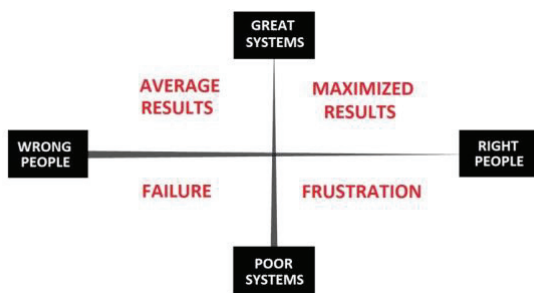
### Introduction

Once the preparation phase of leading change has reached the point where changes can succeed, it is time to begin implementing the changes. Some changes may already be underway, while others may be long overdue. Either way, now is the time to move forward. Changes will be many and will include church systems, staff and structures. Changes regarding leadership, outward focus, and structural changes to support leadership are described in the earlier sections of this chapter. Details of possible system and staff changes are highlighted in the Ministry Areas to Change section below. Changes will be implemented by not only the pastor but by staff and members of the new dominant coalition, who understand and support the changes.

### Ministry Areas to Change

There are many areas that can be changed in a church, and the specific changes that are required will be unique to each church. This section will not be exhaustive in listing every possible change, new ministry, or new church strategy. Rather, this section will look at general systems changes and staff changes, in light of Nelson Searcy's four quadrant chart discussed below, where good systems and the right people are needed to produce the best results.<sup>2</sup>

#### Searcy's Eight Systems of a Church



Searcy teaches that a church can be thought of as a system, made up of many subsystems.<sup>3</sup> He has developed a four quadrant chart (Figure 2), that describes why having good church systems is important.<sup>4</sup> Note that the

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church Revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 151, 153-164.

<sup>2</sup> Nelson Searcy, *The Eight Systems of a Healthy Church* (Nelson Searcy), 38, accessed August 10, 2016, <https://churchleaderinsights.com/>.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Wayne Hedlund, "How To Offer Amazing Ministry With Not So Amazing People," *Wayne Hedlund*, accessed August 10, 2016, <http://waynehedlund.org/amazing-ministry-not-so-amazing-people/>; Searcy, *The Eight Systems of*

bottom half of the chart has poor systems, with either the wrong or the right people. The result is either failure or frustration. Sadly, many church's systems operate in one of these two quadrants. Notice that the two quadrants in the top half which have a good system, produce either average or maximized results, with either the wrong people or the right people. The point is that even the wrong people can accomplish something in a good system, while even the right people will experience frustration in a bad system. The systems mold people to think in act in ways that are either productive or counterproductive to the church's health.

The church systems section below uses Searcy's eight church systems as a framework. Most churches will need some version of these basic church systems, adapted to their unique setting. Changes to these systems, or the creation of these systems when they do not exist, will begin in the implementing change step of the change process. Changes and improvements will continue beyond the formal change process.

Below are the eight major systems proposed by Searcy, that a church needs to have operating effectively.

**The Weekend Service System:** How We Plan, Implement and Evaluate the Weekend Services at Our Church

**The Evangelism System:** How We Attract People to Our Church

**The Assimilation System:** How We Move People From First-Time Guests to Members

**The Small Groups System:** How We Fill and Produce Small Groups at Our Church

**The Ministry System:** How We Mobilize People for Significant Ministry

**The Stewardship System:** How We Develop Extravagant Givers at Our Church

**The Leadership System:** How We Develop Leaders at All Levels of Our Church

**The Strategic System:** How We Constantly Evaluate and Improve Our Church<sup>5</sup>

These systems are discussed in more detail below.

### Improve the Worship Service

One area that most churches in revitalization will need to address is the quality of the Sunday morning worship service. This means improving the quality of worship music and the

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*a Healthy Church*, 38. Wayne Hedlund published this chart on his blog, adapted from the original chart by Nelson Searcy.

<sup>5</sup> Searcy, *Healthy Systems, Healthy Church*.

quality of preaching. While there are other service elements to consider such as announcements, offering, and transitions, these two are the largest and highest impact areas to address in most churches today. Preaching has already been mentioned in the Building Credibility section above, as an area that can be improved early in the change process. This early change is possible because it is an area that most congregations expect the pastor to do anyways, and it does not require asking for permissions that a dysfunctional church system may block. It should be added here that a pastor whose preaching is strong not only builds credibility, but also helps first time guests be more likely to stay, as the preaching interests them enough to be willing to come back. McIntosh writes, “Spend time developing your speaking abilities and sermons. With more than four-fifths of church attendees noting that the pastor’s preaching was important to their decision to attend (church transfers 91%, and new converts 81%), this is the place where a pastor has the most control in improving a church’s ministry.”<sup>6</sup> Changing worship often takes more time, as many long-time members are more sensitive to changes in this area. In some churches the worship is led by a beloved and/or influential leader whose worship leading abilities are substandard, or not in tune with the broader community. However, once the full change process is underway, it is time to improve the worship program. This will often mean bringing on a new worship leader who can lead a quality worship program and recruit others to the task. It is the researcher’s experience that strong worship people attract other strong worship people, improving the overall quality of the worship program.

A third area of the worship service that will need attention is the children’s program. Whatever the format of that program, it needs to be done with both quality and security that modern parents expect in a place where they will leave their children.

### **Evangelism**

An effective evangelism strategy must be implemented. For practical ideas for evangelism, please refer to the thesis excerpt, “An Outward, Missionary Focus.”

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<sup>6</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 152.

