

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A RATIONALE FOR AN INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCH  
TO CLARIFY ITS MISSION, ANALYZE ITS PROGRAM,  
PRIORITIZE ITS OBJECTIVES AND REVITALIZE ITS MINISTRY

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By

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## ABSTRACT

A RATIONALE FOR AN INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCH TO CLARIFY ITS MISSION, ANALYZE ITS PROGRAM, PRIORITIZE ITS OBJECTIVES AND REVITALIZE ITS MINISTRY

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The purpose of this thesis project is to provide a rationale for the pastor of an independent Baptist church to lead his church into a revitalization program. The author selected the topic for two reasons: (1) Church stagnation/decline has become a spiritual disease of epidemic proportions and (2) The author pastored a church which was experiencing decline and viable strategies needed to be understood, accepted and implemented. The main body presents the reasons a church needs to clarify its mission, analyze its program, prioritize its objectives and revitalize its ministry. The appendices delineate the steps taken in the author's church to pursue the above objectives.

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## INTRODUCTION

The author is committed to the sincere belief that besides being a God-ordained *organization*, the local church is just as importantly an *organism*, that is, a living and vibrant body with Jesus Christ as its head.

It is the inherent nature of living organisms to grow, expand, thrive and bear fruit. Therefore, it should be the nature of the local church as well. The problem is that far too commonly churches are not growing, expanding, thriving or bearing fruit.

It is estimated that 85 percent of the Protestant churches in America have reached a point of stagnation. For whatever reason, and there are a multitude of them, these churches have reached a plateau numerically, financially and spiritually, and find themselves spending all of their efforts to simply maintain the status quo.

One of the reasons the author has chosen this topic is because of the particular ministry to which God has called him. He is the senior pastor of an old church in a changing neighborhood. The church had been in a downward spiral of decline for a number of years. In order to combat that decline and to move the church toward a pattern of growth, an effective strategy needed to be devised and implemented.

It is the author's intent to delineate a rationale that could be helpful to other church leaders as they wrestle with the problems of stagnation and decline in their particular situations. Hopefully, some of the information, ideas and methodologies spelled out in this thesis will prove beneficial to others.

## Explanation of the Problem

This thesis will address the matter of stagnation and decline within churches. The reason is the impropriety of this very common problem. This is an issue of major importance because it results in God's work languishing, God's people becoming discouraged, communities being untouched with the gospel of Jesus Christ and multitudes of souls being lost for eternity.

An attempt will be made to help enable local churches answer the following questions: (1) "Why are we here?" - to clarify their God-given mission. (2) "How are we doing?" - to analyze their present program. (3) "What is important?" - to prioritize their objectives. (4) "Where do we begin?" - to prepare the congregation for revitalization of ministry.

With the general understanding that the local church is an organism that in the normal course of things should grow, church leaders commonly give little attention to creating the proper environment conducive to growth. The author's purpose in this paper is to call leaders to examine particularly the internal environment of their churches, evaluate that environment and begin to make the changes necessary to best provide opportunity for growth.

As stated earlier, many churches are in decline or at best in a holding pattern of stagnation. Ralph Neighbor's statistics are startling: "33 percent of all churches in America never grow past fifty members and another 33 percent never pass 150 members before they stagnate. Another 28 percent never pass 350 members,

leaving only 5 percent to grow past the 350 mark."<sup>1</sup> Those statistics are a staggering indictment of the ineffectiveness of local church ministry in America. In view of these facts, it seemed wise to this author to investigate and formulate a workable strategy to help local churches begin to revitalize their ministry.

There are certain parameters to the investigation of this thesis. Specifically, though the above questions could cover an exceedingly broad area of discussion, the following limitations will be observed.

First, there will be no attempt to investigate nor interpret the factors involving the external environment around the church. While recognizing the validity and importance of such a study, the author believes it is such a vast topic it could well become a thesis in and of itself. This paper will limit itself to investigating the internal mechanisms of a church and suggesting alterations that would most effectively enhance revitalization.

Second, it is not the intent of this paper to be exhaustive in its treatment of each subject, but rather to discuss the rationale and consider tentative strategies in several areas. This would allow each church to make application to its particular situation. The intent is not so much to lead *through* revitalization as it is to lead *to* revitalization, that is, to bring a church to the beginning steps.

Third, this thesis does not intend to be an exegetical investigation of pertinent Scripture, but rather a practical survey of a workable methodology.

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<sup>1</sup> Ralph Neighbor, New Wineskins For Future Churches, audiotape lecture presented at Columbia Bible College chapel (Columbia, S.C.: Columbia Bible College Bookstore, 1986).

Fourth, helpful charts, graphs, diagrams and questionnaires may be included in the text if appropriate or may be relegated to various appendices at the end of the paper.

### Methodology

The author intends to research this thesis through several avenues.

First, a study will be undertaken of numerous books written on this and related topics. This material will be gleaned from several universities to which the author has access and from his personal library.

Second, a number of other theses which address similar concerns will be examined. These theses will come from several different universities and seminaries, which assures a variety of approach and broadens the perspective.

Third, applicable class notes and classroom discussion from Doctor of Ministry courses taken by the author and which have been helpful in this area will be reviewed.

Fourth, pertinent articles from various periodicals will be examined.

Fifth, certain procedures the author has used advantageously in his own pastorate will be explained and evaluated.

Sixth, the author will take note of his observations of other churches, their leaders, ministries and procedures.

### Proposed Development of the Thesis

This thesis will follow the process of thought as described below. Chapter One will attempt to clarify the mission of the local church. Chapter Two will examine and analyze the present program of such a church. Chapter Three will give direction in helping a church to prioritize its objectives. The fourth and final chapter will discuss an effective starting place for a church to begin to revitalize its ministry.

Appendices A, B and C will explain in chronological order the procedure followed to clarify the mission, analyze the program and prioritize the objectives at the church where the author is senior pastor. Appendix D identifies the beginning steps followed in preparing for revitalized ministry there as well.

The content of each of the proposed chapters has been summarized above. This thesis will also include both an introductory and a concluding chapter in their respective places at the beginning and at the end of the paper.

### Review of the Literature

A number of research sources will be used in the preparation of a working bibliography.

First, numerous books on the general topic of church change and growth will be consulted. It is the intent of the author to examine the collections of several libraries such as Liberty University, Princeton University and Drew University, as well as books from his personal collection. Pertinent information from the

interlibrary loan service of the New Jersey Library Network will also be accessed.

Second, the author intends to study several dissertation and thesis indices for titles dealing wholly or in part with the subject of this thesis.

Third, lectures recorded on audiotape by church leaders on the topic of church growth will be used.

Fourth, the author will use information from class notes he took or received in Doctor of Ministry courses at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary.

### Results

In dealing with this subject, the author aspires to motivate church leaders to begin the process of revitalization within their own local churches. He hopes to cause such leaders to become dissatisfied with a ministry of decline or stagnation and to create an appetite for both revitalization and growth. He intends to spell out some concrete steps as to how that process can be begun. Since the church is a living, vibrant organism, it is this author's contention that those who are its caretakers should provide the best environment possible for its potential expansion and growth.



## CHAPTER 1

### "WHY ARE WE HERE?" - CLARIFYING THE MISSION

No program for change within the church should be attempted until the church first comprehends its very purpose for existence. Otherwise, it is tantamount to taking a trip with no destination in mind: it may be a nice drive, but it doesn't get you anywhere!

The importance of this principle cannot be overstated: the church must know and agree upon its purpose for existence before it attempts any change. Only then can that change be directed toward reaching its common goal.

In determining why it exists, the local church must come to grips with three facts: (1) The local church is God's primary design for meeting the spiritual needs of humanity in this age, (2) The local church has a distinct and identifiable purpose, and (3) The local church needs to environmentalize, localize and clearly spell out its own unique mission statement.

#### The Local Church as God's Design

The term "church" as it is used in the New Testament sense is not a building and property, nor a hierarchy of religious leaders, nor is it a denomination or institution. These concepts abound in today's world, but they are all false.

The church is primarily people. Eims says: "When we understand that God's *method* of accomplishing His plan and purposes is *people*, we will begin to understand our role in the

kingdom of God."<sup>1</sup> This is a fundamentally important concept for it raises the consciousness to a whole new level of responsibility. Barna touches upon this truth: "Their responsibility was to *be* the church, not just to *attend* one."<sup>2</sup>

Of the 115 times the term "church" is used in the New Testament nearly one hundred of those times it refers to a local assembly of believers. Good sense tell us to place our emphasis where God does - on the local assembly. Their formative organizational principles were three-fold: salvation, identification and affiliation (Acts 2:41). They bound themselves together for the purposes of studying God's Word, fellowship, worship and the observance of the Lord's table, and prayer (Acts 2:42).

But people live in different communities and different cultures and the makeup of their churches may vary dramatically. Hull illustrates this so vividly:

So, then, what about your church? Is it a new one, meeting in a school or hall? You have to set up chairs and arrange the room each week? God bless you! The hope of our nation rests largely in the establishment of more Bible-believing, gospel-preaching, soul-winning churches.

Yours is a medium-sized church? You're in the majority. The average fundamental church, we're told, has an attendance of about 150.

Perhaps you're part of an old, historic, city church. With the flight to the suburbs in the last half century, you've fallen upon trying days. The glory may not have departed, but it definitely isn't what it used to be. Senseless vandalism, crime and other problems make your existence difficult. But certainly your church has prayed and sought God's will as to

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<sup>1</sup> Leroy Eims, Be the Leader You Were Meant To Be (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1975), 10.

<sup>2</sup> George Barna, User Friendly Churches (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1991), 72.

whether you should disband, relocate or seek to keep the work going. And if that - meaning to maintain the testimony - seems to be God's plan, then you can trust Him to care for you. It's not easy. On the other hand, it's an opportunity to prove God's grace and provision.

Then, perhaps you're part of a large, growing church that is throbbing with activity. That's a delightful situation, though even so, it isn't quite the Millennium.<sup>3</sup>

Not only is there great variety between churches, but there also is great diversity within each church itself. Besides the substantiation borne out by personal observation, Scripture declares that each church is likened to a corporal body with a great variety of parts working together under one head to make one efficiently functioning whole (I Corinthians 12:12-27). MacArthur addresses this truth by noting the three principles that identify a church as one body in Christ: unity, diversity and harmony.<sup>4</sup>

Some might take issue with the idea that God would entrust His work in this age to an organization consisting of such finite, sinful creatures as we humans constantly reveal ourselves to be. Baxter responds clearly to this accusation:

Because there are certain defects in our local churches today, are we to abandon the local church as a basic *idea*? Not at all, for beyond doubt the local church is an institution having New Testament origin, sanction, and example; and however much times may change the local church is meant to be a continuing *modus operandi* throughout the present dispensation.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Merle R. Hull, I Love Thy Church (Schaumburg, IL: Regular Baptist Press, 1982), 121.

<sup>4</sup> John R. MacArthur, Body Dynamics (Wheaton, IL: Scripture Press Publications, 1982), 24.

<sup>5</sup> J. Sidlow Baxter, Rethinking Our Priorities (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1974), 227.

What Baxter is saying is that God has always used people, finite people, less than perfect people, to be His representatives on earth and to accomplish His work. And the instrument through which He deigns to use His people in this age is the local church.

Nevertheless, despite its many weaknesses and tragic sins the church has been, in every century since its inception, the most powerful force for good on the face of the earth. It has been light in the midst of a darkness so dense it could be felt. It has been salt in society, retarding the spread of moral corruption and adding zest and flavor to human life.<sup>6</sup>

So, the principle that is important for the reader to understand is that the local church is God's primary design for meeting the spiritual needs of humanity throughout this age.

#### The Local Church Having a Distinct Purpose

At the outset of this paper (page one), the author noted that a local church is both an organism and an organization. As an organism it is intended to grow, expand, thrive and bear fruit. As an organization it should have order and a clearly defined purpose. One of the saddest observations of this day is that many churches from their leadership on down do not have any idea what their purpose is for existence.

Half our local churches scarcely know why they exist, declares Bishop Fred P. Corson of the Methodist Church. In an address to pastors he insisted that many congregations could double their effectiveness if they would define their objectives,

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<sup>6</sup> Ray C. Stedman, Body Life (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, 1972), 2.

and strive to reach these goals. Speaking about conditions more broadly, Emil Brunner writes from Switzerland: "In recent centuries the Church has lost increasingly the consciousness of what the Church is and what the Church is for."<sup>7</sup>

Without a clearly understood and actively pursued purpose, the church tends to drift along maintaining a program and a slate of activities, but scarcely knowing why. As Perry and Shawchuck claim: "You don't find meaning in a purposeless organization."<sup>8</sup>

Apart from that sense of purpose the time will come when the church will drown in the murky sea of its own meaningless program. Many already have. Again, Perry and Shawchuck address this common failure: "It is imperative that we know why we are doing what we are doing. Many church programs have collapsed because purpose orientation has been neglected."<sup>9</sup>

Though each church will want to determine its own express purpose in light of its locality and environment, there are some general purposes of which each church should be aware and toward which it should gear itself.

First, each church should purpose to manifest through each member, and thus corporately through the church, the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit to save, transform lives and reflect Jesus Christ through those who purpose to become His disciples. Hear the words of Stedman: "The church is primarily and fundamentally a body designed to express through each individual member the life of an

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<sup>7</sup> Andrew Watterson Blackwood, Pastoral Leadership (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1949), 15.

<sup>8</sup> Lloyd M. Perry and Norman Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church (Chicago: Moody Press, 1982), 23.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

indwelling Lord and is equipped by the Holy Spirit with gifts designed to express that life."<sup>10</sup>

The Apostle Paul proclaims this purpose in Philippians 3:10 when he set his spiritual sights to "know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Though that was his goal, it was one he never considered having reached, for he continues, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (verses 13-14).

Second, each church should purpose to do its utmost to reach a lost world for Jesus Christ. The mandate is the Great Commission. Matthew 28:18-20 - "And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power [authority] is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world [age]. Amen."

Note that the job of winning people to Jesus Christ is not finished until those converts have been baptized and are being taught all things commanded of the Lord. What is required is a lifelong commitment to continue the discipling process of those won to Christ. No "Lone Ranger" Christian or para-church organization can fully carry out this mandate. The Great Commission is tailor-made

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<sup>10</sup> Stedman, Body Life, 53.

for the local church. This divinely-ordained institution has been called by God to meet the spiritual needs of all people of all ages all over the world.

The church is a vehicle for the Great Commission. It is God's tool for reaching the world. I can't say it too much. The church exists for mission, not for itself. The church legitimizes itself by prioritizing mission. Doing otherwise prostitutes the mandate.<sup>11</sup>

Through the ministries of the local church, as an integral part of the local church and bringing their converts into a mutually-bonding relationship with the local church, Christians are here for the purpose of winning the unsaved to Jesus Christ.

Third, each church should purpose to develop its members into fruitful disciples, having diverse but effective ministries for Jesus Christ. Nowhere does Scripture define this truth more clearly than in Ephesians 4:11-12 - "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for [unto] the work of the ministry for [unto] the edifying of the body of Christ."

Note that the last two times the word "for" is used this paper has inserted the word "unto". That is the literal rendering of this verse. The bottom line is this: the job of spiritual leadership is to train its followers to perform effective ministry for Jesus Christ. If only that concept were properly communicated and understood. But Stedman reminds us of the great animosity to it:

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<sup>11</sup> Bill Hull, The Disciple Making Pastor (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1988), 113.

Throughout the Christian centuries no principle of church life has proved more revolutionary (and therefore, more bitterly fought) than the declaration of Ephesians 4 that the ultimate work of the church in the world is to be done by the saints - plain, ordinary Christians - and not by professional clergy or a few select laymen.<sup>12</sup>

Stedman charts Ephesians 4:11-12 to further substantiate his thesis as follows:

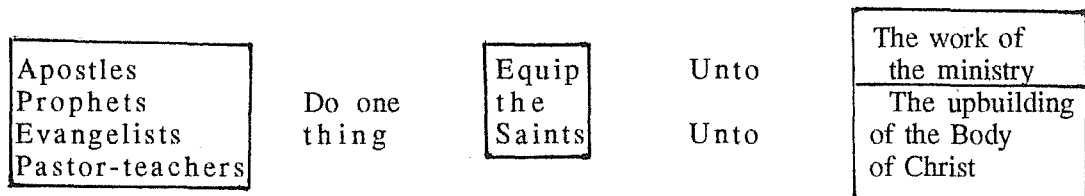


Table 1. Source: Stedman, Body Life, 88.

These are the general purposes which every church should aim for. It is divinely-ordained and uniquely equipped to carry out its tasks.

The church is here on earth, not to do what other groups can do, but to do what no other group of human beings can possibly do. It is here to manifest the life and power of Jesus Christ in fulfillment of the ministry which was given him by the Father, as he quoted it himself in the synagogue at Nazareth. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath annointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."<sup>13</sup>

But within the scope of the general purposes God has for all of His churches, must come those individualized plans that are

<sup>12</sup> Stedman, Body Life, 87.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 146.



tailor-made for each specific local church ministry. A church must have a plan.