## Assimilation

Assimilation is the process of helping people move from being newcomers to becoming “fully engaged church members.”<sup>7</sup> Nelson Searcy estimates that while the average church experiences a 1 in 20 return rate, it is possible to improve to a 1 in 3 retention rate, with an effective assimilation system.<sup>8</sup> McIntosh echoes Searcy’s concern for effective assimilation when he writes, “...there must be a plan for welcoming and connecting with guests when they first come to the church. ...It is also important to design a plan to connect with these guests in the weeks to come. Think through a strategy for following up with guests the week after their first, second, third, and fourth visits to your church.”<sup>9</sup> In his book *Fusion*, Searcy describes a process that does everything possible to help people who first attend a church to return.<sup>10</sup> His system includes connection cards filled out at church, follow up emails, follow up mailings, additional steps when guests return a second time, and service opportunities for newcomers. Searcy offers additional training through audio and video resources on his website.<sup>11</sup> Borden also writes about the need for assimilation, recognizing that in early stages of revitalization, the whole system may need to be run by the pastor.<sup>12</sup> A leader in church revitalization needs to make assimilation a priority, and Searcy’s system offers help.

## Small Group Ministries

Church revitalization authors note that revitalized churches developed strong small group ministries. In *Comeback Churches*, Stetzer and Dodson found that “comeback churches developed an emphasis on small-group structures and started new groups.”<sup>13</sup> Much has been written in the past twenty-five years about small group ministry.<sup>14</sup> Small groups are effective for

<sup>7</sup> Nelson Searcy, *Fusion* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2007), front cover.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>9</sup> McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, 173.

<sup>10</sup> Searcy, *Fusion*.

<sup>11</sup> Nelson Searcy, "Church Leader Insights," accessed October 10, 2017. <http://churchleaderinsights.com/>.

<sup>12</sup> Borden, *Make or Break your Church in 365 Days*, 57.

<sup>13</sup> Stetzer and Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, 147.

<sup>14</sup> Andy Stanley and Bill Willits, *Creating Community* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah, 2004); Larry Osborne, *Sticky Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008); Carl George, *Nine Keys to Effective Small Group Leadership*

discipleship, evangelism and leadership development. Searcy recommends a semester-based small group system where people have frequent entrance and exit points.<sup>15</sup> Developed at the Journey Church in New York City, his system accommodates people with busy lives. Leaders in church revitalization need to develop a small group system that will best fit their setting.

### Ministry (Volunteer) System

Much of the work in churches is done by volunteers giving a few hours of their time to serve. In *Comeback Churches*, Stetzer and Dodson report that "...lay ministry or mobilization is clearly important in affecting a comeback."<sup>16</sup> They found that comeback churches ranked lay mobilization to be the third most significant factor in a church comeback.<sup>17</sup> They also noted that the most common comments from comeback churches in their study were first, identifying people's spiritual gifts and second, increasing the expectations on people to serve.<sup>18</sup> In his book *Connect*, Searcy describes building a volunteer system to effectively recruit and manage these volunteers.<sup>19</sup> Leaders in church revitalization need to have a plan for mobilizing people to serve in ministry.

### Stewardship and Financial Systems

Many churches in need of revitalization face financial pressures. The first pressure may be that there is barely enough money to keep things going, let alone move towards revitalization. Malphurs and Penfold write, "What pastors must realize is that raising capital is part of leadership and it is in their job description, whether they like it or not. It is important that they

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(Mansfield, PA: Kingdom Publishing, 1997); Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson, *Building a Church of Small Groups* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

<sup>15</sup> Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas, *Activate* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2008).

<sup>16</sup> Stetzer and Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, 134.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 135-36.

<sup>19</sup> Nelson Searcy, *Connect* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012).

not neglect it and learn how to do it.”<sup>20</sup> They offer several suggestions for how to raise funds.<sup>21</sup> A leader in church revitalization must take responsibility for raising funds.<sup>22</sup>

A second financial area that will often need revitalizing is the financial management systems. Often a dysfunctional church’s finances are controlled by a long time treasurer who views their role as protecting the church’s money at all costs, ahead of accomplishing ministry. Such a treasurer can control the church by having an effective financial veto to block anything new. When the changes start to move forward, such a person will no longer be able to stay in that position.

### Leadership Development

A leader in church revitalization needs to train and empower leaders to recruit and lead others in doing the work of ministry. Searcy challenges church leaders to plan for leadership development when he writes, “As your church grows, you will need to develop staff, lay leaders, and high-powered volunteers. What kind of plan do you have in place to make sure you are developing people in the right way?”<sup>23</sup> In the Building a New Dominant Coalition step of leading change, the leader is actively recruiting people who will support the revitalization changes. Many of these same people will have potential for leadership, so it is wise to build the coalition with the plan that many of these people will become leaders in the church. Regarding leadership development, Hybels writes, “I am also convinced that leaders must make this one of their highest priorities. ... When a leader develops not only his or her own leadership potential, but draws out the leadership potential of scores of other leaders as well, the kingdom impact from one life is multiplied exponentially.”<sup>24</sup> As a leader in church revitalization develops these other church systems, leaders also need to be developed so that when growth comes, there are leaders to lead new groups and ministries.

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<sup>20</sup> Malphurs and Penfold, *Re: Vision*, 214.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 215-16.

<sup>22</sup> Aubrey Malphurs and Steve Stroope, *Money Matters in the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011). See Malphurs and Stroope for further information on church giving and finances.

<sup>23</sup> Searcy, *Healthy Systems, Healthy Church*, Kindle Locations 336-38.

<sup>24</sup> Hybels, *Courageous Leadership*, 122.

## Strategy

A leader in church revitalization needs to be regularly planning and evaluating, along with the staff and other key leaders. Searcy writes of the Strategy System, “The Strategic System sits above the other seven systems, and serves as the evaluation tool that ties them all together. It gives us the opportunity and means to make sure that we’re constantly improving, rather than living by the status quo.”<sup>25</sup>

### Building a Staff

A leader in church revitalization will need to build (or rebuild) a staff team. There are competing philosophies about church staffing, and church size and budget will limit the number of paid staff. For example, Barna argues that a paid staff should be kept to a minimum.<sup>26</sup> However, with a limited pool of volunteer staff in a church revitalization setting, a lack of free time in double income, over-scheduled city households, and willingness of many city people to pay for specialists, hiring staff can jumpstart church revitalization efforts. Staff need to view their role as multiplying themselves by equipping people for ministry and leadership, rather than doing all the ministry themselves. Kaiser writes, “...effective staffers work less as doers and more as equippers, mobilizing the people of the church to invest themselves more deeply and fruitfully in service to others.”<sup>27</sup> Staff add a great benefit to the church, but many churches in need of revitalization feel that they cannot afford to add paid staff. Gary McIntosh believes that many churches have their priorities wrong. He writes, “Many churches place their priorities in this order: facilities, programs, staff. However, you’ll discover that churches with this priority list are often the declining or plateaued ones. On the other hand, churches that place their priorities in the order of staff, programs, facilities are usually the growing ones.”<sup>28</sup> While adding staff does not automatically guarantee a church will grow,<sup>29</sup> McIntosh notes that a church’s

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<sup>25</sup> Searcy, *The Eight Systems of a Healthy Church*, 35.

<sup>26</sup> George Barna, *The Habits of Highly Effective Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1999), 60-63.

<sup>27</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 125.

<sup>28</sup> McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 95.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

growth rate is linked to the number of pastoral staff and support staff, who need to be added at a one to one ratio.<sup>30</sup> He also notes that the church faces a dilemma where it needs more staff but cannot afford it.<sup>31</sup> He describes how churches can be creative to overcome this financial challenge.

My research has found that churches address this need through several means. For instance, churches use volunteer staff, pay some at below-market wages, hire several part-time staff members, recruit staff members who can pay their own way, ask for financial gifts to cover extra staff, expect staff members to raise support outside the church, and use a number of other creative options.<sup>32</sup>

The point is that staff will need to be added one way or another. A leader in church revitalization will find a way, even if takes some creativity to make it happen, as McIntosh describes above.

With the comments above in mind, the researcher recommends the following staff members be brought on the team, in roughly the order listed below. It must be noted that staffing needs will vary depending on church size. The recommendations below assume a church of under two hundred people in need of revitalization. In church settings with under one hundred people, only the Lead Pastor might be full time with others brought on as part-time staff or in some creative way, as described by McIntosh in the quotation above. A church of over two hundred that is in need of revitalization may have some or all of the staff listed below already in place, or may be paying for other staff, but missing these key roles. Each situation is different, and the recommendations below are meant as guidelines. The key philosophy behind the staffing is that the roles are designed to enable the church to be outwardly focused rather than inwardly focused.<sup>33</sup>

**Lead Pastor / Senior Pastor** – The Lead Pastor is the core hire and is assumed to be in place leading the revitalization effort. The qualities and role of the Lead Pastor are discussed in the first section of this chapter.

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<sup>30</sup> McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, 141.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, 141-42.

<sup>33</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 125-26; McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 111.

**Worship Director** – Gary McIntosh argues for the priority of spending on worship, children, and outreach, amidst the tight budget that many churches in revitalization will have.<sup>34</sup> The Lead Pastor must hire a quality Worship Director to help provide quality worship services.

**Ministry Assistant** – A pastor in church revitalization must delegate administration as soon as possible, and will quickly need administrative support. A competent ministry assistant can multiply a pastor's effectiveness by freeing up time for more ministry, at a fraction of the pastor's salary cost.<sup>35</sup>

**Bookkeeper** – Having a paid bookkeeper helps ensure that the church follows all charitable finance regulations, and relieves a volunteer of this heavy role. It also gives the church board confidence, knowing that day-to-day finances are being managed.

**Children/Youth Director** – If a church has few or no children or youth, then children's ministries should be emphasized first. The children who come will grow to become a youth group in time (it's amazing how fast!), and the children's ministry may attract families who have older siblings. The Children/Youth Director needs to view their primary role as evangelism, as well as doing discipleship.

**Outreach Pastor or Discipleship Pastor** – Initially, the Lead Pastor will take on the role of the Outreach Pastor, but as the church grows, it will become too much to do both roles. Depending on the giftedness of the Lead Pastor, either an Outreach or Discipleship Pastor will need to be hired.

**Other Staff** – Other roles will need to be filled such as tech roles, social media management, and small group directing. Some roles may be done by existing paid staff, or new staff may need to be added. Interns can also be a source of staffing, recognizing that they will need time and training to be most effective.<sup>36</sup> Other staff roles may need to be created due to the unique local needs.

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<sup>34</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 111.

<sup>35</sup> Stetzer and Dodson, *Comeback Churches*, 43.

<sup>36</sup> For example, FEB Central Ministries, the researcher's regional association of churches, partners with Heritage College & Seminary to benefit churches and students through a pastoral internship program.

Lead Pastors may determine that their staffing needs are different than listed above due to local circumstances, their church size,<sup>37</sup> and their own unique spiritual gift mix. Whatever their staffing model, they need to have a plan for staffing that fits with their overall revitalization plan. Again, it should be stressed that smaller churches may not have the financial means to hire the staff listed above, and will need to utilize creative combinations of part-time staff, volunteer staff, and other solutions, as McIntosh suggests above.<sup>38</sup> The staffing plan should have an outward focus, so that the church will continue growing and being revitalized.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> For more on church staffing and church size, see McIntosh, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, 85-95.

<sup>38</sup> McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, 141-42.

<sup>39</sup> Gary McIntosh, *Church That Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), 216.

## THE BIG FOUR

*Next Level Leadership Network - Session 3*

*Tim Strickland, Leadership Development Director, FEB Central*

### Today's Agenda (3hrs)

Welcome, Prayer, and Updates (15min)

Devotional (30min)

Sharing: Your Personal Spiritual Retreat and Goals for 2021 (45min)

Break (15min)

Teaching and Discussion: The Big Four: Preaching, Worship, Children's Ministry, and Life Groups (75min)

Finish

### Welcome, Prayer, and Updates

Welcome to our third FEB Central Next Level Leadership Network meeting!