The late Dr. Henrietta C. Mears always stressed the importance of a plan in the Lord's work. "If a man wants to build a place for a large business, he doesn't phone the cement company and have bags of cement piled on his lot, or phone the lumber company and have stacks of lumber piled everywhere. He doesn't start to order the materials until he has a plan."

What plan do you have for your church? What principles and specifications are you following?<sup>14</sup>

Those principles and specifications are spelled out and coordinated by the defined purpose of the individual church through its mission statement.

#### The Local Church Identifying Its Purpose Through a Mission Statement

Every true servant of the living God will eye critically the ministry God has given to him/her, comparing what is with what could be or what ought to be. The spiritual leadership of a local church should be driven by images of the desired condition within that church.

Jones says, "The church has always prospered and profited with pastors and leaders who had visions and dreams."<sup>15</sup> To refuse to be satisfied with the status quo, to catch a vision of what God can do and desires to do, and to communicate that vision to the church is absolutely essential for effective leadership. That vision is best

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<sup>14</sup> Harold L. Fickett, Jr., Hope For Your Church (Glendale, CA: Regal Books Division, Gospel Light Publications, 1972), foreward.

<sup>15</sup> Bruce W. Jones, Ministerial Leadership In A Managerial World (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1988), 218.

communicated when it is succinctly captured in a mission statement. Jones addresses this issue: "In a recent article, Mark Roman makes the point that setting the vision in words is the crucial executive act. He says the mission statement is a proclamation of corporate purpose and the single most important driving force of the organization."<sup>16</sup> Hull substantiates this thought with these words: "The mission must come first."<sup>17</sup>

So, the first priority is establishing a mission statement. Above all else, the mission statement defines a sense of purpose. Jones explains: "A vision (or even a mission statement) should answer the question of *what* the purpose of the organization is . . . ."<sup>18</sup>

This is a very confusing age for Christians to live in. Gone, probably forever, are those comfortably simple days of establishing a church program and expecting automatic conformity to it by the congregation. Christian buzz words fly around with mind-boggling speed: fundamentalism, evangelicalism, new-evangelicalism, baby boomers, baby busters, relational ministry, felt needs, etc. Non-traditional churches are using an unheard of variety of approaches to ministry, some with resounding success. It is vital in such a diverse environment where there is a clash between the old and the new that the local church develop a cohesive sense of purpose that will bind it together to give unified and meaningful direction. That job may be difficult, but it must be done. MacNair substantiates: "Finally, each church must hammer out its declaration of specific

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>17</sup> Bill Hull, "The Mission Must Come First," Church Disciple 5, no. 4 (November 1991), 2.

<sup>18</sup> Jones, Ministerial Leadership In A Managerial World, 207.

purpose if its members are to become fitted together in spite of the tensions in today's evangelical world."<sup>19</sup>

The mission statement establishes in words the purpose of the organization. It is important to define that purpose in terms of the permanent rather than to the temporary or the passing circumstances. Schmitt explains:

Objectives are the enduring statements about the purpose of the organization. They are the future destinations and may be stated in quantitative or qualitative terms, but they should be broad and timeless statements, as opposed to the more specific goals. This describes the "business" that the organization might pursue in the future. This statement is intended to put boundaries on future opportunities and to provide a point of departure from which the informational requirements for assessing future opportunities can be assembled and evaluated. The objectives are sometimes called the mission statement. This must be at the initiation of the process, and it is one of the most important parts.<sup>20</sup>

It was noted earlier in this chapter that churches exist in a wide variety of communities and cultures. Because of that fact, mission statements may vary quite widely and need to be adapted to their particular environment. Perry and Shawchuck make this fact clear: "Mission clarification deals with the question of purpose in the light of concrete environmental realities."<sup>21</sup> The mission statement should be adapted to the church's particular environmental needs.

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<sup>19</sup> Donald J. MacNair, The Birth, Care And Feeding Of A Local Church (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971), 19.

<sup>20</sup> Frank Schmitt, A Practical Introduction To Church Administration class notes (Lynchburg, VA: Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990), 23.

<sup>21</sup> Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 23.

Some might question if it really is so important to develop a meaningful mission statement. The answer to that is a resounding "YES," and that for several vital reasons.

First, a meaningful mission statement will help to determine if the present program and ministries are accomplishing anything of genuine value or if they are just "vestigial organs" of a bygone era, filling time slots and demanding workers but accomplishing little. Perry and Shawchuck put their fingers right on the heart of the matter: "Mission clarification is not meant to determine specific programs or activities, but to ask the *why* of all activities engaged in and all the programs carried on . . . . Mission clarification asks 'Why?'"<sup>22</sup> An excellent procedure for any church to follow in streamlining their ministries would be to evaluate the "Why?" of each one of them annually and to alter or eliminate them accordingly.

Second, a meaningful mission statement will enable a church to turn God-given dreams into substantive realities by stripping away the non-important and the unessential while directing that church toward vital and fruitful ministries. Again, hear Perry and Shawchuck: "A clear focused understanding of its mission enables a congregation to sort out the precious from the worthless, to focus on the ministries that will turn their visions into realities."<sup>23</sup>

The key concept is to bring all activities and ministries of the church into line with the mission statement: "Why are we here?" Barna explains: "Successful churches composed vision statements that

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 20.

defined specific target audiences and missions that would serve as the focus of the aggregate church outreach."<sup>24</sup> Barna likens the mission statement to the beginning of a marketing plan:

The first step in developing your market plan is to restate the mission of the church. All the marketing activity described in the plan must be consistent with the church's ministry purposes. It is helpful to put the church's mission in writing so there is never a doubt as to the body's underlying motives or intentions. By stating the purposes of the church up front and on paper, it is easier for those involved in the marketing plan's development and implementation to maintain a clear focus on ministry. The statement provides a standard against which every concept and approach can be tested to be certain that activities undertaken by the church are consistent with what the church is all about and what it is trying to achieve for Christ's Kingdom.<sup>25</sup>

Third, a meaningful mission statement provides credibility to the church's existence by those who observe it. MacNair says it well: "Only if the church has spelled out its own specific purpose clearly and only if it seeks to achieve this purpose in all aspects of church life, will it be able to give an impression which glorifies God in the eyes of the community."<sup>26</sup>

The question might be asked as to what elements are necessary to develop a meaningful mission statement. Anderson provides helpful criteria:

Good purpose statements have certain characteristics:

1. They answer the question "Why?"

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<sup>24</sup> Barna, User Friendly Churches, 91.

<sup>25</sup> George Barna, Marketing The Church (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1988), 97.

<sup>26</sup> MacNair, The Birth, Care And Feeding Of A Local Church, 18.

2. They are brief enough to be remembered.
3. They are long enough to be complete.
4. They are broad enough to be comprehensive for the organization.
5. They are understandable by both insiders and outsiders.<sup>27</sup>

The value of a good mission statement to a church can scarcely be over-estimated. It brings substance to God-given visions, focuses the church's attention on ministry and things that really matter, produces credibility in the eyes of man and gives glory to almighty God. Again, Anderson goes right to the heart of the matter:

The process of developing or revising a purpose statement is a powerful catalyst for change in itself. The process takes the attention away from divisive specifics, provides a shared experience for all involved, and unites around the real reasons for existence. It is a process that should take no short cuts.<sup>28</sup>

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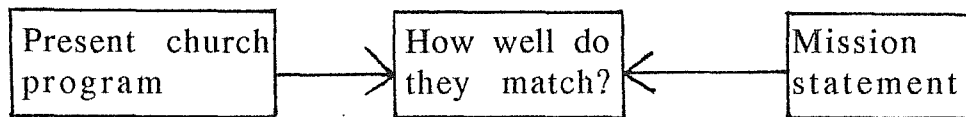
<sup>27</sup> Leith Anderson, Dying For Change (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1990), 164.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 164.

## CHAPTER 2

### "HOW ARE WE DOING?" - ANALYZING THE PROGRAM

Once the church has adopted an appropriate and meaningful mission statement, it is ready to scrutinize its program with a balanced, honest and critical eye to see how well it measures up.



This step is a vital link in the chain leading toward revitalization of ministry. Quite possibly, some pastors and churches will drag their feet at this point for such a process can prove brutally embarrassing, but total honesty is called for if the effective changes that lead to growth are to be made.

It's difficult for a church to admit that it may be facing stagnation or even decline, but like the alcoholic who cannot conquer his problem until he is willing to admit he has one, honest evaluation is a necessary prerequisite to correction.

#### The Common Reality of Church Stagnation and Decline

How common the reality of stagnation and decline is among churches! The author has spent most of his life and ministry among a fellowship of churches in the upper Midwest. Though many of those churches are over forty years old, only a handful of them surpass 150 in attendance on Sunday morning. Why? Stagnation! Excuses for those poor statistics abound, but whatever the excuse,

the fact is that those churches have plateaued numerically, or even gone down hill.

Like all organizations, a church will experience a life cycle.

Schmitt explains:

Organizations do change. They go through a life cycle, like people. They are born, go through infancy, reach maturity, enter old age, and eventually die. The organization is born when two or more people agree to cooperate to accomplish some shared purpose. During the infancy of an organization, creativity is desired because there is no tradition. A lot of new things are tried. This is actually a period of disorganization. When an organization reaches maturity it will have tried a lot of things, the ones that don't work are discarded and the ones that do work are used again and again and become traditions. This stage has a lot of policies, procedures, rules, and methodology in place. This is a period of bureaucracy.

In old age the organization gradually makes maintaining the traditions more important than the original purpose and all creativity ceases and all energy is spent in maintaining and protecting the traditions. This is a period of institutionalism. Finally, the organization will die, unless it has some type of revival of creativity and a return to its purposes or the finding of new purposes.<sup>1</sup>

This pattern is common to all organizations including churches.

Schmitt calls it a life cycle. Allen and Brown picture it as a bell curve as seen below:

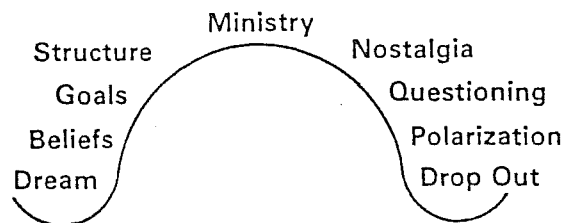


Table 2. Jere Allen and J. Truman Brown Jr., Church And Community Diagnostic Workbook, (Nashville: Convention Press, 1989), 68.

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<sup>1</sup> Schmitt, A Practical Introduction To Church Administration, 28.



They quote Dale who describes the process an aging church follows:

According to Bob Dale, a church begins with a *dream*. Usually that dream includes the evangelization of many persons in its community and a bringing of its members closer to God. That church has a belief system. Many times the *beliefs* of a church can be revealed in the music it sings - for example, whether most of the songs are about the life beyond, such as "When We All Get to Heaven" or the great hymns of the faith such as "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." (The items on the left side of the curve above are not in a 1, 2, 3 chronological order but flow together.) Soon a structure begins to appear that is simple at first but becomes more complex with the size and age of the church. Finally, the church is at its apex in *ministry*. This word is used in the broadest possible sense, as when Jesus said, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

On the left side of the curve, the church is capable of setting goals and is future oriented.

The first symptom of the church being on the downward right side of the curve is *nostalgia*. There is nothing wrong with a church appreciating the great past chapters in its life-history book. It is quite another thing for the people to want to prefer living in a past golden era.

This can lead to the negative *questioning* of the structures, emphases, and programs of the church. Finally, the church finds itself in the stage of *polarization*. This is the "we-and-you" stage. On the right side of the curve the energies of the church are consumed in "putting out the fires of discontent." It is foolish to try to lead a church in goal-setting when it is on this side of the curve.<sup>2</sup>

Fortunately, this situation is not irreversible. Again, Allen and Brown explain:

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<sup>2</sup> Jere Allen and J. Truman Brown Jr., Church And Community Diagnosis Workbook (Nashville: Convention Press, 1989), 68.

But there is an answer. The church can be led to "redream the dream."

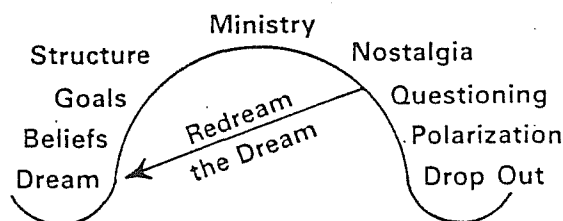


Table 3. Source: Allen and Brown, Church And Community Diagnostic Workbook, 68.

Instead of castigating the members for a poor showing, the leadership can affirm the church by leading it back to the original dream - a dream that has never been fulfilled. After considering that dream, the church is led to redream its dream with a dream for today with the present leadership. Then the cycle can begin again. The church can be restructured according to the present beliefs of the church until it finds itself once more setting realistic goals for *ministry*.<sup>3</sup>

Arn and McGavran illustrate this aging pattern for a church. The picture painted here is one well-known to the author and will be, perhaps, to the reader as well:

Its 50th anniversary was celebrated with speeches, dinners and remembrances. Yet the celebration had the aura of a funeral, for all sensed the future decline and death of the church if present trends continued.

The membership rolls carry approximately 400; however, Sunday morning attendance centers around the 200 mark. Two morning services are held, although they could easily be combined into one.

Some ten to fifteen years ago the growth which the church had earlier known plateaued and the last five to seven years have seen a steady decline. The Sunday School has also been declining and at a more rapid rate than the church.

With the decline in membership, giving has slackened, and commitments to missions, denominations and staff have

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 68

been curtailed. The church has many older adults and few young families. Leadership is tightly held by a few families and rigid in its structure and demands. This has been a proud church and holds to its pride tenaciously. The former pastor left in discouragement, and the pulpit committee is presently seeking for a man who will resolve their problems.

The physical plant is well located on a main street. Its architecture reveals its age; however, its rooms and sanctuary are more than adequate for the church's program.

The community, once upper middle-class white, has changed color. Black and Spanish Americans comprise approximately half the community and whites the other half. The church is located on the dividing line. While "Changing Church" carries on a variety of programs, most of them turn inward with little significant contact with the community.

"Changing Church" is representative of many thousands of churches across America.<sup>4</sup>

It is important to remember that a church is both an organism and an organization. As an organization it does go through a life cycle and exists at this moment somewhere on that cycle. Wise church leadership will determine the "where" before proceeding any farther. A church that is substantially advanced on that cycle will usually find it difficult to deal with the realities demanded for revitalization. Barna explains:

I've also come to believe that it is substantially easier to achieve growth in a church that has been newly planted than in an existing congregation that is beset with hardening of the spiritual arteries. In a new church, the chances of bringing together people of like mind and like mission are much greater. In such churches, attracting people who own the common vision for ministry is much more probable. Indeed, it takes such a oneness of mind and spirit to successfully launch a church in America today.

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<sup>4</sup> Win Arn and Donald McGavran, How To Grow A Church (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1973), 139-141

For the church that has a long history and has been stuck on an attendance plateau for sometime, or perhaps has been slowly deteriorating, turn around is a major challenge. You're fighting preconceived notions of what the church is meant to be, based upon historical precedent. You're faced with individuals who are faithful members, but who may not have the zeal, the energy, the vision or the interest to birth the renewal process. The existing image of the church, the appearance and condition of the facilities, the attitude of the pastor and staff toward what they are and are not willing to change - all these things and more may block the road to growth.<sup>5</sup>

Though the reasons may vary widely, the sad fact is that churches do stagnate and churches do die. Wagner quotes Schuller as saying: "One thing is certain: a church must never stop growing. When it ceases to grow it will start to die."<sup>6</sup>

That lack of numerical growth by the body is almost invariably preceded by a lack of individual spiritual growth by the members of the body. Few pastoral experiences cause more grief than people who have been saved many years but who do not manifest the spiritual maturity that should go with those years. MacArthur says it well: "The most heart breaking thing in my ministry is not that some people don't respond to the gospel. It isn't that more people don't go to the mission field, but that some members of the Body remain babies all of their lives."<sup>7</sup>

So the fact is, church stagnation and decline is a real problem, a common problem, a problem every church must examine itself for if any effective change is to be made. Symptoms are many and varied

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<sup>5</sup> Barna, User Friendly Churches, 188-189.

<sup>6</sup> C. Peter Wagner, Your Church Can Grow (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, Division of G/L Publishers, 1976), 91.

<sup>7</sup> MacArthur, Body Dynamics, 86.

as well as Green reminds us: "Symptoms of disintegration are: 'formalism, indifference, obsolescence, absolutism, red tape, patronage and corruption.'"<sup>8</sup> Another symptom Green mentions is the difficulty in maintaining interest in the program: "When Christians have to be pushed or pulled into participation in the program of the church, something is wrong with both the program and the Christian."<sup>9</sup>

In facing the issue of stagnation and decline, each church must ask itself the same question as did the twelve apostles when told by the Lord that one among them was a betrayer: "Lord, is it I?"

#### The Common Reasons for Church Stagnation and Decline

There are many reasons why churches begin to stagnate and decline. Any one or combination of these many factors may be the culprit. If on any given day ten patients go to a doctor because of running temperatures, he may find ten or more different factors causing the fevers. The wise doctor will not administer any medication until he is sure of the cause. Likewise, a stagnant church must put its collective finger upon the reason(s) for that stagnation before attempting corrective measures.