Today's topic is "The Big Four" - Preaching, Worship, Children's Ministry and Life Groups.

### Preparation for the Next Meeting

Our next meeting topic is: *A Plan for Developing Leaders*. Prior to the next meeting:

- Meet with your Coach
  - If you do not have a coach we will help you find one
  - The coaching handout will be sent out following this meeting
- Come prepared to share the following:
  - Reflections on how you are working on "The Big Four"
  - How you currently develop leaders in your church - it may be a formal plan you have developed or an informal process that occurs

## Devotional - A Spiritual Battle - Ephesians 6:10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup> and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; <sup>17</sup> and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, <sup>18</sup> praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, <sup>19</sup> and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

- Ephesians 6:10-20 (ESV)<sup>1</sup>

*“The Christian life is not a genteel engagement. It is no exercise class. Christianity is warfare, and because of this is necessary for the Christian soldier to wear armor adequate to resist the spiritual (and sometimes physical) onslaughts of Satan”<sup>2</sup>*

- James Montgomery Boice

### A Spiritual Battle

We must always remember that we are engaged in a spiritual battle. While there are many wise and practical steps to take in leading a church, our work is ultimately spiritual in nature.

### Stand Firm

When we face challenges and setbacks, we must remember that there are spiritual forces arrayed against us. We win the day through the power of Christ in us, who enables us to stand firm.

### The Armour of God

- The Belt of Truth
- The Breastplate of Righteousness
- Shoes of Readiness given by the Gospel of Peace
- Shield of Faith
- Helmet of Salvation
- Sword of the Spirit

### Prayer - Our Secret Weapon

The Lord calls us to pray for one another, and especially for boldness in declaring the gospel.

***“Keep Alert with all perseverance”***

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>2</sup> James Montgomery Boice, *Ephesians: An Expository Commentary*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006), 244.

## The Big Four: Preaching, Worship, Children's Ministry, and Life Groups

Most sports have a few core areas, “the fundamentals” - that you need to do well to succeed in the game.

For example:

- Baseball - catching, throwing, hitting, base-running
- Hockey - skating, passing, shooting

There are four areas of church ministry that your church needs to do well. Often as pastors we get busy trying to do many other good things, but neglect these fundamentals:

- Preaching
- Worship
- Children's Ministry
- Life Groups

Today we will discuss each of these areas and how you can strengthen them.

### 1. Preaching

*“Spend time developing your speaking abilities and sermons. With more than four-fifths of church attendee’s noting the pastor’s preaching was important to their decision to attend (church transfers 91 percent and new converts 81%), this is the place where a pastor has the most control in improving a church’s ministry.”<sup>3</sup> — Gary McIntosh*

One of the biggest reasons someone remains in a church is because they like the preaching of the pastor.<sup>4</sup> Out of all the areas of ministry, if you are the Lead Pastor you have the most control over preaching, because you are the one doing it and almost everyone in your church desires and expects you to take the time to do it well.

#### Three Simple Principles of Preaching:

##### i. Do Be Biblical

It is vital that your preaching be rooted in Scripture.

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<sup>3</sup> Gary McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, (Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 2016), 152.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 148-152.

*Expository Preaching*

One of the great benefits of expository preaching is that it forces you into the text. Many preachers have benefited from using the Big Idea Method of building a sermon, based on Haddon Robinson's classic book, *Biblical Preaching*.<sup>5</sup>

*Topical Preaching*

There are times when topical preaching is helpful, but you must be careful not to substitute your own ideas and assumptions for Biblical principles. Topical preaching can seem easier but can actually be a lot of work, as you need to do Systematic Theology on the topic, rather than just cherry-picking verses to support your point.

**ii. Don't be Boring**

*"Boring preaching is a sin. It's not simply a matter of one's personality or gifting (or the lack thereof). To explain and expound and apply the Word of God in a monotone, lifeless, joyless manner is sin."*<sup>6</sup>  
— Sam Storms

A lot of preaching is boring because a lot of preachers do not spend time making their sermons interesting.

The good news is that it is a lot easier to learn to be interesting than it is to learn how to exegete accurately, and the payoff is significant.

Here are a few simple ways to be more interesting:

*Good Presentation Skills*

- Varied Voice pitch and volume
- Eye Contact
- Pacing
- Gestures
- Conversational Style

*Sermons that are Logical*

Sermons need to be logical and make sense. This seems like an obvious point, but it is amazing how many sermons feel like a disjointed group of biblically accurate points that do not seem to flow from one to the next.

A logical sermon takes people on a journey where they are interested to find out what comes next, because you are clearly taking them somewhere.

<sup>5</sup> Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, Second Edition ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Sam Storms, "Expository Exultation: Or, Why Boring Preaching is a Sin," *Sam Storms*, August 22, 2014, accessed 2016, <http://samstorms.com/enjoying-god-blog/post/expository-exultation:-or-why-boring-preaching-is-a-sin>.

Your points should flow and build on one another. If your points do not flow logically, you probably do not understand the text well enough. The Bible is logical and the points flow logically.

Sometimes you will preach deductively, where you state the main point and then prove it with three or four subpoints. Sometimes you preach inductively where you prove the main point three or four ways before you say it near the end. Some sermons are a blend of both deductive and inductive structure. But they all should be logical.

### *Humour*

As a preacher you are not a comedian, but it still doesn't hurt to have some humour in your sermons. In Gary McIntosh's research, he found that 80% of new believers listed the pastor's sense of humour as a reason for choosing the church.<sup>7</sup>

### *Stories and Illustrations*

Stories and Illustrations help people understand the point you are making, and also add colour and interest to the message.

I find the best humour, stories, and illustrations come from every day life experiences that are familiar to your people. The Bible is about real life, and it is amazing how often you can find contemporary examples that illustrate the point of a Bible passage. The Bible is also filled with irony and humour, and if you do good exegesis you will pick up on the irony and humour and be able to share it as part of your message.

### *Watch yourself on video and be brutal in your self-assessment*

Ask yourself, would I attend my church to listen to this? :) If you're feeling really brave, ask your wife the same question.

### *Limit the sharing of your Exegesis*

Younger preachers tend to share too much of their exegesis with the congregation. I think they do it because it is so interesting to the preacher, and they spent so much time digging for it. You need to pick and choose what points need your exegesis to explain them, and what points you will just state, knowing you did the exegesis, but not showing it all to the congregation.

### *Try cutting 5-10min out of your sermon.*

It's easier to go long than it is to stay short. Try cutting 5-10min out of your sermon - you might be amazed how the sermon has the same or more impact with less content.

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<sup>7</sup> Gary McIntosh, *Growing God's Church*, (Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 2016), 149.

*Practice all of the above - you will get better!*

I think of Billy Graham practicing his preaching out in nature, thinking about the right words and inflection of his voice. He was one of the great preachers of the last century, in no small part because he worked hard at his craft.

### iii. Do be Spiritual

People don't just need information, they need to sense the voice of God and the hand of God in your preaching. You can't manufacture this, but you can be passionate about it, pray over your sermon, and preach like it matters, and trust God to give spiritual results.

## 2. Worship

To have good worship, it really helps to have a good worship leader.

Here are some qualities to look for in a worship leader:

- Theological Depth
- Spiritual Sensitivity
- Humility
- Organizational Skills
- Recruiter and Developer of other Musicians
- Musical Gifting

But you often inherit situations where a nice person is leading worship who isn't very good at it. Some people can be trained to be much better, but others simply do not have the gifts necessary to grow much beyond their current capacity.

So the challenge becomes finding a way to bring on a more gifted worship leader without offending or disrespecting the current leader.

One way forward if you are working with volunteers is to create a part time worship leader position and have people apply for it.

## 3. Children's Ministry (and as you grow, + Youth Ministry + Family Ministry)

To have good children's ministry it helps to have a good children's ministry leader.

What to look for in a children's ministry leader:

- Theologically Sound
- Organizational Skills
- Recruiter and Developer of Children's Workers
- Evangelistically Driven
- Good with Adults (especially parents!)
- Good with Kids

#### 4. Life Groups

While people may initially stay in your church because they like the pastor, they tend to stay in the church for the long haul because they develop meaningful relationships.<sup>8</sup>

If your church has under about 75 people, you can get away without having a significant small groups ministry, but beyond that size you need to gather people in groups where they develop friendships with other believers and come together to grow spiritually.

Groups come in many shapes and sizes, but I like to think of two broad categories:

##### **Long term groups**

These groups start and have no specific end date. The strength of them is that people can grow very close but the weakness is that it may be hard to add newcomers into the group.

##### **Short term groups**

Short-term groups start with a specific end date planned. It might be a multi-week study of a Bible book or topic. The strength is that people can jump in without feeling locked in for a long time, and they can study a topic of interest. The weakness is that they relationships may not grow as deep.

I think it is helpful to have both short term and long term groups, and to have planned entry (and possible exit) points for people into life groups 2-3 times annually.

##### **Leadership Training**

Capable leaders are the primary bottleneck to growing your small groups ministry. You need a training plan to develop the leaders you need. Our next teaching is all about developing leaders so we will discuss it more then.

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<sup>8</sup> I have seen a statistic that newcomers will leave after about 8(?) months if they don't develop deeper relationships with people in the church. I can't remember where I saw the stat, but I did see this principle in action when I pastored a church.



# NOTES FROM TAKING YOUR CHURCH TO THE NEXT LEVEL BY GARY MCINTOSH<sup>1</sup>

*Compiled by Tim Strickland - Leadership Development Director, FEB Central*

The following notes are guidelines regarding church size and growth. They are general principles and represent helpful steps to take in most church situations. However, there will be exceptions based on unique conditions in each local church.

## Relational Church (0-200)<sup>2</sup>

### 1. 35 - Consists of:

- bi-vocational pastor
- may be just one family and closer friends

### 2. 85 - To grow from 35-85, the church needs to add:

- F/T pastor with good personal skills to cast vision publicly and personally
- Basic children's ministry up to elementary ages
- Critical mass of 50 (means 65 in practice)
- Facility that seats 100-125, 40-50 parking spaces
- Add people outside the immediate "family" group - this is the small church's most difficult challenge

### 3. 125 - To grow from 85 to 125:

- Add 3 new adult programs for men and women
- Children's ministry up to 6th grade
- Start a small groups ministry (7 groups per 100 in worship)
- Add a secretary for the pastor
- Facility that has minimum capacity of 150, 70 parking spaces

### 4. 200 - To grow from 125 past 200 there are 9 key factors:

- Add staff - add 1 pastor and 2 support staff (1:1 ratio of ministry staff:support staff) Be creative in how to fund it
- Lead Pastor moves to more administrative shepherd and less caregiving
- Pastor delegates ministry to others, can't do it all himself
- Lay people must be mobilized to use their gifts and natural talents
- Keep adding programs - i.e. youth program (but not necessarily a youth pastor yet, can be lay-led at this point)
- Add a 2nd worship service
- Add classes - a church of 200 should have 6 adult classes or other mid-sized groups, and 14 smaller groups
- Maintain a simple decision-making structure - avoid bureaucracy
- Expand facilities

<sup>1</sup> Gary McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level* (Grand Rapids, Baker, 2009) 115-206.

<sup>2</sup> Note that 90% of Relational Churches will find the steps listed here necessary and helpful, though some will need additional steps due to their unique situations.