It cannot be said often enough: seeking solutions to the problem before knowing why the problem exists is like shooting in the dark - it makes a lot of noise and may give some sense of

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<sup>8</sup> Hollis L. Green Why Churches Die (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1972), 173.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 204.

satisfaction, but it probably will not hit the target and endangers the innocent.

Several students of church growth submit various reasons why churches stagnate and decline. Towns lists five such factors as liberalism, lack of vision, insufficient facilities and staff, sin or the subtle shift from evangelism to education.<sup>10</sup> Perry and Shawchuck's list is longer: spiritual problems, struggling over division, unconfessed sin, held grudges, church leaders tied to unproductive work, message of the church is addressed to a limited portion of the population, no-growth myopia, lack of lay involvement and present organizations become ends in themselves.<sup>11</sup>

Wagner's list seems a little more thorough and certainly is thought-provoking. He shares eight reasons why churches are sick and devotes an entire chapter to discuss each of those reasons:

1. Ethnikitis: A static church in a changing neighborhood.
2. Old Age: People move out of an area and no one else moves in.
3. People Blindness: The malady which prevents a church from seeing the important cultural differences that exist between groups of people living in geographical proximity to one another - differences which tend to create barriers to the acceptance of our message.
4. Hyper-Cooperativism: Inter-church cooperation to the degree that the centrality of the local church is minimized so that evangelism does not result in church growth.
5. Koinonitis: Becoming so intent upon fellowship that everyone finds themselves spending most of their church time enjoying each other to the exclusion of the newcomer, the

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<sup>10</sup> Elmer L. Towns, America's Fastest Growing Churches (Nashville: Impact Books, 1972), 7-8.

<sup>11</sup> Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 110.

spiritually immature or the ones who are classified as "different."

6. Sociological Strangulation: The slow-down in the rate of church growth caused when the flow of the people into the church begins to exceed the capacity of the facilities to handle it (parking, sanctuary, class rooms).

7. Arrested Spiritual Development: When people in the church are not growing in the things of God or in their relationships with one another.

8. St. John's Syndrome: Christian nominality - when Christians become Christians in name only, when they feel that their faith is only routine, when church involvement is largely going through the motions, and when belonging to church is a family tradition and a social nicety.<sup>12</sup>

All of the above are common problems and very pertinent for today. The following is a catalogue of reasons for church stagnation and decline that the author considers important enough for every seeker after church revitalization to ponder over carefully relative to his own church situation.

#### An Inward Institutional Focus

This is the church that has lost sight of the vision for its purpose for existence. At one time that purpose may have been clear, but the passing of time and changing circumstances have bedimmed that purpose. Note Anderson:

Most churches begin with a sense of purpose, even if they lack a statement of purpose. They want to establish a place of worship for a certain group of people, or they want to reach an area evangelistically, or they want to represent a specific denominator. After a generation the purpose is either fulfilled or forgotten. But the building, staff, budget, missionaries, and members remain. Subtly, the purpose becomes to keep the institution going.

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<sup>12</sup> C. Peter Wagner, Your Church Can Be Healthy (Nashville: Abingdon Publishers, 1979), chapter headings.

Institutional focus is the enemy of change because change will alter the institution and potentially put it at risk.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the church becomes limited and parochial in its outlook. Actually, it ceases to have an outlook because it is so wrapped in itself. Green says such a "church has become more interested in conserving things already attained than pressing forth into the world with the good news. Consequently, the base has become the field of operation."<sup>14</sup>

Hendrix calls this aging cycle "inevitable":

Maybe you have heard of the inevitable cycle in religious organizations. It starts with a *man* with a vision and a burden. Thus it becomes a *movement*, and this generally degenerates into a *machine*. Then, finally it becomes a *monument*. These are the four "M's" of organizational deterioration and it results in "control organization." This mentality says, in effect, "Never mind whether we are doing anything; let us just make sure that we are doing it properly."<sup>15</sup>

The end result of long-term inward focus is the death of that particular church. Barna concurs: "Our research shows that churches usually die from the inside out. Death is largely due to an inward focus, rather than an outward concern."<sup>16</sup>

### Tradition

Tradition is simply a patterned way of doing things. Frequently, this pattern is no longer effective, but is maintained because the church remembers it as being effective. Such patterns

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<sup>13</sup> Anderson, Dying For Change, 112.

<sup>14</sup> Green, Why Churches Die, 46.

<sup>15</sup> Olan Hendrix, Management For The Christian Worker (Santa Barbara, CA: Quill Publications, 1976), 28.

<sup>16</sup> Barna, User Friendly Churches, 110.



become deeply entrenched and cherished. Green warns of the danger:

The church faces other problems that are of a current nature. They are problems inherited from past leadership and programs that have outlived their usefulness. These problems concern the property and the social structure of the church and are the biggest areas of strangulation.<sup>17</sup>

With what bulldog tenacity church people hold on to the outmoded patterns of the past! Even while recognizing that something is deathly wrong, they refuse to let go. Anderson describes this attitude:

. . . an estimated 85% of America's Protestant churches are either stagnating or dying. Many of the sincere and committed Christians who still fill the family pews in these churches hold on to the nostalgic hope that tomorrow will be yesterday. Others desperately want their churches to catch up with the times and meet the challenges of the present generation, but they don't know how. And still others doggedly fight the inevitable changes for the sake of traditions that would be better abandoned.<sup>18</sup>

Of course, holding so tightly to outdated programs and policies that were once effective but are no longer, will quickly strangle a church by obstructing anything new that might serve the people and thus enhance growth.

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<sup>17</sup> Green, Why Churches Die, 115.

<sup>18</sup> Anderson, Dying For Change, 10.

## The Fortress Mentality

This is a graphic term which describes the following attitude: "You come to us because we're not coming to you!" Tillapaugh explains: "Nearly everyone in the Christian community agrees the 'fortress mentality' dominates the vast majority of our churches today. The typical scenario in a fortress church is to buy land, build buildings and concentrate nearly all its ministry efforts within the walls of those buildings."<sup>19</sup> Again: "In a few words, the fortress mentality says the church will minister to anyone who will come within the four walls of our church buildings, and fit in with us."<sup>20</sup>

How easily and how rapidly this concept deteriorates into an isolationist style of Christianity. It can involve taking the biblical concept of separation to an extreme far beyond biblical exhortation so that Christians are separated from any effective, fruit-bearing relationships with non-Christians.

## A "No Growth" Attitude

Here is a lifeless attitude of contentment with the status quo coupled with a determined will to keep anyone from stirring the calm waters of the ecclesiastical boat. The church has convinced itself that no change is possible and is content to just keep an even keel. Arn and McGavran identify this trend: "At least part of the difficulty, part of the reason for the lack of church growth, is that too many Christians have settled for *no* growth. They have concluded

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<sup>19</sup> Frank R. Tillapaugh, Unleashing Your Potential (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1988), 13.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 22-23.

within themselves that growth is quite impossible, so why work at it? Once that happens, there is no possibility for growth."<sup>21</sup>

A church program is in real trouble when there is satisfaction with the status quo because it signifies no desire for improvement. When apathy reigns, and the church leaders are aware of it and content to have it so, the problem is especially significant and difficult to root out.

People are resistant to change because change breeds insecurity which in turn causes fear. This is a fundamental characteristic of human nature. This characteristic dictates that church members initially be against any change.

#### Leaders Chained to Unproductive Maintenance Ministry

The church as an organization demands efficient administrative procedures in order to function properly. The problem arises when spiritual leaders must give the lion's share of their time to keeping the church machinery running: board meetings, committee meetings, program meetings, organizational meetings - unproductive, lethargy producing, time wasting, meetings.

McGavran addresses this issue when he contrasts twelve reasons why churches grow with eleven why they do not. His number seven reason for growth: "Some church man refused to be tied to work which did not plant churches. Or some Christian leader discovered the difference between 'good church work' and the chief

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<sup>21</sup> Arn and McGavran, How To Grow A Church, 5.

purpose of Christian mission, and turned from one to the other."<sup>22</sup>  
His number one reason for non-growth: "Leaders were chained to  
existent maintenance work. Or church and mission were devoted to  
a nonproductive pattern once needed but long since outmoded."<sup>23</sup>

### No Systematic, Long Range Planning

Church planning according to Schmitt falls into four categories:  
(1) Operational (day-to-day and week-to-week), (2) Project (six to  
eight week bites), (3) Annual (next year), and (4) Long range (five to  
seven years).<sup>24</sup>

Many churches never get beyond annual planning, and some  
sad to say, not past project planning. Green emphasizes the need of  
proper planning: "Systematic long-ranged planning is a vital function  
of organization."<sup>25</sup> Why is such planning so vital? Perry and  
Shawchuck spell it out:

The environment of every church in America today can  
best be described as turbulent. Gone (perhaps forever) are the  
quiet pastoral days when environmental changes came slowly  
and predictably. In their place has come an environment  
characterized by rapid and radical change, an environment that  
is often indifferent and hostile to the church. In such an  
environment a church that fails to do careful planning runs the  
risk of becoming an island of irrelevancy and ineffectiveness in  
a hostile sea of need.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Donald McGavran, Understanding Church Growth (Grand Rapids:  
Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), 162.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 163.

<sup>24</sup> Frank J. Schmitt, Pastoral Leadership class notes (Lynchburg, VA:  
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 1991).

<sup>25</sup> Green, Why Churches Die, 98.

<sup>26</sup> Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 18.

## Church Leaders Fear Self-Examination

One of the most excruciating procedures in life is to look at oneself and one's ministry with an unbiased and critical eye. It can be doubly devastating when others are asked to be the critics. It can shatter the preconceived and sterile self-image that many leaders strive so hard to put in place. Perry and Shawchuck again: "The fact that most church leaders do not evaluate their efforts is due not so much to a lack of skill as it is due to a lack of nerve. Many church leaders don't want to know how well, or how poorly, they are doing."<sup>27</sup>

## Unwillingness Of Congregation To Follow Leaders

With utmost clarity, Hull describes this common reason for church stagnation and decline:

Some congregations treat suspicion of their leaders' motives and decisions as a treasured corporate value. To follow their leadership without fighting them is considered irresponsible. Historically these congregations challenge all ideas and programs their leaders suggest. Their church business meetings shame the name of Christ. There are bickering, political power plays, and petitions. Roberts Rules of Order have more clout than Scripture.<sup>28</sup>

## Changing Neighborhood

All neighborhoods change, some rapidly and others very slowly, but change they will. Unless the church changes with the community, isolation from it will result. Huttenlocker explains:

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>28</sup> Hull, The Disciple Making Pastor, 166.

Community change will inevitably create problems for a congregation situated in such an environment. Whether from commercial encroachment, ethnic shifts, or other factors, many congregations become largely isolated from residential neighborhoods and geographically separated from constituents who once lived nearby. Eventually this adversely affects attendance. Remaining members wistfully recall better days when Sunday School class rooms and the sanctuary were filled, rather than half-empty as now.<sup>29</sup>

As the distance between the church and its immediate neighborhood increases, so does the certainty of decline. The problem may well emanate from a lack of commitment to that community by the church as Jones elaborates:

Conversely, research also demonstrated that many churches will decline when their communities change. In a study of 100 Southern Baptist churches, declining churches no longer reflected their communities, sociologically, economically, racially, nationally, ethnically, or in age patterns. . . . The major problem was the lack of commitment on the part of the church members to meet the challenge.<sup>30</sup>

The prognosis for a church that is unwilling to change in a changing neighborhood is not good. Anderson describes the all-too-common scenario:

White, middle-class communities give way to poorer minorities. Church members move to other neighborhoods or suburbs and drive back to a church that is isolated from its community. Current community members are unlikely to join a church that is not only a white and middle-class church, but is controlled by people who live fifteen miles away. Within a

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<sup>29</sup> Keith Huttenlocker, Conflict And Caring (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 75.

<sup>30</sup> Jones, Ministerial Leadership In A Managerial World, 181-182.

few years the church dies and the building passes to a new ministry that is tied to the immediate neighborhood.<sup>31</sup>

### Lack of Receptivity to Outsiders

Sometimes the attitude in a church seems to be, "We four and no more!" The church motto is: "We may be small, but we're pure." What they do not seem to realize is that such an attitude may put them right out of business. Arn and McGavran explain:

So many Christians have become accustomed to, preoccupied with, their own congregation. They like their own congregation. That's perfectly natural. They should. But unfortunately, the outsiders remain *outsiders*. There is no way of reaching these outsiders when a church is preoccupied with its own members. So congregation after congregation is sealed off to itself, by its own language, by its own culture, by its own degree of education, or wealth, or residence. The bridges to other segments of the population, across which church growth will occur, simply are not built.<sup>32</sup>

Anderson explains the two kinds of churches in regard to their response to people who are different:

Basically, there are two types of churches. One is the church that establishes systems to attract and incorporate persons who are different. The other is the church that institutionalizes self-perpetuation with strict rules to keep out anyone who is different. Both have risks. People who are different will change the church; people who are the same will keep the church from changing.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Anderson, Dying For Change, 144.

<sup>32</sup> Arn and McGavran, How To Grow A Church, 5.

<sup>33</sup> Anderson, Dying For Change, 113.

## Generational Need Differences

There are at least four generationally diverse groups attending Bible-believing churches today: the Youth Market (born in 1977 or after), the Baby Bust (born 1965-1976), the Baby Boom (born 1946-1964), and the Fifties Plus Market. Each has distinctly defined and unique needs. Anderson describes generational conflicts that can arise:

The older generation cannot understand their adult childrens' lack of institutional loyalty. And the younger generation can't comprehend their parents' devotion that will settle for lesser quality out of blind loyalty.

All of this goes a long way toward explaining the numerical decline of churches that have expected loyalty but neglected needs; and it explains the significant growth of nondenominational churches that have catered to the perceived needs of baby boomers.<sup>34</sup>

Churches often are afraid to change their program for fear that they will be perceived as slipping away from sound biblical doctrine. Unless the church can make the distinction between these two things, doctrine and program, it may well find itself imprisoned in patterns of previous generations that will be rejected by members of contemporary society.

### Refusing to Minister to the Entire Family

No institution is better equipped to minister to the needs of the entire family than the local church: nurseries, Sunday School, children's and youth ministries, college and career, adults, etc. No one category should be emphasized to the detriment or exclusion of any of the others. Each is vitally important. Today's family will not

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 82.



attend where each one of those family members is not ministered to directly and effectively. Arn and McGavran give clear warning: "If a church brings in only children, many of them are going to fall away. But if the entire family can be reached as a unit, the stability of the converts will be much greater. Innumerable bits of evidence prove that truth."<sup>35</sup>

### Cultural Rules Instead of Biblical Absolutes

How prevalent these rules are and how readily they are confused with biblical principles. Anderson states the problem clearly:

Every Christian community has behavior rules, and it doesn't take long for the newcomer to learn what is acceptable and what is not. Rules range from length of hair to acceptance of adulterers. Each group also has its own folkways. There is no way of avoiding these social customs which often seem to appear from nowhere and then are repeated and reinforced until they are part of the group's personality.

Too often, however, folkways increase in importance until they take on the force of moral law. In some churches this has happened to such customs as men always wearing suits and women never wearing slacks, no clapping of hands in worship and no dating outside of the fellowship. When these folkways are challenged, the inflexible organization claims moral, if not biblical, authority in perpetuating the practice. This inflexibility soon makes the church or organization out-of-date and in need of sociological renewal.

The challenge is not to be rule-free, but to determine which rules are morally and biblically required rather than culturally convenient. Culturally convenient rules are inevitable but must be regularly updated; moral rules must be maintained and practiced, no matter what the current culture.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Arn and McGavran, How To Grow A Church, 33-34.

<sup>36</sup> Anderson, Dying For Change, 133.

### Lack of New Converts to Christ

People who are being won to Jesus Christ maintain the vital blood supply to the local body of Christ, the church. Without them, death ensues. McGavran explains:

Nor (again as we have seen earlier) is it fruitful to increase cultural efforts expecting that they will result in the growth of the church. . . . *only a stream of converts entering the church will bring her into living contact with her environment.* It is fallacious to assume that all an introverted church has to do is "become interested in civic life, put up candidates for office, make pronouncements about national affairs, or undertake more helpful acts." These are all steps in the right direction; but something much more organic is needed.<sup>37</sup>

### Ignorance Concerning Spiritual Gifts

God has gifted every believer with one or more supernatural abilities to minister for His glory within the local body (Romans 12; I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4). The ignorance concerning the place and purposes of these gifts is abysmal among today's Christians. Wagner says: "Ignorance of Spiritual Gifts may be a chief cause of retarded church growth today. It also may be at the root of the discouragement, insecurity, frustration and guilt that plagues many Christian individuals and curtails their total effectiveness for God."<sup>38</sup>

For the church genuinely interested in ministry revitalization, analyzing its program and assessing it against the possible reasons for stagnation and decline, is not an option but a vital necessity.

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<sup>37</sup> McGavran, Understanding Church Growth, 273.

<sup>38</sup> C. Peter Wagner, Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow, 2nd ed. (Glendale, CA: Regal Books Division, G/L Publications, 1980), 32.

### Analysis of the Present Church Program

Of all the procedures involved in bringing the church to the place where revitalization can begin, this is by far the most difficult. The reason is because reality demands honesty and honesty must admit that the present program may be flawed. Rather than admitting this fact and using it as an opportunity for advantageous change, many church leaders take it as a personal affront and reflection upon their character or ability; a negative reflection which they are not willing to confront.

However, if the church is to be helped, personal egos must be laid aside for the common good. Crosby Associates make the terse but pertinent observation that "in the real world, tough decisions have to be made."<sup>39</sup>

Tough decisions cannot co-exist with fragile egos. Wagner notes that "the indispensable condition for a growing church, is that it wants to grow and is willing to pay the price for growth."<sup>40</sup> A large part of that price may well be the willingness to suffer the embarrassment of a poor assessment score card in order to consider wise and profitable changes.

#### What Analysis Is

Analysis is measurement; measurement of what *is* compared to what *should be*. Arn and McGavran stress its importance: "Church leaders should constantly evaluate their efforts against *results now*."

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<sup>39</sup> Crosby, Philip Associates, Inc., Quality Education System For The Individual (n.p., 1988), 44.

<sup>40</sup> Wagner, Your Church Can Grow, 49.

We must ask, 'Are we, in fact, working for results in the next six months, the next six weeks, maybe the next six days?'"<sup>41</sup>

Analysis is finding out what is happening and reporting those findings to others in the organization. Open communication of all data is necessary if understanding is to be reached and a consensus is to be formed.

Analysis is ferreting out problems in the present program and getting to their root causes so they can be eliminated.

Program analysis is not simply a one-time exercise, but an ongoing process that may lead the church to trim, add to or alter the program in other ways that bring improvement.

In the process of analysis, it is important that all factors be taken into consideration. The decisions that are made will only be as wise as the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data used will allow.

Getz uses a diagram to remind the reader that all evaluation must be done using three vital lenses: (1) The lens of biblical principle - enduring, inviolable, unchanging truth, (2) The lens of history - how others have effectively used certain procedures in the past, and (3) The lens of culture - procedures that work today in one's present and particular environment.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Arn and McGavran, How To Grow A Church, 44.

<sup>42</sup> Gene A. Getz, Sharpening The Focus Of The Church (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), 116.

## Why Analysis Is Important

The importance of an accurate analysis of the church's program can scarcely be over-emphasized. Accurate analysis measures quality and it is quality that keeps people returning to the church.

In analyzing why people come to a particular church, Hunter and McGavran give the following rather startling statistics: "6% to 8% - just walked in; 2% to 3% - through the church's program; 8% to 12% - the pastor attracted them; 1% to 2% - were visited by church members; 3% to 4% - came through a Sunday School class; 70% to 80% - invited by relatives and friends."<sup>43</sup>

Those statistics are overwhelmingly significant! 70% to 80% of those who came to a church were there as a result of the invitation of relatives or friends who already attend that church. Why did those relatives and friends do that inviting? Because they had confidence in the church's *program*. People do not invite others to a church where the program is slipshod or second rate.

Thus, a quality program is vital. The Crosby Associates maintain, "We need a measurement of quality *to get management attention, prioritize problems so we can decide what corrective action is needed, and see how well we have done in our efforts to improve.*"<sup>44</sup>

There is a tremendous price to pay for poor quality: the destruction of good-will relationships which are so vital to the effective operation of a church, wasted time and money and effort,

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<sup>43</sup> George G. Hunter, III and Donald McGavran, Church Growth Strategies That Work (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 34.

<sup>44</sup> Crosby Associates, Inc., Quality Education System For The Individual, 55.

dissatisfied attenders who soon become either troublemakers or non-attenders, and countless opportunities lost to win people to Jesus Christ and disciple them for His glory. The best reason that can be given for a thorough and honest appraisal of a church's program is the prohibitive cost of doing things wrong.

Many ills arise from a church's unwillingness to critically analyze its present program. Three of the most significant and damaging are given below:

(1) The members of the local church are kept from ever reaching their full ministry potential by obsolete or meaningless program structures. Perry and Shawchuck observe: "Providing the laity with effective church structures through which they can discover their own calling in ministry is one of the most loving things any pastor or church may do for the congregation."<sup>45</sup>

(2) The church becomes all wrapped up in time-consuming annual "events" rather than in meaningful and strategically-planned ministry. The question is never asked, "Why are we doing this?" Tillapaugh addresses this problem:

I believe our churches are using way too much time managing things that do not warrant a big time investment. . . . A second area of time use we need to rethink is the number of meetings we expect "good" church members to invest time in. Presently, we expect people to attend Sunday School, Sunday morning worship, Wednesday evening prayer meeting, regular Bible study and any number of committee meetings. No wonder so few people have any time left for investing in ministry beyond the walls of the church.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 138.

<sup>46</sup> Tillapaugh, Unleashing Your Potential, 86.

(3) The pastor has no time left over after making certain that all of the over-burdened machinery of the church is running properly. The warning of Perry and Shawchuck must be heeded:

The pastor should not have to be involved in every program or every decision. When the pastor insists on being involved in everything the church will always be weaker and smaller than it would be otherwise, for the church will be limited to the extent of the pastor's abilities and available time. The church will never grow beyond his strength and abilities. The tragedy is that the talents of many of the laity will be wasted from inactivity and nonuse.<sup>47</sup>

#### Including The Congregation In Program Analysis

Though the church leaders should take charge of the responsibility for program analysis, the most meaningful input is that which comes from the congregation. A Bible-based church is not an elitest organization run by the favored few, but a democracy of the saints whose leaders are repeatedly given the designation of "minister" or "servant."

A good leader is a good listener. Hocking says: "Communication is not one-sided. One speaks, but another must listen. Listening is a lost art. Most people are waiting for the other person to stop talking so that they can talk."<sup>48</sup>

Pastors and deacons and other church leaders must listen to what their congregation is saying. If they refuse, there will come a time when many from that congregation will find another church with leaders who do listen. When a people know that their concerns

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<sup>47</sup> Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 142.

<sup>48</sup> David L. Hocking, Be A Leader People Follow (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1985), 43.

are being heard and given due consideration by the church leadership, an atmosphere is created that lends itself to meaningful change. The congregation must be involved in program analysis as Perry and Shawchuck remind us: "Congregational assessment is the congregation sitting down to take counsel regarding its own strengths, weaknesses, hopes, and dreams; and upon the basis of its counsel deciding what its strategy for ministry should be."<sup>49</sup> Again: "There is perhaps no other single activity you can do for your church that has greater potential for generating energy for action than has congregational assessment."<sup>50</sup>

Including the congregation in program analysis may be accomplished in a variety of ways. If such a procedure has not been followed before, home meetings can be a very effective new means of obtaining congregational feedback. They can be particularly helpful in redeveloping unity if long-term walls of mistrust stand between the congregation and its leadership. Not many churches have done this. Hear Barna: "It is the rare congregation that has feedback mechanisms in place which enable the leaders of the body to gain a realistic and continual understanding of how they are doing, where they are going and what they are lacking."<sup>51</sup>

The purpose of the home meetings is to discover from the congregation their answers to three simple questions: (1) "What do you like around here?", (2) "What don't you like around here?", and (3) "What would you like to see different?" (The author describes in

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<sup>49</sup> Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 24.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>51</sup> George Barna, Church Disciple 5, no. 4 (November, 1991), 2.



Appendix B the procedure followed for initiating home meetings in a church he pastored.)

Another effective means of obtaining meaningful feedback from the congregation is through carefully planned and thought-out surveys. A list of possible surveys is also provided in Appendix B.

Eliot Wigginton has been involved in public school work for many years. In his book, Foxfire 6, he spells out five principles that he claims are necessary to provide a solid foundation for a healthy school environment. These principles are just as applicable to a church situation as to a school. Those principles are repeated below but with bracketed [ ] words used by the author of this paper to show the application of the truth to the local church.

First: Every detail in the physical environment of a school [church], no matter how small, matters and contributes in a cumulative way to the overall tone.

Second: Students [members] must be allowed a measure of control over that environment, and a degree of decision-making responsibility within it.

Third: All courses [preaching and teaching], to the fullest extent possible, should be experiential - rooted in the real.

Fourth: The school [church] and the community should be as one.

Fifth: There should be an atmosphere inside the school [church], fostered by the principal [pastor], of *fermentation*, excitement, and anticipation - the feeling that something is *happening* that is good and worth being a part of - all laced with a generous dose of the unexpected.<sup>52</sup>

A good program of congregational self-analysis is a giant step in the proper direction toward ministry revitalization.

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<sup>52</sup> Eliot Wigginton, Foxfire 6 6th ed.(New York, NY: Doubleday, 1980), introduction.

## CHAPTER 3

### "WHAT IS IMPORTANT?" - PRIORITIZING THE OBJECTIVES

Once the church has to its own satisfaction clarified its mission and thoroughly analyzed its program, it is ready for the next step leading toward revitalization of ministry - establishing the priority of its objectives. In other words, the church is at the place where it must ask itself what is important to its life and ministries, and just as importantly, what is not.

The key word here is "change." That change may come from additions to the program, from subtractions from the program or from rearrangement or redesign of the present program. In some ways this step is the most difficult because it may demand the stepping on toes of some who clutch tightly to sacred cows in the program that they are unwilling to release.

#### Vital Prerequisites to Consider in Prioritizing Objectives

Before prioritization takes place, several vital prerequisites should be considered.

#### What Kind of Church Does God Want This Church to Be?

A church is designed by God to be flexible enough to fit perfectly into any culture, age, country or milieu, but if it is to become all that God wants it to be, it must be properly adapted to the one it is in. Hodges asks the appropriate questions: "What kind of

church does God want in our city? What would God do with our congregation if He could find an instrument that He could completely use as He would desire?"<sup>1</sup>

These questions force those investigating to take two important steps: to go back to the Scriptures to see what God's standards and requirements are for a church and to go back to the community to determine what specifically God desires of that church in its given locality.

### How Do We Get People Into the Church?

The church *is* people. New people make up the life blood of the church. If new people are not coming into and being added to the church, that church will eventually die. Even though it may not be growing the way it should, the question a church must ask itself is does it desire to grow and is it willing to pay the price for growth to take place. VanEngen says that, "YEARNING for numerical growth is a true mark of the Church, while the actual AMOUNT of numerical growth is a matter of historical, sociological, political, anthropological, religious, and cultural factors and does not point to the trueness of the Church."<sup>2</sup>

Getting people in is a key prerequisite claims Houseman: "The church is there to bring folks in. If we forget that we've forgotten everything."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Melvin L. Hodges, Grow Toward Leadership (Chicago: Moody Press, 1960), 17.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Edward VanEngen, The Growth Of The True Church (Amsterdam: Rodo pi B.V., 1981), 451.

<sup>3</sup>Bart Houseman, Church Disciple 5 (November 1991): 2.

## How Do We Meet the Needs of People Once We've Gotten Them In?

People will come to a church initially for any of a variety of reasons: convenience, curiosity, they were invited or burdened or hurting, etc. But they will *continue* to attend that church only if they sense that their needs and the needs of their family are being met. This fact demands some digging on the part of the church leadership to determine what those needs are perceived to be and to attempt to meet those needs. The Crosby Group, which is a secular company assisting people in the business world, states it this way:

If we don't know what the customers expect, it will be difficult to meet their expectations.

Understanding our customers' requirements involves communication. We must listen to our customers so we understand what they need.<sup>4</sup>

If, as Wagner maintains, "The secret of success is to find a need and fill it,"<sup>5</sup> then this is a vital prerequisite to establishing priorities in the local church.

Once these three prerequisites have been duly established, every objective of the church must come into conformity to them before they should even be considered.

### Vital Factors to Consider in Prioritizing Objectives

There are certain factors which must be considered by the church that intends to prioritize its objectives. The following is a cross section of those that are considered essential.

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<sup>4</sup>Crosby, Quality Education System For The Individual, 18.

<sup>5</sup>Wagner, Your Church Can Grow, 136.

## To Become Organized for Revitalization

Organization, managerial ability and administrative skills - these are the leadership qualities that are frequently wanting even in seminary-trained pastors. As Wilson says: "They come out well-grounded in theology but sorely lacking in management and motivational skills, and that is where the congregations are in trouble."<sup>6</sup> Somehow these graduates seem to have the impression that if their intentions and motives are in order and if they just "preach the Word", it won't matter how much they flounder as leaders.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. Today's adult Christians live and work in a world where sound organization, intelligent management and administrative ability are cherished assets which are vital to success. They will not rest content with a pastor who does not manifest these skills.

### SCRIPTURAL DESIGNATIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF PASTOR

PREACHER (kerux): "proclaimer to a congregation" - I Timothy 2:7

TEACHER (didaskalos): "instructor of a church school" - Ephesians 4:11

SHEPHERD (poimen): "shepherd of a flock" - I Peter 5:1-4

BISHOP (episcopos): "superintendent of a working force" - Acts 20:28

ELDER (presbuteros): "president of a deliberative assembly" - Acts 11:30

Table 4. The five essential roles of a pastor

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<sup>6</sup>Marlene Wilson, How To Mobilize Church Volunteers (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1983), 45-46.

Table 4 diagrams the five essential roles of a pastor. While at the heart of the pastor's calling is his willingness to be a minister or servant, he is also called to be a preacher-teacher, a shepherd, a leader and an administrator. It is important to notice that God gives certain responsibilities to the pastor which demand the development of administrative skills. The pastor avoids or ignores this God-given facet of his calling at the risk of failing in his ministry.

Not only must the pastor have a handle on organization, the church itself must become organized for revitalization. Marlene Wilson in her fine book, How To Mobilize Church Volunteers, gives valuable information in Chapters Three and Four regarding the development of a sound organizational system and the formation of a task force to engineer such a system.

At this point it is important to be reminded that there is a vital difference between an *objective* and a *system*. An objective is simply a statement of what it is that needs to be accomplished. A system is the methodology that is used to carry out objectives. Of course, the system must lend itself well to carrying out the desired objectives.

In helping a church to identify its objectives, Hendrix lists four questions that must be answered: "(1) What are your objectives? (2) What are your opportunities? (3) What are your resources? (4) What is your strategy for applying your resources to your opportunities to obtain your objectives?"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Hendrix, Management For The Christian Worker, 51.

The church must install a system that not only will allow, but will also encourage revitalization. That may demand massive reorganization. At that point the church is ready to state its prioritized objectives and pursue them. The Crosby Group maintains that such a state is a sign of a quality organization: "Put simply, it means that first we decide what we are going to do and then we do what we decided. We identify the requirements so that everyone understands them, and then we meet those requirements. That is quality."<sup>8</sup>

#### To Aim for Specific Objectives

Someone has well said that he who aims at nothing will certainly hit it. Perry and Shawchuck do well to remind the reader that "a key element of church revitalization is in fact working to get the church on target through a clear sense of purpose and meaningful goals."<sup>9</sup>

Many today are pursuing what they call SMART goals which have the following characteristics:

<b>S</b>	- Specific
<b>M</b>	- Measurable
<b>A</b>	- Attainable
<b>R</b>	- Relevant
<b>T</b>	- Trackable

Table 5. Smart goals

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<sup>8</sup>Crosby, Quality Education System For The Individual, 21.

<sup>9</sup>Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 45.

These goals or objectives are not ends in and of themselves, but are means by which the congregation is led in the desired direction, that of attaining the ends spelled out in the Mission Statement. As these objectives are pursued by the church, they will begin to capture the hearts and the minds of the congregation and that excitement will give added impetus to the entire revitalization process.

In establishing goals, Cleveland maintains that five questions need to be answered:

- (1) What are our church's goals?
- (2) Is there an adequate structure for achieving those goals?
- (3) Is there openness of communication?
- (4) Does the church have the capacities to meet those goals?
- (5) Does the church reward its members for working toward its stated goals?<sup>10</sup>

#### To Include the Congregation in the Decision-Making Process

If the church is being called upon to make changes, then the church itself should decide to make those changes. The vital principle is this: people are committed to plans they helped to make. The danger is to overlook this fact in the mad rush to get moving, but the fact is a wise planner always includes those affected by the plan in the planning process. Ownership always breeds active interest and involvement. Morris' words illustrate this truth:

As a pastor, I've never been able to get too excited about somebody else's program. Not even if it comes from the

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<sup>10</sup>Rich Cleveland, lecture on initiating change in the church, Navigators' Conference (Valley Forge, PA: 1988).



conference president. . . . But when it's my program, something opens up within me, and I invest incredible amounts of time and energy to achieve its success. Why has it taken me so long to see that the members of my church are no different? How many years I've wasted trying to get them to do things they had no desire to do, while practically ignoring the potential of their own hopes and dreams concerning their church and their Lord! . . . I have finally learned that the right question to ask [as pastor] is not: How can we get our members to do what we want them to do? It's: How can we help our members fulfill *their own* needs for involvement, commitment, and successful ministry in the church?<sup>11</sup>

#### To Establish the Principle "Form Follows Function"

If as the Scripture regularly affirms, believers are left on this earth to minister, the local church should give its undivided attention to ministry. Every facet of the church should be adapted for ministry: property, program and people.