**Managerial Church (200-400)****Characteristics:**

- A Mid-sized church is squeezed between wanting to go back to being smaller and wanting to grow to be bigger - one of these pulls will win
  - *May have pressure to eliminate multiple worship services, let staff go under guise of cutting costs, have pastor do more visitation*
  - *May have pressure to add more programs*
- Focus shifts from relationships to managing the growing programs
- Pastor shifts from caregiver to administrative leader

**Key Issues to grow from 200 past 400:**

- Add staff - about 125:1 (or 150:1) pastors to people, 1:1 pastors to support staff
  - *Need 3 to 4 ministry staff people, (4 if not enough support staff)*
- Senior Pastor becomes Leader
  - *Shifts from administering ministries to long range planning, vision, overseeing staff, preaching excellent sermons, designing systems to reach, win, disciple and keep people*
- More Congregational care by congregation, less by pastor
- Specialization of staff roles, rather than just being generalists
- Add a worship service - 2nd or 3rd, depending on facility capacity
- Build on success (80/20 rule)
  - *Pour resources into the 20% of ministries that are producing the best fruit*

**Organizational Church (400-800)****Characteristics:**

- Pastor becomes player-coach
- He is the leader, but still involved personally in some ways

**To grow beyond 800:**

- Pastor must become a leader, not a caregiver or administrator
  - *Small and medium church caregiving/administrator expectations must be dropped*
- Staff must be specialists who build teams of people to do the ministry, not do it themselves
- Leadership Development emphasis
- New Ministry Development
  - *Develop niche ministries to help specific groups of people*
- Caregiving by laypeople
  - *Small group leaders, Bible class teachers, music leaders, etc... become pastors*

**Centralized Church (800-1500)****Characteristics:**

- Pastor becomes a visionary
- Multi-level staff
- More decision-making authority for staff

- Pastor-directed and board-protected
- Management divisions/silos

### **To grow past 1500:**

- Board must become a policy-setting board, not a management board
- Typically call an executive pastor to manage on-campus ministry, somewhere between 1200-1500 people
- Staff transition from being practitioners to "team builders"  
- *Note that some staff cannot make the transition*
- Be a church **of** small groups, not just *with* small groups
- Think beyond the local church, since outside people will be coming, watching and learning from this larger church, beyond the local neighbourhood

### **Decentralized Church (1500+)**

#### **Characteristics:**

- The centralization of the previous size becomes limiting to growth
- Must become interconnected matrix rather than silos

### **To keep growing past 1500:**

- Add more than one executive pastor (often 2 divided between ministry and admin functions)
- Add staff members who build teams
- Select experienced board members
- Add new departments (ie tech or HR)
- Maintain the church's image/branding (since it is well-known now)

### **Final Note about Authenticity and Size**

#### **Growth and Authenticity are not incompatible.**

#### **Authenticity relates to four strands of meaning:**

- The church's **Story**
- **Passionate** people
- Being connected to a **Great Purpose**
- Being connected to **Values** that align with the story

#### **Also, see charts on pages 192-197, that combine lifecycle and church size insights**

- Larger churches tend to have longer high points of effectiveness (multiple decades rather than a few years or a decade)
- The goal is to find the sweet spot - the growth point - can last for 20 years and be reinvented



## CHURCH LEADERSHIP READING LIST

- General Church: *Center Church* by Tim Keller  
*Deep and Wide* by Andy Stanley  
*City on a Hill* by Philip Ryken  
*Nine Marks of a Church* by Mark Dever  
*Deliberate Church* by Mark Dever  
*The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren
- Sound Doctrine: *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem  
*Bible Doctrine* by Wayne Grudem (shorter version of S.T.)  
*Christian Beliefs* by Wayne Grudem and Elliot Grudem (shortest)  
*Foundations of the Christian Faith* by James Montgomery Boice
- Spiritual Vitality: *Christ for Real* by Charles Price  
*Don't Waste Your Life* by John Piper  
*The Passion for Souls* by Oswald J. Smith  
*Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire* by Jim Cymbala
- Church Systems: *The Eight Systems of a Healthy Church* by Nelson Searcy (Ebook)  
*Taking Your Church to the Next Level* by Gary McIntosh
- Evangelism: *Growing God's Church* by Gary McIntosh  
*Tactics* by Greg Koukl (conversational apologetics)  
*The Reason for God* by Tim Keller  
Alpha Course Resources  
Christianity Explored Resources
- Assimilation: *Fusion* by Nelson Searcy  
*Becoming a Welcoming Church* by Thom Rainer
- Discipleship: *Four Chair Discipleship* by Dann Spader
- Small Groups: *Activate* by Nelson Searcy (semester-based small groups)  
*Nine Keys to Effective Small Group Leadership* by Carl George  
*Sticky Church* by Larry Osborne (sermon based small groups)  
*Creating Community* by Andy Stanley and Bill Willits  
*Building a Church of Small Groups* by Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson
- Leadership: *Building Leaders* by Will Mancini and Aubrey Malphurs  
*The 21 Irrefutable Laws of a Leader* by John Maxwell  
*Sticky Teams* by Larry Osborne  
*The Shepherd Leader* by Timothy Witmer
- Stewardship: *Money Matters* by Aubrey Malphurs and Steve Stroope  
*Money, Possessions, and Eternity* by Randy Alcorn
- Mobilizing Servants: *Connect* by Nelson Searcy
- Governance: *Winning on Purpose* by John Kaiser



## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

Many churches are designed not to work. It was this realization, that the operating system of many churches is designed to work against the church's growth and health, that inspired much of the researcher's interest in church revitalization. Pastor and Church Leadership writer Carey Nieuwhof writes, "I'm convinced bad governance is a key contributing factor as to why many churches don't grow. And, conversely, I'm convinced that good governance is a key factor as to why some churches do grow."<sup>2</sup> The previous sections describe how strong leadership is needed for church revitalization. This section examines the need for a proper governance system to complement strong leadership.

There are several common systems of church governance and variations within each, as outlined by theologian Wayne Grudem in his *Systematic Theology*.<sup>3</sup> John Kaiser aptly describes the unique systemic problems inherent in each in his book *Winning on Purpose*.<sup>4</sup> Regarding a congregational system he writes,

*Congregational rule is notorious for divisive politics. ...The agenda of a democratic congregation has difficulty rising above the lowest common denominator of spiritual maturity. ...A democratic church culture is fertile ground for controllers. ...A vision for the future that arises from a committee of the whole is fragmented, fuzzy and unstable. ...Congregational churches tend to leave ministry to the pastor and leadership to the members.*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church Revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 104-112.

<sup>2</sup> Carey Nieuwhof, "5 Signs Bad Governance Is Stifling Your Church's Growth and Mission ", May 13, 2015, accessed 2016, <http://careynieuwhof.com/2015/05/5-signs-bad-governance-is-stifling-your-churchs-growth-and-mission/>.

<sup>3</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 923-36.

<sup>4</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 32-40.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 36-38.

Regarding a Presbyterian or elder-led system he writes,

*Congregations ruled by elders often assume that their polity mirrors the New Testament Church and is therefore sacred. ...For congregations with independent Presbyterian polity, the elders tend to be accountable to no one but themselves. ...Elder-rule in an autonomous church may well be the least accountable polity of all. ...Elder boards easily mistake groupthink for the voice of the Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup>*

Regarding episcopal systems, his list of problems can be summarized as follows: Institutional distinctives, bureaucracy, the rotation of pastors, calcified structures and tradition tend to smother mission effectiveness and innovation.<sup>7</sup> Kaiser shows that the governance systems by which many churches operate are self-defeating systems that need to be adjusted for missional effectiveness. In all of these models of church governance, strong leadership is stifled, making church revitalization difficult at best.

Paul Borden writes about the problems of many church structures, and Kaiser's writings grew out of their work together at Growing Healthy Churches in California. The following passage from Borden summarizes the problems.

Regardless of the denomination and its polity, most congregations in the United States are designed to be small, remain small, and function ineffectively in the twenty-first century. These structures, from their inception until now, reflect the cultures in which they were created. Unlike in the Scriptures, authority is divided from responsibility to act. There is little if any accountability for results, and the little that does exist is not applied with consistency throughout the system. In some cases, triangulation is codified into the system. Egalitarianism is honored over effectiveness, and bold leadership is greatly discouraged. Change always starts with mission and vision. However, no new mission and vision will take hold and last over time if the structure is not changed to allow both to flourish. The bureaucratic structures of our congregations do not produce leaders or allow leaders to lead, and such structures usually drive off the good or strong leaders at both the clergy and lay levels.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>7</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 38-39.

<sup>8</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 21-22.

Borden's words are direct and piercing, speaking frankly about the dysfunctions afflicting many struggling churches, whose systems of governance are working against them.

John Kaiser wrote *Winning on Purpose* to describe a system of governance known as The Accountable Leadership Strategy that is designed to overcome the common governance problems described above. This system, described in the paragraphs that follow, is presented as a model of church governance that empowers leaders in church revitalization to exercise effective leadership. It is intended to be implemented at the end of a Church Revitalization Change Process in step 9. *Normalize the Changes*, as described in the fourth section of this chapter, *Leading Change in Church Revitalization*.

#### The Accountable Leadership Strategy

John Kaiser developed the Accountable Leadership Strategy of church governance in an attempt to see churches helped rather than hindered by their governance systems, in their mission to fulfill the Great Commission. He designed it so that it can be adapted to the common church polities. There are a few principles that undergird the system. The first principle is that the mission of the church is The Great Commission, to “make disciples of all nations.”<sup>9</sup> The second principle is that pastors need to be free to exercise leadership.<sup>10</sup> The third principle is that every person in the system needs to be given authority and accountability to match the responsibility they have been given.<sup>11</sup> The fourth principle is that permission to act is assumed rather than

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<sup>9</sup> Matt. 28:19.

<sup>10</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 28-30.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

granted, and everyone in the system operates with freedom within pre-defined boundaries.<sup>12</sup> The basic structure is as follows:

- The Board Governs
- The Pastor Leads
- The Staff Manage
- The Congregation Ministers<sup>13</sup>

The pastor is governed by the board through Mission, Boundary and Accountability Principles, that are agreed upon in advance. Kaiser writes,

What strategies and tactics should the pastor and staff use in an effort to achieve the mission? They may use *any means they think best* – as long as they do not violate the boundaries agreed upon beforehand. ... The Accountable Leadership strategy applies this freedom within boundaries to pastoral leadership. The pastor is the leader and is expected to lead, not merely to submit suggestions for approval. However, there are certain boundaries stated up front, such as financial policies, theological commitments, and ethical standards. These must not be violated, but anything else is fair game.<sup>14</sup>

The Accountable Leadership Strategy allows the board, pastor, staff and congregation to conduct the ministry of the church, without requiring constant permission from the congregation or board. The four basic pieces of the model are investigated below.

### **The Board Governs**

The board's primary job is to define the Mission, Boundary, and Accountability Principles for the pastor. The Mission Principles define the reason that the church exists and what it is seeking to accomplish. The Boundary Principles define theological, financial and ethical lines that must not be crossed. The Accountability Principles define how the pastor will

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 45-46.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>14</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 45-46.

be held accountable, and include annual goals for the pastor, to be approved and assessed by the board.<sup>15</sup>

Because the board's position is so crucial to the system functioning, and because of the authority the board possesses, the screening process for the board is stringent. Kaiser writes,

It should be obvious by now that the individuals who serve on a board using the Accountable Leadership strategy must be chosen and trained with utmost care. Board members who enter the room with a casual, mystical or managerial expectation of tinkering with anything in the congregation that grabs their attention—or their spouses—cannot govern well.<sup>16</sup>

All prospective board members must successfully complete a training course taught by the senior pastor to be considered for the role, and must meet high standards in spiritual giftedness, church participation, and giving.<sup>17</sup> Gary McIntosh endorses careful selection of board members and pastoral involvement when he writes, “If you have a nominating committee, be sure to gain influence or control of that committee. At the least, as the pastor, you should have veto power over who is selected for any board, committee, or church position. This is no time to take a backseat in nominating procedures.”<sup>18</sup> Having board members who understand and support the governance system is vital, and prospective board members must be carefully screened.