Of what value is a fifteen acre parcel of land that sits neglected and unused? Stained glass windows adorning a cavernous auditorium are beautiful, but what asset are they to ministry? Do the annual men's pancake breakfast and mother-daughter banquet genuinely accomplish something for God or do they just exhaust a lot of people with little to show spiritually for the effort? Are the church people involved in meaningful ministry or in time-wasting, nonproductive activities?

Perry and Shawchuck remind us of the bottom line: "Form Follows Function is an important principle to remember."<sup>12</sup> Having

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<sup>11</sup>Richard Morris, "It's Time To Do Less For Your Church Members," Ministry, A Magazine For Clergy (January 1982): 4, quoted by Wilson, How To Mobilize Church Volunteers, 48-49.

<sup>12</sup>Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 51.

come this far in the process of revitalization, it would be tragic if the church were unwilling to make the changes in structure necessary to accomplish the desired objectives. That is not to say that everything should be thrown out, but certainly everything should pass the test of ministry evaluation.

Again, hear the wisdom of Perry and Shawchuck: "What the church needs, then, is a balance between ongoing programs to keep the best of what it now has and the change programs needed to constantly renew itself."<sup>13</sup>

#### To Maintain The Balance Between Revelation and Relevance

This balance is a difficult stance to maintain and, frankly, Bible-believing churches historically have done a poor job of it. The problem is that there exists two truths that must be addressed and kept in mind as a church prioritizes its objectives. Truth #1: There is an infallible, inerrant, unchanging foundation to the Christian faith called the Bible. It is this and this alone which should determine church doctrine. Truth #2: Culture changes from generation to generation and from locality to locality. It is this which should determine programming and methodology.

Liberal churches have faced the issue of cultural needs and community responsibilities and have done a good job of it; they have made themselves relevant. But they have dropped the ball when it comes to revelation. They have ignored or rejected Bible doctrine, a stance that is without excuse.

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 54.

Conservative churches, on the other hand, have done a fine job of maintaining "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), revelation, but have failed miserably in maintaining any relevance to their own society. This is also a stance that is without excuse.

Churches which do not wisely deal with both of these issues may well find themselves part of an isolated and ineffective subculture, recognized only as a curious oddity by an unimpressed world.

Anderson's warning is vital to hear: "Knowing the Bible is not enough. The church has a responsibility to understand people and the culture in which they live. This means that the Bible must be made relevant in today's culture in order to benefit today's people."<sup>14</sup>

Conservative Christians must learn to not respond with a knee jerk reaction when someone throws at them the term, "social gospel." Fearing to be tarred with a liberal brush, many have reacted negatively in the past only to lose the opportunity to minister to multitudes of people. The solution is a proper balance between revelation and relevance.

#### To Understand and Minister in Light of Three Modern Realities

If churches ignore these realities, they risk losing touch with the very people God intended to be their home mission field, those across the street and down the block.

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<sup>14</sup>Anderson, Dying For Change, 17.

### The Reality that People Will Continue to Come Only to a "Full Service" Church

Certainly the term "Full Service" bears some explanation. The manner in which Anderson expresses this concept can scarcely be improved upon:

What goes for cars, doctors, tires, and schools also goes for churches. Americans go where they think they can get the best deal, or where they think their needs will be met, regardless of previous affiliations.

This means that a few weeks of poor sermons, weak music, or a dirty nursery may prompt present members to start looking elsewhere. Guaranteed constituencies are rapidly becoming a thing of the past.<sup>15</sup>

More and more Americans are opting for "full service churches" that offer quality and variety in music, extensive youth programs, diverse educational opportunities, a counseling staff, support groups, singles' ministry, athletic activities, multiple Sunday morning services, a modern nursery, and the other services and programs only available in larger churches.<sup>16</sup>

The question church leaders must ask themselves is, "Are we offering to our constituency the services that they want and that they need?"

### The Reality that Today's Christian Responds to "Felt Needs"

Believers who were born before or during World War II generally based their Christian life and practice upon one basic principle: commitment. That is not to say that this commitment was necessarily to Jesus Christ. In many cases it was, but as often as not

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<sup>15</sup>Anderson, Dying For Change, 49.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 51.

that commitment may have been to a particular church and its program. If the church doors were open, they were present: Sunday School, morning worship, Sunday evening training hour, Sunday evening service, Prayer Meeting, choir practice, youth meetings, adult fellowships, banquets, evangelistic meetings, Bible conferences, missionary conferences, ladies' and men's meetings, and any other reason to meet the church could conjure up.

Believers born after World War II generally have a radically different basic principle upon which they operate: felt needs. That is, if the particular ministry or program the church offers is sensed by them to meet a real need in their lives or of others in their family, they will attend and participate with eagerness. If not, they will not participate or even attend. And if the program or ministry they now support ceases to meet a felt need, they will quit that, too.

The reality of this principle explains the phenomena of decreasing attendance and participation in Sunday evening services and Prayer Meetings - Post-World War II Christians do not feel that legitimate spiritual needs are being addressed there. As the church continues its program "as is" apart from consideration for the felt needs of its constituency, more and more Christians will drift away to another church where they believe those needs will be met.

Though church leaders could wish that today's Christian did not operate on the basis of felt needs, wishing does not change the facts. The fact is, they do, and they will ever more increasingly as time passes. Wishing that something were not so, ignoring it or refusing to respond to realities, are all exceedingly dangerous, though the temptation may be to do just that. Barna responds to that mindset:

There has been increasing talk in pastoral circles about the dangers of "pandering to people's felt needs." The fear is that by paying attention to what people feel they need, we will remove our focus from the essence of the gospel and begin to compromise the message of Christ.

These healthy and growing churches proved that this need not be the case. They did not view a needs-oriented ministry as a marketing gimmick, but as a method of assuring effective ministry. Several of the pastors had learned from prior experience that without a felt needs approach, creating spiritual growth in the membership was often extremely slow, if not impossible. Instead, they saw a needs-based outreach as a way of plowing the fertile fields. Knowing what was on people's minds, and applying the truth of Scripture, guaranteed that they would have an attentive audience.<sup>17</sup>

#### The Reality of the Necessity of a "Market-Driven" Strategy

This reality is closely related to that of the felt needs concerns of today's Christian, except it is aimed more at an effective response by the church to meet those perceived needs.

Though it has been stated before, the point needs to be driven home by reiteration: people will no longer attend a certain church simply because it hangs out a shingle stating the weekly slate of services. Much more must be offered. Again, Anderson addresses this issue:

Religion that assumes people will come and conform no longer works. That is the approach of a monopoly, such as some denominations once held in certain areas. There are few monopolies today. Choices abound. And the church that fails to be sensitive to the needs and desires of existing and potential "customers" will not get a hearing for its message.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Barna, User Friendly Churches, 107.

<sup>18</sup>Anderson, Dying For Change, 132.

Anderson goes on to say: "Any structure can be consumer-responsive and any structure can be unresponsive. The important thing is that the ethic of the system operate in a way that listens, responds, affirms, explains, and lets the people know they are heard."<sup>19</sup>

Barna maintains that if the church sees itself as being here for the purpose of meeting the needs of people, it will indeed be market driven. Therefore, the church must establish its plans, strategies, ministries and programs based on recent and accurate information.

For now, think of marketing as the activities that allow you, as a church, to identify and understand people's needs, to identify your resources and capabilities, and to engage in a course of action that will enable you to use your resources and capabilities to satisfy the needs of the people to whom you wish to minister. Marketing is the process by which you seek to apply your product to the desires of the target population.<sup>20</sup>

The American Institute Of Church Growth is an organization involved in assisting churches to become more successful in targeting the potential markets to which they can minister in their communities. Table 6 is a chart they have developed which spells out six strategic steps a church needs to follow to achieve that objective. The six steps are simple, logical and clear enough for any church to follow. Following a procedure such as this will bring into focus many realities about a church's ministry community which previously may have been very fuzzy. Clarity of vision will produce wise decision-making.

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 132.

<sup>20</sup>Barna, Marketing The Church, 23.

YOUR CHURCH AND THE LOCAL MARKETPLACE

DEFINING THE MINISTRY COMMUNITY	
1. DEFINE MINISTRY AREA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plot membership on map</li> <li>• Determine distances you can expect people to travel.</li> <li>• Fix a geographical area using this travel distance.</li> </ul>
2. DESCRIBE POTENTIAL MINISTRY PEOPLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the distinctive groups in the ministry area.</li> <li>• Describe each of these in detail.</li> </ul>
3. UNDERSTAND YOUR CHURCH PROFILE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider attitudes of members, age and education, interest of members, building facilities, philosophy of ministry, financial resources, gift-mix, leadership profile.</li> <li>• Identify friends and relatives of members not presently in the church.</li> </ul>
4. SELECT TARGET COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize the people groups who will best fit into your church.</li> </ul>
5. PRIORITIZE THE TARGET COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify available resources within the church and allocate them to the most potentially productive areas.</li> </ul>
6. DEVELOP SPECIFIC STRATEGIES FOR REACHING EACH COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use gifts, strengths, special interests of lay members.</li> <li>• Identify needs the church can effectively meet.</li> </ul>

Table 6. --Six steps for targeting potential market. Source: Bruce W. Jones, Ministerial Leadership In A Managerial World (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1988), 189.

To Get People Excited About Ministry by Discovering and Utilizing Their Spiritual Gifts

Nothing will more speedily and effectively eliminate the "spectator mentality" of a congregation than for them to discover that God desires to use each of them for ministry and has sufficiently equipped each one to do so. According to Barna, the principle of servanthood needs to be re-established:

The key to establishing this available pool of laborers was the church's ability to help people realize the practical meaning of the New Testament teaching about servanthood and the



responsibilities we have as the followers of Christ. These churches took great pains to lead people to understand that ministry is a give and take proposition.

To be a servant of Christ means getting in the trenches of ministry and doing what needs to be done for God's Kingdom - using the gifts He has given us. To be a part of the church means accepting the responsibility to be a minister on behalf of the church<sup>21</sup>

The key to involving people in ministry is not simply plugging warm bodies into vacant positions, but finding people who are fitted for a particular ministry and using them there. Towns speaks to this need:

I believe one of the key ingredients to building an effective growing church is spiritual gifts. The key phrase is "using people where they are usable." If every Christian were involved according to his spiritual gifts, he would be used in ministering where he is most usable. I find that growing churches cannot be disassociated from growing Christians. Therefore, when a person has found his gifts, knows the significance of his gifts and properly exercises his gifts, he will grow. As he grows (internal growth) then his church will grow (external growth).<sup>22</sup>

So it is vital for local church leaders, not only to re-establish the principle of servanthood, but also to continually articulate and affirm the need to minister in the areas where one is spiritually gifted.

Wagner defines a spiritual gift as "a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ according to God's grace within the context of the Body."<sup>23</sup> In another context,

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<sup>21</sup>Barna, User Friendly Churches, 162-163.

<sup>22</sup>Larry Gilbert, Team Ministry (Lynchburg, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1987), forward.

<sup>23</sup>Wagner, Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow, 42.

Wagner adds this comment: "The key function of the pastor, then, is not that he evangelize, but that he lead his people into discovering, developing and using their God-given spiritual gifts."<sup>24</sup>

If a church is indeed to grow, the people of that church must be aware of what God has called and gifted each one of them to do. The church must see its members as ministers, recognize that each of those "ministers" has a special area of ministry, help them to identify that ministry and then provide them every opportunity to carry out that ministry within the framework of the local body. Barna spells out the church's responsibility here in this way:

- (1) identify those talents and gifts;
- (2) refine those gifts;
- (3) provide opportunities for the individual to utilize those gifts in significant ministry; and
- (4) support the individual in that ministry.<sup>25</sup>

What a difference it will make in the church when its members are serving rather than sitting and soaking and souring, ministering rather than waiting to be ministered to! Barna describes that difference:

By employing volunteers in the areas in which they are gifted, the probability of burnout, disenchantment with the church, disappointment with either the role they are asked to play or with the outcome of their own performance, is minimized. What tended to happen was that those involved in the ministry in areas of their own giftedness actually enjoyed what they did, and gained a sense of fulfillment from their involvement. Consequently, they were much happier about

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<sup>24</sup>Wagner, Your Church Can Grow, 81.

<sup>25</sup>Barna, User Friendly Churches, 163.

their church and their relationship with it.<sup>26</sup>

There is one word to describe a church like that: EXCITING! It is exciting alike to droopy old-timers, to peppy younger Christians and to the newcomers. All of these will sense and respond to that charged atmosphere when they set foot within the door of the church building. Stedman explains that excitement:

To become aware that God Himself has equipped you - YES, YOU - with a uniquely defined pattern of spiritual gifts and has placed you exactly where he wants you in order to minister those gifts, is to enter a whole new dimension of exciting possibility. In all the world there is no experience more satisfying and fulfilling than to realize that you have been the instrument of divine working in others. Such an experience awaits any true Christian who is willing to give time and thought to the discovery and understanding of his pattern of gifts, and will submit himself to the Head of the body, who reserves to himself the right to coordinate and direct its activities.<sup>27</sup>

An *exciting* church is an *excited* church and an *excited* church is one that is poised for growth.

The New Testament lists the spiritual gifts in four passages: Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and I Peter 4. Since it is not the purpose of this paper to deal exhaustively with the issue of spiritual gifts, suffice it to say that Table 7 lists the spiritual gifts by category, and that the category of the manifestational gifts are considered by this author to be no longer significant to the ongoing ministries of the local church.

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 163.

<sup>27</sup>Stedman, Body Life, 53-54.

<u>MOTIVATIONAL</u>	<u>MINISTERING</u>	<u>MANIFESTATIONAL</u>
Apostleship	Ministration(helps)	Miracles
Prophecy	Giving/Hospitality	Healing
Evangelism	Ruling (Gov't.)	Tongues
Pastoring	Showing Mercy	Interpretation
Teaching	Faith	
Exhortation	Discernment	
Word Of Wisdom		
Word Of Knowledge		

Table 7. --Listing of the New Testament spiritual gifts

From the two categories of the motivational gifts and the ministering gifts God graciously and sovereignly bestows upon His children the wonderful privilege of using divine abilities to serve Him. It must be noted that spiritual gifts are not the same thing as the fruit of the Spirit. In Table 8 Gilbert provides a helpful chart of contrast between the two.

<b>Gifts of the Spirit</b>	<b>Fruit of the Spirit</b>
*Related primarily to the collective body of believers	*Related primarily to the individual believers in the body
*Related to ministry	*Related to character
*May be classified as to order of importance	*All are essential
*May be exercised in such a manner as to offend others and cause discord and division to the body	*Can never be misused
*No single believer receives all the gifts	*Every believer may bear all the fruits all the time
*No gift can be demanded of all believers	*All of us can be commanded to manifest the fruits

Table 8. --Spiritual gifts contrasted with fruit of the Spirit  
Source: Larry Gilbert, Team Ministry (Lynchburg, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1987), 26.

Neither are spiritual gifts natural talents with which one is born, although God can certainly sanctify and use such talents, and frequently does. A spiritual gift is sovereignly given to the new convert at the time of salvation. God intends for that gift to be discovered, developed and dedicated to service for Him.

It is this author's contention that each Bible-believing church is a local manifestation of the Body of Christ. As such, the various members are variously gifted by the Holy Spirit to form an efficiently functioning, comprehensive whole, able to minister effectively as a unit according to God's purposes.

What a glorious sight to behold a church that comprehends this truth and operates accordingly! MacArthur agrees:

So that all believers may minister to each other, the Spirit has apportioned gifts in beautiful balance. If a Christian does not use his gift, the Body is cheated, but as all believers are being ministered to and are ministering their gifts, they all are maturing and enjoying a full complement of gifts.<sup>28</sup>

In a recent Sunday School class containing twelve adults, the author polled them to determine the variety of spiritual gifts present. The results revealed a well-rounded variety that would have made a fine nucleus for a new church.

By means of another chart, Table 9, Gilbert shows how the spiritual gifts operating through the members of a local church work together, first to bring people to Christ, and then to lead them progressively onward in spiritual maturity.

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<sup>28</sup>MacArthur, Body Dynamics, 22.

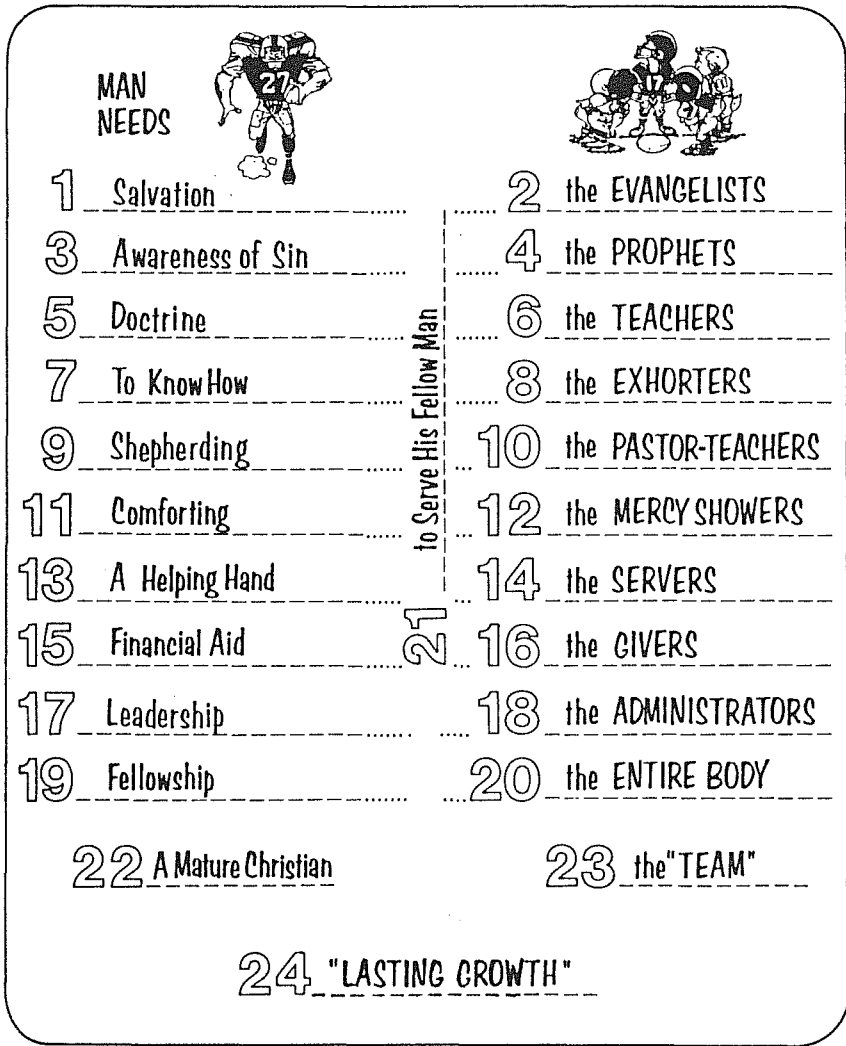


Table 9. -- How the spiritual gifts work together  
 Source: Larry Gilbert, Team Ministry (Lynchburg, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1987), 133.

Many of the problems related to non-growth in churches can be attributed to this one problem: people need to become aware of and use their spiritual gifts to become effective servants for God in the church. Gilbert concurs: "I suggest that many of these churches are having problems because they are not meeting the needs of the

people. That is where spiritual gifts come in - equipping the saints for service so that needs can be met in their people's lives."<sup>29</sup>

#### To Develop Church-Wide Involvement in One-On-One Ministry

Ours is the age of the spectator. Television has done much to augment the couch-potato mentality. We are a generation of watchers who are content to observe others perform and register our approval or disapproval by various means. This virus has also mortally infected churches. MacArthur expresses the problem clearly:

The local church essentially is a training place to equip Christians to carry out their own ministries. Unfortunately, for many Christians the church is a place to watch professionals perform and to pay the professionals to carry out the church program. In many quarters Christianity has deteriorated into professional "pulpitism" financed by lay spectators. The church hires a staff of ministers to do all the Christian service.

To limit the work of the ministry to a small, select class of full-time clergymen hinders the spiritual growth of God's people, stunts the discipleship process in the Body, and the evangelistic outreach of the church into the community.<sup>30</sup>

Churches must get their congregations involved in personal ministry and it is up to church leaders to bring it to pass. As a matter of fact, Adams suggests that this is the main task of spiritual leadership: "The fundamental principle to note is that biblical leadership has in view the *challenging and equipping of the whole flock for ministry*."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Gilbert, Team Ministry, 131.

<sup>30</sup>MacArthur, Body Dynamics, 94.

<sup>31</sup>Jay E. Adams, Pastoral Leadership (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975), 23.

The key is to create an atmosphere in the church where laity involved in one-on-one ministry are recognized, publicly lauded and encouraged to continue. Churches should make it easy and even desirable for people to become personally involved in the work of the Kingdom. Bart Campolo speaks poignantly to this issue:

Personal discipleship is the way of Christ. I suppose there is a place for television evangelism and video Bible studies, and I enjoy Christian concerts and festivals a great deal, but those are not the ways Jesus made His disciples. Disciples are made through an intentional relationship with a mature Christian - someone who celebrates our victories and points out our areas of weakness - someone who sometimes gives us the answers and at other times makes us ask the questions - someone who prays for us and with us - and someone who ultimately refuses to let us slip away from God without a fight. All of those other things that make up the Christian subculture are fine, so long as buildings, programs, and paraphernalia don't get in the way or become so important to us that we fail to establish the kinds of personal relationships that bring about true Christian growth. What's the use of all our churches, choirs, evangelistic outreaches, books of theology, and everything else if we are only making believers - and not disciples - out of all men and women?<sup>32</sup>

Campolo demonstrates the absolute necessity of personal relationships: "We can't simply offer people the Gospel and expect them to survive unless we also offer them relationships with mature Christians who will help them grow. That really is the way of Christ, and it must be our way as well."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Bart Campolo and Tony Campolo, Things We Wish We Had Said (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1989), 109.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 110.



## To Establish a Genuine Sense of Worship

Many of today's so-called worship services are anything but. It is not real worship to hurry disjointedly through what is called "the preliminaries" in order to get to the preaching. It is not real worship to break the Spirit's flow in the service with a fifteen minute commercial called the announcements. It is not real worship to swallow goldfish, cut off the Sunday School superintendent's necktie or preach from atop the church roof. It is not real worship to end the service with twenty verses of "Just As I Am" in order to pad the statistics by forcing someone to walk the aisle.

Genuine worship is in large part a lost art. Worship is a balance between liturgy and anarchy, between no fire and wild fire. In many churches, the only life ever seen is when people awake to leave after the sermon. Yet others are strapped into an emotional roller coaster the moment they set foot in the building in order to simulate life.

Hayford defines worship this way: "Worship includes the joyful praise of God, the serious listening to His Word, and the obedient response to His will, but not necessarily in that order."<sup>34</sup>

Worship is a joyful recognition of the presence of almighty God, of one's absolute obeisance to Him, of reverence and love for Him, and the expressing of these truths by heartfelt attitudes, acts and words. Worship demands the active involvement of the one worshipping. As Stevenson declares: "Worship is a verb. . . a

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<sup>34</sup>Jack Hayford, John Killinger and Howard Stevenson, Mastering Worship (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1990), 63.

response to God, and it requires active participation."<sup>35</sup>

### To Magnify the Life of Prayer

As with worship, prayer has also become a lost art in the late twentieth century. People are in too much of a hurry and claim they do not have time. The latest polls record that the average evangelical layperson spends an average of three minutes a day in prayer and the average evangelical pastor seven minutes. Those statistics are not only shameful, they are inexcusable!

Any and all steps taken to revitalize church ministry are futile if not bathed constantly in believing, fervent prayer. Such an emphasis on prayer must start at the top in the church if the congregation is to appreciate its necessity and eternal value.

Once again, hear the words of Barna: "You cannot expect to have a congregation that takes prayer seriously if the leaders of the church do not commit their lives to a relationship with God that is built upon a significant prayer life."<sup>36</sup>

And so this chapter is concluded with the reminder that prioritizing the objectives is the church deciding what is important and what is not. It is hoped that many of the matters touched upon will help the reader think more clearly through many of these issues.

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 105.

<sup>36</sup>Barna, User Friendly Churches, 121.

## CHAPTER 4

### "WHERE DO WE BEGIN?" - PREPARING THE CONGREGATION FOR MINISTRY

It may be that the title of this chapter is after the fact, for if the concepts propagated in the first three chapters have been implemented, revitalization has actually already begun.

The purpose of this chapter is to ascertain that both the church leadership and the congregation at large are prepared for a massive overhaul, from top to bottom, both inside and out. The place to start is with the church leadership.

#### A Prepared Leadership

It is easy to get a title, but it is difficult to become a genuine leader. One does not necessarily become a leader simply because of a position held. Many who are in places of authority are not real leaders and others show great leadership ability who never become more than foot soldiers.

Sanders says: "Leadership is influence, the ability of one person to influence others. One man can lead others only to the extent that he can influence them."<sup>1</sup>

Every organization has both its officially elected or appointed leaders and its unofficial moral leaders who often hold no recognized position. These in the second category lead by influence. That

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<sup>1</sup>J. Oswald Sanders, Spiritual Leadership (Chicago: Moody Press, 1976), 19.

official leader is wise who musters the support of the church's unofficial moral leaders before embarking on ambitious projects.

Concerning pastoral leadership, Hull says it "is helping people do what they don't want to do so they can become what God wants them to be."<sup>2</sup> It is important to the church revitalization process that church leadership be properly prepared for it. It will help to bring that preparedness to pass by coming to grips with several realities.

#### A Prepared Church Leadership Will Understand Its Tasks

What is it that church leadership must prepare itself for, must see as its God-given responsibility, if it is to move the church genuinely toward revitalization? In other words, what are the tasks of viable church leadership?

#### The Task of Envisioning a God-given Dream for the Future

If a church leader has eyes for only the present state of affairs, he might as well quit. The present condition of most churches is usually of such a nature that the most optimistic would despair.

The church leader should see not only what is, but also what should be and what can be by God's grace. What is valid for leaders to consider is not the *present* condition but the *potential* condition. Jones says: "The church has always profited and prospered with pastors and leaders who had visions and dreams."<sup>3</sup>

A leader is one who stares out the window and has dreams, dreams that God can bring true by using the willing members of the

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<sup>2</sup>Bill Hull, The Disciple Making Pastor, 165.

<sup>3</sup>Bruce W. Jones, Ministerial Leadership In A Managerial World, 218.

local body to bring to pass. Eims says concerning a leader that he "has been described as a person who sees more than others see, who sees farther than others see, and who sees before others do."<sup>4</sup>

The successful pastor will always have one eye optimistically on tomorrow while grappling with the difficult realities of today.

### The Task of Translating Those Dreams Into Palatable Realities

Visionaries are called by God to "Dream The Impossible Dream." With all due respect to Robert Schuller, they are "possibility thinkers" in the biblical sense ; they believe that God can still do something supernatural if He just has those yielded to Him who are willing to be His channels.

Such visionaries frequently do not have a clue as to how God is going to bring those grand dreams to pass. Usually, God will raise up others from the congregation to be the "nuts and bolts" people. Their task is to make the dreams work. But one responsibility the visionary-leader does have - he must communicate his dream to the rest in such a way that they not only understand it, but that they also get enthusiastically excited about it.

It has been well said that the one who leads with nobody following is just taking a walk. A visionary must gain a following for his dream else it will die there in his own heart. The dream must be communicated. Hull insists: "A clearly understood objective produces sustained conviction. Leaders must clearly communicate the objective."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Leroy Eims, Be The Leader You Were Meant To Be, 55.

<sup>5</sup>Bill Hull, The Disciple Making Pastor, 112.

Experience is a great teacher and one of its repeated lessons is that church people do not make change easily or rapidly. The wise visionary-leader will not drop his dream like a bomb upon his congregation, but will introduce it little by little so that over a period of time his people may believe they have thought it up themselves. How much more palatable change becomes when we initiate it ourselves rather than having it forced upon us from without!

Schmitt agrees: "Planning cannot be introduced into an organization that is not ready to accept it. An all at once introduction of a comprehensive planning process is almost inevitably doomed."<sup>6</sup>

Table 10 is a model assembled by Arn and McGavran that could be helpful to those leaders interested in moving their church through the process of change. Note that the left hand column spells out the process while the right hand column illustrates how to use this process to initiate church growth.

The key to making such change palatable is to work with people rather than against them, to determine where they are and begin there making modest overtures toward the desired change.

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<sup>6</sup>Frank J. Schmitt, "A Practical Introduction To Church Administration," 24.

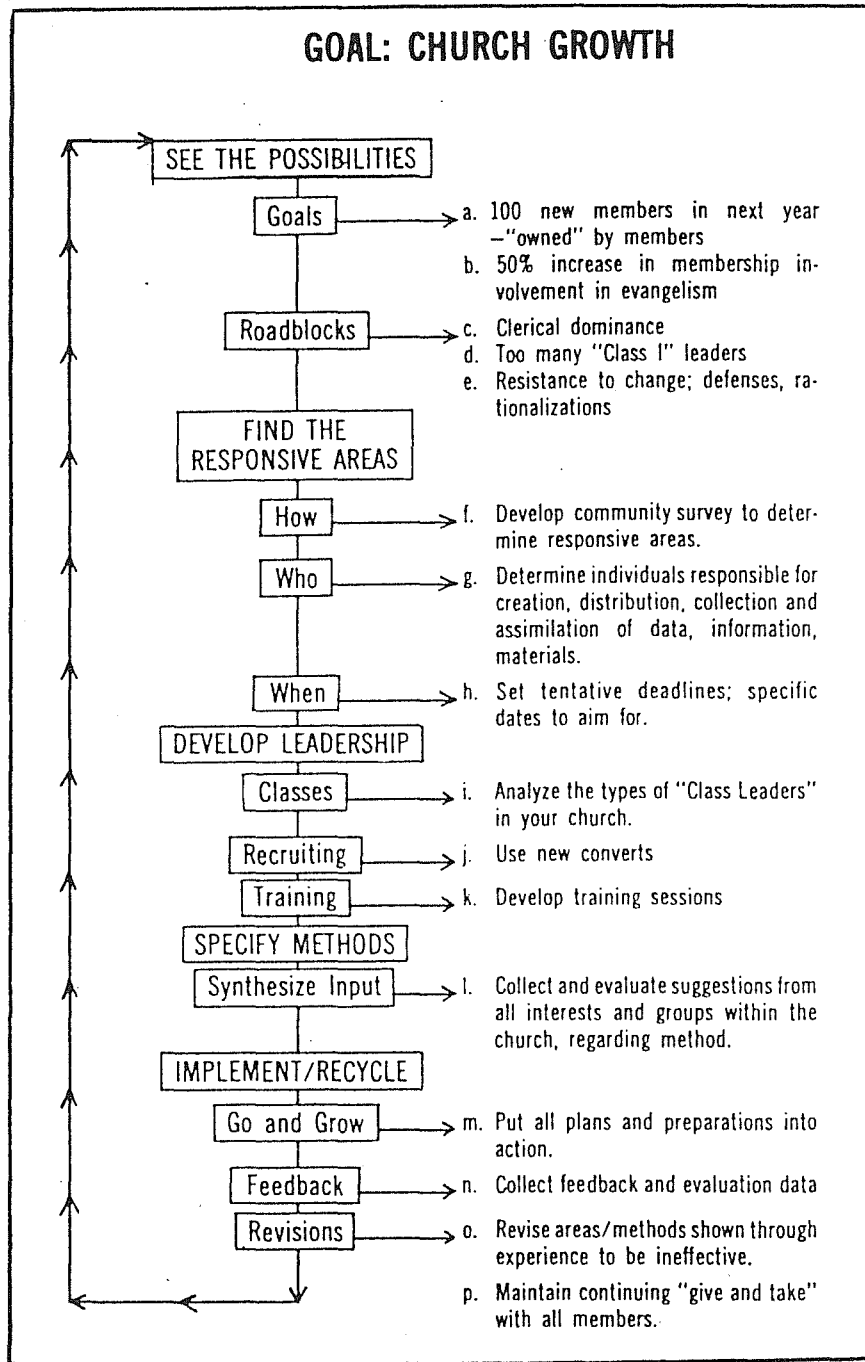


Table 10. -- Process to initiate change  
 Source: Win Arn and Donald McGavran,  
How To Grow A Church (Ventura, CA:  
 Regal Books, 1973), 176.

## The Task of Determining What the Church Assets Really Are - People

Only a twisted sense of values causes one to consider the greatest church assets to be the property, the physical plant, the bank account or even the program. Certainly, these are all vital, but the key assets to any church are the people there who are willing and able to serve their Savior and Lord.

Johnson maintains that church leaders must learn this truth early: "One of the lessons for church leaders is that their most important asset is not money. The people in the church, especially those who work through it, are its greatest asset. When such persons are encouraged to experience ministry through their volunteer activity, the impossible can be done."<sup>7</sup>

There exists in every church a large untapped work force just waiting to be used if they were just given the proper motivation and direction. Schaller's words are an encouraging reminder:

In the typical congregation between 30 to 65 per cent of the members are willing to serve as workers and leaders in the congregation if they know they are needed, if they are challenged with responsibility that matches their interests and abilities, if they are given meaningful assignments, and if they know their efforts are appreciated.<sup>8</sup>

How important it is, then, that church leaders become "people persons" who recognize that the strength of the church is the people themselves and who give themselves to building up and preparing for ministry these human assets.

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<sup>7</sup>Douglas W. Johnson, The Care And Feeding Of Volunteers (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978), 82.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., foreward.



## The Task of Equipping the Congregation for Effective Ministry

With tongue in cheek this verse is taken completely out of context here, but it does describe the situation of many Christians who are sitting on their hands in Bible-believing churches all across the land: ". . . for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Romans 7:18).