### **The Pastor Leads**

The pastor's role is to be the leader of the church, with accountability to the board. The pastor may use any strategy or tactic in fulfilling the mission of the church that does not violate boundary principles. Kaiser writes, “They may use *any means they think best* – as long as they

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 72-73,76.

<sup>16</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 153.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> McIntosh, *There's Hope for Your Church*, 91-92.

do not violate the boundaries agreed upon beforehand.”<sup>19</sup> The pastor does not need to ask for permission from the board to initiate or change a program of the church. Permission to act is assumed, unless the action violates a guiding principle.

This leadership role for the pastor is often the opposite to the chaplain image that many churches apply to their pastor, where the pastor is viewed as a spiritual care-giving employee rather than as the leader.<sup>20</sup> This chaplain model positions their shepherd to be the “hired hand” despite Jesus’ warning that a hired hand would not properly care for the sheep.<sup>21</sup> It is ironic that in their desire to protect the church (from the shepherd), they actually make her more weak and vulnerable. Paul Borden sees this view of a pastor as a misunderstanding of the shepherd imagery of Scripture. He writes, “In congregational life our declining institutions think that shepherds take care of sheep for the sheep’s benefit rather than to benefit the Chief Shepherd by accomplishing God’s mission. ... We suggest to our congregations that the pastor be called the leader. After all, shepherds are called to lead sheep.”<sup>22</sup> The Accountable Leadership Strategy assumes the pastor is the leader and sets up a structure to support that leadership role.

### **The Staff Manage**

It is essential for the pastor to build a capable staff team who will manage the ministries and operations of the church. Kaiser writes, “...the pastor assembles the team that will need to turn the vision into reality and works out a strategy to deploy each member of that team for his or

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<sup>19</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 45.

<sup>20</sup> Borden, *Hit the Bullseye*, 21.

<sup>21</sup> John 10:12-13.

<sup>22</sup> Borden, *Hit the Bullseye*, 21-22.

her maximum fruitfulness.”<sup>23</sup> In the Accountable Leadership Strategy, the staff report and are accountable to the pastor. The pastor is ultimately held accountable for the staff’s performance, and thus the pastor is free to hire and, if necessary, release church staff.<sup>24</sup> The staff may include unpaid members who oversee significant ministries in the church.<sup>25</sup> The pastor is responsible to set goals and objectives with staff members and ensure they stay within boundary principles. The board does not direct the staff in how to run their ministries, but leaves oversight to the pastor, who is held accountable for the staff.<sup>26</sup>

### **The Congregation Ministers**

The congregation is freed from governance, leadership and management to do “the work of ministry,”<sup>27</sup> as God intends for the congregation to do. Kaiser writes, “The congregation is the ultimate player in the Accountable Leadership strategy. The board, pastor, and staff play their positions only so that the congregation can effectively do the work of the ministry...”<sup>28</sup>

Congregation members will need to be placed to serve in areas that match their spiritual gifting, as well as natural skills and passions.<sup>29</sup> Congregation members serve in the many ministries of the church, with some becoming paid or volunteer staff who oversee ministries. In a

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<sup>23</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 122.

<sup>24</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 123.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>27</sup> Eph. 4:12.

<sup>28</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 93-94.

<sup>29</sup> McIntosh, *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, 142; Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*. Wagner’s book is noted here as an example of the many resources and tools that have been published on the subject of spiritual gifts over the last twenty-five years.

congregational church, the congregation will only vote on major decisions,<sup>30</sup> which might include the calling or releasing of a pastor, the electing of board members, the purchase or sale of real property, and the approval of the annual budget.

### Bylaw Changes

Adopting the Accountable Leadership Strategy will require most churches to update their bylaws. Some churches will find that they can begin to operate on the model within the framework of their existing bylaws, but to integrate the model into the culture of the church, bylaw changes will likely be needed.

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<sup>30</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 134.

## NORMALIZE CHANGES

*Thesis Excerpt by Tim Strickland<sup>1</sup>*

Kotter explains that changes are normalized when the organizational culture has changed.<sup>2</sup> He writes,

Two factors are particularly important in anchoring new approaches in an organization's culture. The first is a conscious attempt to show people how specific behaviors and attitudes have helped improve performance. ...Anchoring change also requires that sufficient time be taken to ensure that the next generation of management really does personify the new approach.<sup>3</sup>

In a church, this means that the board members, staff and others key leaders need to embody the new way of doing things. The pastor will need to train them and encourage them in the new culture. They also need to be reminded that the changes that have been made are contributing to many positive things now happening in the church.<sup>4</sup>

The changes also need to be locked in by making structural changes that reflect the new culture. It is important to note that structural change happens towards the end of the change process, not at the beginning. Borden writes, "Structure never changes first. If the primary focus is on structure, all changes will be like lightning rods that attract chaos from those wanting to stop change. However, if a congregation is going to implement a new vision and achieve a new vision, then the structure must change."<sup>5</sup> Kaiser's Accountable Leadership Strategy (described in

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Strickland, *Leadership in Church Revitalization* (D. Min Thesis, Denver Seminary, 2017), 151-152.

<sup>2</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, 14-16.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-15.

<sup>4</sup> The researcher has observed that people often see and sense the positive results in church, and make the connection between the new way of doing things and the good results.

<sup>5</sup> Borden, *Direct Hit*, 112-13.

the Governance Structure thesis excerpt), along with related bylaw changes, need to be implemented to create a healthy, flexible structure that allows the board to govern, the pastor to lead, the staff to manage and the congregation to minister. This structural change is needed to lock in the changes that have been made, or the church will revert back to old patterns, undoing all the good work in preparing and implementing change.<sup>6</sup> Also, potential church board members must be carefully screened and trained in the new governance structure.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>7</sup> Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose*, 153-54.





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