Many more people in the local church would become actively involved in ministry if someone would just show them how! This need is desperate. The pastor sets the tone here as Perry and Shawchuck remind us: "The pastor's role in all of this is absolutely vital and foundational. That role is to identify, recruit, train, and equip the laity to do the work God is calling them to do."<sup>9</sup>

A large part of the task of equipping the congregation for ministry is matching people up with ministries that "fit" them. Edward T. Hiscox is one of the church fathers whose book, The New Directory For Baptist Churches, has been used as a "how to" manual by Baptists for almost a century. He explains the need for church leadership to enable people to find their ministry niche:

The responsibility of a Church is both corporate and personal. As a *body* it is bound to make its influence felt far and near. But the body is what the individual units which compose it make it to be. Each member, therefore, should strive to be and to do what the entire Church ought to be and to do, "the light of the world and the salt of the earth," "a city set on a hill, that cannot be hid." There is work for all, and work adapted to the condition and ability and capacity of each, however weak and humble. Old and young, great and small, male and female, have something to do, and something that

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<sup>9</sup>Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 61.

each can do - if there be a heart to do it. The efficiency and usefulness of a Church depend upon each member's filling his own place, and doing his own work, so as neither to attempt the work of others, nor yet to stand idly by while others serve. In nothing, perhaps, are the wisdom and skill of the pastor and officers more apparent than in finding work for all, and giving something fit and adapted for each to do.<sup>10</sup>

### The Task of Turning People Loose to Do Ministry

Frequently, church leadership has the faulty attitude that only the pastoral staff or other official leadership should be allowed to do ministry. Somewhere they have picked up a fear of entrusting the members of the body to do what they have been called of God to do and gifted by the Holy Spirit to do.

Barna warns of the danger of not only refusing to use people, but also of forcing them into a lock-step program of ministry:

Successful churches also recognized the risk of limiting an individual's vision for personal ministry by the description of the church's corporate vision. Church leaders were careful not to undermine the perceived ministry of an individual when it was different from the focus of the church at large. Individuals were encouraged to fulfill the vision for ministry that God had given to them, and to seek creative ways in which that outreach might be done in cooperation with what the church was doing.<sup>11</sup>

Frank Tillapaugh says it all in his book title, Unleashing The Church. Perry and Shawchuck's reminder is also pertinent:

People develop best when they are deliberately given situations in which they can make their own choices, where

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<sup>10</sup>E.T. Hiscox, The New Directory For Baptist Churches (Chicago: Judson Press, 31st ed., 1962), 253.

<sup>11</sup>Barna, User Friendly Churches, 91.

they understand the context, and where their ideas contribute to results. They appreciate being permitted to experiment and share ideas without being subject to judgment. Mistakes need not be used as invitations to censure, punish, or judge.<sup>12</sup>

God's work done God's way by all of God's people will certainly know God's hand of blessing.

### The Task of Discovering and Developing New Leadership From Within the Congregation

The pastor has a very important role to play in preparing the church for revitalization, but that role is not at all what many of them think it to be. Many pastors have the Messiah Syndrome, that is, they see themselves as the indispensable savior without whose wisdom and expertise the church is doomed to fail. They view themselves as the Super Star among a lesser cast of rank amateurs.

Such a viewpoint is not only dead-wrong biblically and spiritually, it also puts the church on the fastest road to disaster it could possibly follow. Repeatedly, the Scriptures and Jesus Himself reminded His disciples they would accomplish the greatest spiritual good when they saw themselves exactly as He saw Himself, servant of all (John 13:1-16 and Matthew 20:26-28).

Sanders says it well: "True greatness, true leadership, is achieved not by reducing men to one's service, but in giving oneself in selfless service to them. And this is never done without cost."<sup>13</sup>

In other words, the pastor's role is not so much that of a star performer as that of a stage manager who directs the roles of the laymen as they carry out the great drama that God has planned for

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<sup>12</sup>Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 99.

<sup>13</sup>Sanders, Spiritual Leadership, 13.

their church. The stage manager may well discover previously hidden talent in others and in the process of assisting them in developing and using that talent, bring them to public attention and approbation.

Rush words it thusly: "We must develop leaders who know not only how to recruit and lead people but also how to turn followers into leaders."<sup>14</sup> In Table 11 Rush demonstrates the five steps necessary to develop new leadership from the congregation.

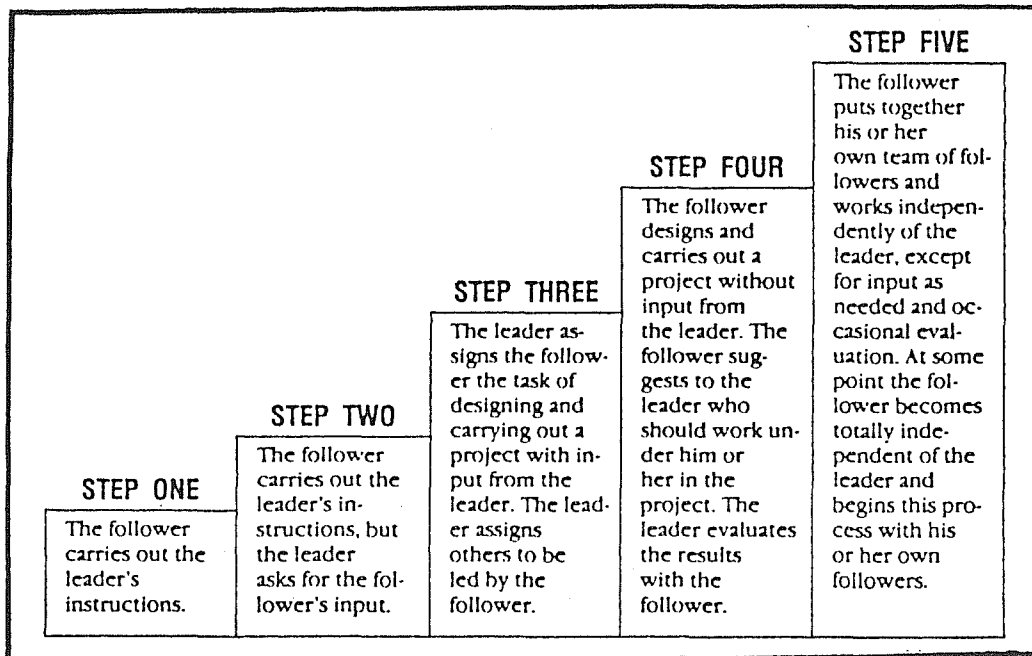


Table 11. -- Steps to developing leadership  
 Source: Myron Rush, The New Leader (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books/SP Publications, 1987), 134.

<sup>14</sup>Myron Rush, The New Leader (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books/SP Publications, 1987), 16.

Only as those in the church with leadership potential are discovered and developed can the continuity of effective leadership in that church be assured. Hull describes just how important this is:

The most effective way to abort the future of eager believers is to inspire them without training them. Tell them they are priests of God, gifted ministers of the gospel, then don't show them how to make it happen. Satan has honed this into one of his best weapons for brutalizing Christians.<sup>15</sup>

#### A Prepared Church Leadership Will Understand the Principle of Shared Leadership

This truth is somewhat related to the one previously discussed except the issue now is not developing lay leadership from within the congregation, but sharing both pastoral duties and the limelight with other professional staff the church sees fit to call.

If, as in the normal course of things it should, that organism known as the local church continues to grow the time will come when one pastor will not be sufficient to handle the responsibilities. Then it will be important for that one who had been previously known as "pastor" to make the transition to "senior pastor" as other staff members are being added.

Though each church must decide for itself under the direction of the Holy Spirit when a new staff member is needed, Jones provides a ball-park figure: "The current consensus is that there should be one staff member per 150-200 people being ministered to."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Hull, The Disciple Making Pastor, 131-132.

<sup>16</sup>Jones, Ministerial Leadership In A Managerial World, 163.

The question the church must ask is, "When is it necessary to add members to our professional staff?" There are many variables, but tables 12 and 13 should prove helpful to any church considering additional staff.

SCHALLER'S TYPOLOGY ON SIZE AND STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS			
Organizational Characteristics	Small Church (1-100)/10 Million Attend (33%)	Middle-Sized Church (100-200)/9 Million Attend (30%)	Large Church (200+)/11 Million Attend (37%)
1. Government	Participatory democracy	Should become a representative democracy	Becomes a representative democracy
2. Decision Making	Power center in key families (family or clan)	Power center in key individuals (tribe: multiple families)	Power center in key positions and/or staff (nation)
3. Court of Appeal	Congregational meeting	Congregation and/or the governing board	Governing board
4. Change	Leading families or members	From minister through members, or from them	From pastoral staff or through them
5. Leadership	Responds	Interacts	Leads
6. Pastoral Role	Enabler	Team player	Leader coach
7. Pastoral-power	Little influence	Some influence	More influence
8. Lay Leadership	Some opinion maker and general overseer of the congregation	Too small for lay leaders to concede that the minister is in charge but too large to be lay controlled	In very large churches the minister assumes the role of the leader most in charge
9. Self-Image	Primary group: one big happy family	Like small church: big family but poor self-image	Corporation: many group structures
10. Focus of attention	People	Problems	Potential

Table 12. -- Typology on size and structural characteristics

Source: Bruce W. Jones, Ministerial Leadership In A Managerial World (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1988), 152.

NUMBER	WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	SIZE	LEADERSHIP	COMMON CHARACTERISTICS
25%	40	mini-sized	lay leaders	overgrown small group
25%	50-100	small-sized	shared leadership	comfortable relationships
25%	100-175	middle-sized	pastor-shepherd	optimum size of cost effectiveness
10%	175-225	awkward-sized	multiple staff	self-image of "big" family
4%	225-450	large-sized	multiple staff	need change in decision-making process
1%	700 plus	super-sized	strong pastor	corporate structures

Table 13. -- Common characteristics of various size churches  
Source: Bruce W. Jones, Ministerial Leadership In A Managerial World (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1988), 138.

### A Prepared Leadership Will Understand the Causes of Failure

It is imperative for us to understand at the outset that sometimes God intends for us to fail. Failure is used by Him in His enigmatic work of character and saint building. Scriptural examples abound.

Moses failed as leader of the Israelites at age forty only to be developed by God into a far more effective leader at age eighty. Abraham fled into the south away from the land of promise to learn some terribly hard-earned lessons there that made him a much more useful servant when he finally returned. Joseph was afflicted with desolation and destitution before being elevated to the top. God uses failures to produce winners.

Having taken notice of this truth, however, it is also obvious that frequently leaders bring certain failure upon themselves needlessly. The following are a common list of causes for failure that if understood and forewarned could be prepared for or avoided.

### The Inability or Unwillingness to Deal With Obstacles

Life is a constant series of greater or lesser crises that must be faced and dealt with if that life is to be handled successfully. Since ministry is a part of life, it follows that ministry also will be full of crises.

Call them what you will: crises, problems or obstacles, the fact is they litter the highway down which God calls His children to walk. The successful leader is not the one who sees all of the obstacles nor the one who ignores the obstacles, but the one who can see over the obstacles to the coveted goal on the other side. To such a leader people will flock. Eims says: "There are those who think that the ability to see obstacles is a mark of maturity and insight. Really, this is the easiest thing to see. God wants men who see the way over the difficulty and give encouragement to the people."<sup>17</sup>

The supposed inability to deal with problems is a falsehood because the child of God can face any crisis through the power of the indwelling Christ (Philippians 4:13). The unwillingness to face obstacles is simply a temporary reprieve, for they will have to be faced eventually and usually in a far more fierce form.

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<sup>17</sup>Eims, Be The Leader You Were Meant To Be, 89.



## The Failure to Properly Carry Out Effective Administration

Evidence seems to show that more pastors fail in this area of their responsibilities than anywhere else. Some do not recognize it as a legitimate part of their calling and thus ignore it or refuse to hone the necessary skills.

But God does give administrative responsibility to every pastor in his role as the episcopos, the bishop of the local church. The word bishop means one who is the overseer of a working force. That definition reeks with administrative responsibility!

Perhaps some definitions here would be helpful. Wilson defines management as "working with and through people to accomplish organizational goals and purposes."<sup>18</sup> Wagner spells it out this way:

What is administration? Arthur Merrihew Adams defines it as "working with and through people to get things done." The idea is one of executive management. The executive head of the church is generally the pastor. Some do not prefer the word "executive," but this is precisely what the pastor is. However, if he is *only* the executive and administrator, both he and the church are in real danger.

The word "executive" comes from two Latin words: "Ex," meaning "out," and "sequi," which means to follow up to the end. Thus it is to carry out or to follow through to completion. The pastor as administrator or executive, therefore, works with and through people to get things done. He takes the proper leadership in following up each objective to the end that God might be glorified.

Administration, then, involves planning programs and seeing them through to the end. It involves the leading of the

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<sup>18</sup>Wilson, How To Mobilize Church Volunteers, 47.

church staff, the church officers, and various committees in the church, as well as the general membership.<sup>19</sup>

Administration is not an option for the pastor, it is a must. If he is spiritually gifted in that area so much the better. If he is not, he should work at developing his administrative ability to the highest level possible. Jones explains why: "A church may try to grow past its administrative limitations, but it will always drop back to the level of efficiency of the pastor, staff and lay leaders."<sup>20</sup>

#### A Prepared Church Leadership Will Recognize God's Time Parameters on Their Ministry

The perennial question for the pastor is whether to go or to remain. A pastor can leave too soon and miss the blessing of the full flowering of the ministry that God had intended for him. On the other hand, he can stay too long and thwart the work that God had intended to accomplish through another of His chosen vessels.

Sanders makes two cogent observations relative to a change in leadership: "No man, however gifted and devoted, is indispensable to the work of the Kingdom"<sup>21</sup>, and, "A work originated by God and conducted on spiritual principles will surmount the shock of a change in leadership and indeed will probably thrive better as a result."<sup>22</sup>

When all is said and done, when all the Scripture has been searched, all the fervent prayer has been uttered, all the circumstances carefully evaluated and all the advice sought from

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<sup>19</sup>Charles U. Wagner, The Pastor: His Life And Work (Schaumburg, IL: Regular Baptist Press, 1976), 91-92.

<sup>20</sup>Jones, Ministerial Leadership In A Managerial World, 157.

<sup>21</sup>Sanders, Spiritual Leadership, 133.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 132.

godly friends, in the final analysis down in the secret recesses of the heart must come that decision - "This is what I must do!" - And the peace of God will ratify the correctness of that decision.

### A Prepared Congregation

A church leadership which is prepared for ministry revitalization is ready to prepare the congregation itself for such revitalization. Unless that congregation *is* prepared any attempt at revitalization will miserably fail and may well result in a change in church leadership, at the church's behest!

The following areas of concern are those in which the church leadership must prepare the congregation if they are expected to take those beginning steps toward ministry revitalization.

#### Accepting the Reality of the Need for Renewal

Churches need to be taught that they are living organisms and as such must experience growth and change. They must be made to see that all living organisms are in a constant state of fluctuation.

When this concept is first introduced, people will normally react negatively, and that for two reasons: (1) Change is a fearsome thing, and (2) They have been taught that to change *anything* is a sign of liberalism and the first step in sliding away from biblical absolutes. They must be made to see the difference between maintaining theological orthodoxy while wisely adapting to change in their cultural methodology. Anderson explains:

The renewing church or para-church organization must be bound by the cause of Jesus Christ but open to new ideas and changing structures. Distinction must be made between moral absolutes and cultural relatives. Yesterday's answers are not always appropriate for today's questions. Change and challenge should not be threatening but recognized as part of the process. Leaders must keep calling the organization and its people back to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the standards of the Bible while challenging people to grow and innovate within the cultural boundaries. Fulfilling mission is always more important than perpetuating the traditions.<sup>23</sup>

God's people in the local church must be brought to see that a changing and culturally relative *methodology* can be completely consistent with a fixed and biblically sound *theology*. Since culture is constantly changing, renewal is not a one-time fix but an ongoing process of analysis, evaluation and appropriate change. With one eye on eternal, unchanging truth and the other on temporal, ever-changing society, the church that is flexible is in a vastly improved position to know success.

### Understand the High Cost of Change

Valuable results never come at bargain basement prices. If the church is going to make substantive change, it will cost dearly. In the following statement Anderson makes that fact abundantly clear:

Change seldom comes cheap. It has a price tag of time, money, and people.

. . . . When organizations implement changes, the costs are higher. Reshaping a church takes many hours of hard work, accompanied by the inevitable misunderstandings and emotional pain. Some members feel alienated and forced to leave. Longtime friendships may be severed. Hiring staff,

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<sup>23</sup>Anderson, Dying For Change, 136.

printing literature, adding programs, sending missionaries, aiding the poor, buying a van, or tearing down a building can cost thousands or even millions of dollars. It is not just a matter of where the money for change will come from, but where it will not go - because deciding to spend it in one area means it is not available for another.

. . . . Total costs can never be fully anticipated. Money is measurable and is therefore the easiest to estimate; but time and emotions and relationships are difficult to quantify.

. . . . I am suggesting that there be an up-front recognition that changes usually come with a high price tag. Preparation for paying the price is a valuable part of the process.<sup>24</sup>

So as the church prepares to enter the revitalization process, it must be made aware that the price will not come cheap.

#### Claiming Ownership of the Leadership's Dream

Church renewal begins in someone's mind and heart as a vision for the future. The congregation must buy into that dream and make it their own if the vision is to ever become a reality. Ownership produces both involvement and excitement. Barna describes the electric atmosphere in one church when that occurred:

Once the vision was articulated - through a letter sent to all parishioners, a sermon on the meaning of the vision for ministry, and a special series of midweek classes on the integration of the vision with the outreach activities of the church - people began to see that they could begin to enter an entirely new realm of spiritual endeavor and growth. Members became excited about the potential for the future. They began inviting friends to experience the renewed congregation, and serious outreach programs of all types began to flourish.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 172-173.

<sup>25</sup>Barna, User Friendly Churches, 93.

Renters have no investment; they don't care so they unconcernedly allow things to fall apart. Owners, on the other hand, have a vested interest, thus they will gladly expend a great deal of time and effort to maintain and improve upon their investment. The wise spiritual leader will move heaven and earth to bring the church members into ownership of his dream for the church's future.

### Learning the Principle of "People Before Programs"

When Americans face a problem or a need, they tend to work at it until they devise a system that proves successful and they stick with it. Churches do the same thing only they call their systems "programs."

Programs are devised by churches to respond to situations and to meet needs. Programs are important. They speak of organization and efficiency. But programs can, and often do, stand in the way of ministering to people rather than being of help.

The emphasis of Jesus is that to which we must return - people. Jesus performed ministry for people; He did not set up programs. Programs can so quickly become impersonal operations. We must at all costs get back to *ministry*, and that demands a return to "people first." Barna gives a list of pertinent questions that churches need to ask themselves to determine which comes first, people or programs:

1. If you were to list every program in your church, how many people can you identify whose lives were substantially influenced by each?
2. If your church were asked to close down every program which has not truly affected any lives in the last year, how many would you lose?

3. What would it do to your church to go on a program diet, losing those unnecessary programs that absorb precious resources?
4. How often are the programs in your church evaluated?
5. Who is responsible for their evaluations?
6. What is the basis for the evaluation?
7. What kind of impact do those programs have on lives (not how many people take part in the program)?
8. What is the balance of programs within your church between those focused on the needs of the congregation and those emphasizing the needs of people outside of the church?<sup>26</sup>

The church's emphasis should be upon ministry and real ministry focuses upon *people* not upon *programs*. Programs once begun tend to perpetuate themselves whether they minister to people or not and thus lose all real value. The church must look at people's needs, not with an eye to beginning a program, but with an eye to ministering to those needs. When people's needs are met ministry takes place. And that's why God left us here!

### Becoming Consistently Involved in Personal Ministry

The New Testament doctrine of the priesthood of the believer means, among other things, that *every* believer has a ministry and is expected by God to carry that ministry out. Ministry is not for the select few, but for the elect all!

Most churches that have ceased growing have lost that vision. Barna says: "In stagnant churches, the laity were more likely to be observers than participants. They perceived their role as being an audience in the stands, nodding approvingly as the clergy went through their paces in efforts to demonstrate religious behavior."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 47-48.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 84.

Hull explains why God is displeased with a Christianity that is a spectator sport:

The goal of the decentralization of ministry is the grand picture of Eph.4:16: every member doing his part, pulling together for the purpose of God. The picture also teaches that the people will be fulfilled, productive, and the body will grow and build itself. This is the most loving thing a pastor can do for a church. Why does the pastor as minister and the congregation as spectators grieve God? Because the pastor burns out and the people rust out.<sup>28</sup>

If the biblical principle of all-church ministry is to be maintained, several corollary concepts must also be understood and implemented.

#### The Concept that Ministry Is Seven Days a Week

Programs are usually carried out within the church building, and frequently, only on Sunday. Ministry can be carried on anytime, anywhere and by any believer. There should be no dichotomy between Christian faith on Sunday and Christian walk Monday through Saturday. Consistent Christianity demands consistent ministry in whatever situation the believer has been placed by God regardless of the day of the week.

#### The Concept of Team Ministry

The New Testament teaches that the church is the Body of Christ and that each believer is a member in that Body having a particular and vital function that contributes to the well-being and

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<sup>28</sup>Hull, The Disciple Making Pastor, 186.



efficient operation of the whole. There are no vestigial organs in the Body of Christ!

This truth could also be illustrated by a football team. On the field at any given time are eleven players, each having a definite and important role. If the team is on offense, those players are a quarterback, halfbacks, fullback, center, guards, tackles and ends. None can claim that the role of any other is unimportant. The failure of any team member to perform adequately guarantees that the team as a whole will fail to live up to its potential. Only when each team member carries out his responsibilities correctly can the team as a whole become a winner.

Sadly, a church that functions in that manner is a rarity. Green observes: "The real potential of such a congregation where each member is a minister remains to be discovered."<sup>29</sup>

### The Concept of Ministry Creativeness

One of the major dangers for church leaders is to try to lock church members into historically acceptable patterns of ministry. In reality, ministry can be as varied as the imaginations of God's people will allow and as His Holy Spirit will empower. Leaders must not allow their superintendency to kill the creativity of those who follow. Wilson quotes an unknown author who addresses this issue:

As leaders we need to be more like gardeners than manufacturers - we need to grow instead of make people. When you want tomatoes, you plant tomato seeds, carefully

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<sup>29</sup>Green, Why Churches Die, 186.

choose the right soil and place and take care of them. We don't make tomatoes - we allow them to grow.<sup>30</sup>

### Building Relationships Outside of the Church

The old principle is still true: there is no impact without contact. It was not without reason that Jesus came to the farewell dinner for Matthew attended by those whom the Pharisees looked down their noses upon, publicans and sinners.

How can one be reached for Christ if all contact with that one apart from church is avoided? He or she cannot be so reached. God's people must be taught the need for building solid personal relationships with people outside of the church if they hope to gain a hearing for the gospel. True friendship always precedes trust and trust is vital when dealing with matters of the soul.

### Becoming Sensitive to Needs

Christians should have their spiritual antennae raised at all times in an effort to be sensitive to the needs of those around them. One who is sensitive to needs will never be without ministry because real ministry is based on legitimate needs. Hear Arn and McGavran: "A growing church, then, is a church sensitive to the needs of its own people, to the needs of the community, to the needs of the world, and endeavors to meet those needs on many different fronts."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Wilson, How To Mobilize Church Volunteers, 27.

<sup>31</sup>Arn and McGavran, How To Grow A Church, 107.

## Determining to Minister to Baby Boomers

Since the issue that is being addressed here involves an entire generation of people, the importance of intentionally planning to minister to them can scarcely be over-emphasized. If the baby boomer generation is not involved in the church, the church will die.

Anderson has as solid a grip on the realities of the baby boomers as any author. This section will be completed by quoting at length from his pertinent insights into this phenomenon.

### The Reality of the Existence of Baby Boomers

The following graph illustrates the fact that from the mid-nineteen forties to the mid-nineteen sixties there was a phenomenal increase in live births in America. This is the generation known as the baby boomers.

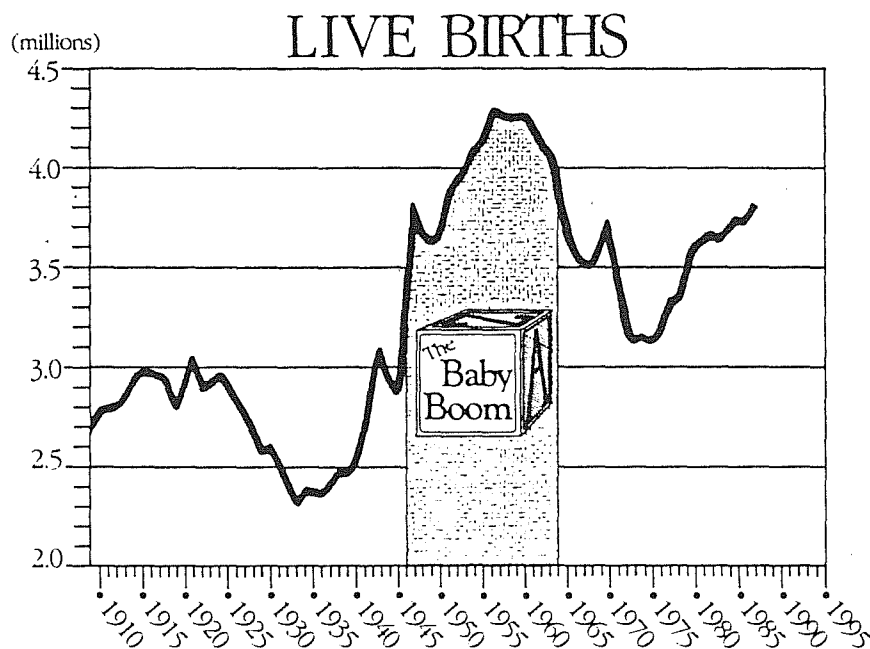


Table 14. -- Baby boomers, the pig in a python effect  
Source: Leith Anderson, Dying For Change (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1990), 79.

## The Characteristics of Baby Boomers

Low loyalty, high expectations, weaker relationships, tolerance for diversity, comfortable with change, different leadership style (participative, democratic, process oriented, attuned to needs, hands-on, media conscious, entrepreneurial), different motivating values (more attuned to experience vs. possessions, fun vs. duty, change vs. stability, candor vs. tact, professionalism vs. journeymanism).<sup>32</sup>

## Relating to Baby Boomers

The organization that wants to relate well to boomers will promote variety, treat everyone as a professional, value straight talk and truthfulness, encourage participation, minimize layers of management, and be sensitive to individual needs and relationships.<sup>33</sup>

Churches and Christian organizations will not effectively reach baby boomers with 1950 methods and programs. We must relate to boomers in terms of their distinctions and in response to their needs. Most won't just "show up" at a Sunday church service to hear the Gospel.<sup>34</sup>

Anderson quotes Schaller as maintaining that the following list is vital in adequately ministering to baby boomers:

1. Preaching - Meaningful content in the sermons, and the communication skills of the preacher.
2. Vital Worship - The carefully designed, fast-paced experience that touches people at a feeling level and evokes a sense of active involvement in worship, as contrasted to a spectator role.

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<sup>32</sup>Anderson, Dying For Change, Chapter 5, 75-99.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 94.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 95.

3. Teaching Ministry - Different from preaching, usually found in adult classes.
4. Strong Weekday Program.
5. Strong Ministry Of Music.
6. Transformational Leadership - The transformational leader is driven by a vision of a new tomorrow, wins supporters and followers for that vision, and transforms the congregation.
7. Change-Agent Skills - Blending the old and the new requires a high level of competence in planned change and intentionality in program planning.
8. Challenge The People - High expectations of the people.
9. Continuity Of Leadership - Long tenure for the pastor.
10. Changing The Priorities - Moving away from the one-to-one relationship with the pastor to relating to people in small groups.
11. Advertise!
12. Athletics.
13. Choices - Different services and multiple activities.
14. Parking - One off-street parking place for every two people attending the service with the highest attendance.
15. Facilities - Higher quality reflected in buildings built after 1949.
16. Attractive Programs For Young Adults - Rather than focusing on "singles."
17. Christian Day School.<sup>35</sup>

### Baby Boomers in Places of Leadership

As baby boomers move into the board rooms of business, they will also move into leadership positions within the church and religious organizations. Those that welcome them early will have a leading edge in reaching the vast number of other boomers. Those that are slow to open leadership to this generation will face constituency defection, internal revolution, or even institutional death. Baby boomers will become increasingly unwilling to take orders from pastors, elders, presidents, and boards that exclude them from the ownership and processes of the organization<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 97-98.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 93.

As the beginning steps of revitalization are approached, it cannot be over-emphasized that both the church leadership and the congregation as a whole be prepared for these changes. It is a wonderful, exciting, frightening and awesome time.

And it is of God.

## CONCLUSION

We have looked at the four vital steps that are necessary in preparation for ministry revitalization: clarifying the church's mission, analyzing the church's program, prioritizing the church's objectives and preparing the church's leadership and congregation for ministry. It is hoped that an adequate rationale has been developed for ministry revitalization. How desperately needed such revitalization is today. Churches facing the 21st century cannot possibly operate successfully using the methodology of a bygone era.

Reports from all across the nation bear out the fact that most Bible-believing churches today are either stagnating or declining. Brethren, these things ought not so to be, nor do they need to be! God is not dead nor has His Holy Spirit ceased to work. But it is time today's Christians stopped glorifying the past and lamenting the present, and busied themselves in wisely facing the future.

Revitalization is a glorious probability if God's people in the local church would covenant to link spiritual arms and face it together. And when it takes place what a center of rejoicing the church buildings become. Ought not rejoicing characterize the assembling of God's people? Hear the words of Perry and Shawchuck one last time: "The pastor and congregation should never miss an opportunity to celebrate. Celebration is a vital key to a revitalized church."<sup>1</sup>

Church revitalization - Let's get on with it!

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<sup>1</sup>Perry and Shawchuck, Revitalizing The 20th Century Church, 70.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A  
THE MATERIAL USED IN CLARIFYING THE MISSION AT FIRST  
BAPTIST CHURCH

Getting started is always the hardest. Keeping the wheels turning is relatively easy, but to first get them moving when they have been frozen in place for so long takes grit and determination.

The following is the process used by the author to bring the church he pastored to the beginning steps of church revitalization. There certainly is no claim here to divine inspiration. The way it was done may not have been the best way. Plenty of mistakes were made. But the frozen wheels did get unstuck and did begin to turn. May the reader use what he can and learn from what he cannot.

First and foremost is the need to bathe this entire process in prayer. Unless God is in such a process it is doomed to failure. As the hymn writer said, "The arm of flesh will fail you; ye dare not trust your own."

The first step in church revitalization is establishing a mission statement. The following procedures were followed to bring the church to the place of recognizing the need for and of adopting a mission statement.

A Personal Evaluation of the Church by the Pastor

The evaluation format used by the author was classwork done for a DMin class at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, VA, taught by Dr. Elmer Towns, in the summer of 1990. The

evaluation is given in its entirety in the following pages so the reader may give thought to the material relevant to his own church.

## EVALUATION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH ASBURY PARK, NJ

### I. SIDE-DOOR STRATEGIES IN USE

A "side-door" evangelistic strategy is a method of evangelism that networks people through non-evangelistic meetings. It involves winning people first to the individual Christian, then to the church and then to Christ. We have several such strategies in operation at our church.

#### A. Athletic Teams: Men's And Women's Softball And Men's Basketball

Several people have either started attending the church or have become more faithfully involved in the church because of playing on one or more of these teams. Opportunities have also been afforded for counseling, encouragement, sharing and just plain fellowship.

#### B. AWANA Club

AWANA stands for Approved Workers Are Not Ashamed, a children's ministry of evangelism, Bible teaching and physical competition. Many of these youngsters now attend Sunday School and/or Children's Church as a result. Some parents have also been reached and become a part of the church primarily because this ministry has been made available to their children.

#### C. Summer Vacation Bible Conference

This is a hybrid between a Vacation Bible School and a Bible Conference. It is geared primarily to adults, but also has a program for and ministers to children. Several elective Bible classes are offered, usually on some particular theme. When

they are over, the student attends one of a variety of craft classes he/she signed up for before the week began.

This program runs Monday through Friday, with a closing program, craft display and awards. Several couples have been introduced to our church and now attend as a result of this week.

#### D. Youth Program

This program, run by our Youth Pastor, is an attraction to couples with teens. Besides regular activities, there is a Wednesday evening program of Bible study and games for the teens while the adults are attending Prayer Meeting.

#### E. Deacon Fund Ministries

A committee of deacons ministers to those who are in financial need by assessing that need, ministering to that need as deemed proper and also sharing the gospel if the recipients are unsaved. Numerous people have been won to Christ through this ministry. The fund is established primarily for members or those nominally associated with the church, although not exclusively.

#### F. "Home Builders" Sunday School Class And Fellowships

This is a relatively new class of young parents and young marrieds that attempts to minister to their particular needs. Many have expressed that this has filled a real void in their lives for spiritual intimacy. Many such young Christians are now attending our church and becoming more actively involved in the church program as a result of this ministry.

#### G. Young Mothers' Bible Study

This is the newest program in our church. When the present pastor came in March, 1987, there were no babies in our nursery. Now, a rapidly growing segment of the church are the young couples, resulting in a burgeoning nursery.

One of the church ladies has a burden for the young mothers. The resulting Bible study has met some real needs

and deeply touched the lives of our young mothers as they have learned to share with one another and reach out to care for one another.

#### H. The Beach Bunch

The Beach Bunch is a contingent of older and retired couples and individuals that fellowship on the beach every day. They enjoy dinner together on the beach once a week and have other activities. Most of them have known each other and been involved in one another's lives for decades. The great thing is that they willingly open their arms to others of their age that desire to join them. Numerous older folk have been tied into our church or have come back to our church as a result of this group.

## II. STYLE OF WORSHIP

Identifying the style of worship of First Baptist Church is a very difficult thing to do. It is a "Duke's mixture", an unusual combination of styles based on the differences between the background and desire of the pastor and the background and desire of the congregation.

The best word I can use to describe our church is "diverse". The good thing about that is it keeps the church from jumping on the bandwagons of institutions, individuals or denominations. The bad thing about it is that there are a tremendous variety of expectations in the congregation at the worship service.

The pastor's preference for a style of worship is rather informal, congregational, and at the same time, expository. He would enjoy some give and take in the service, the singing of old-time favorite hymns, choruses and selected contemporary music, and testimonies and sharing time on a regular basis, even on Sunday morning.

On the other hand, people in the congregation are rather divided on what style of service they prefer. Many are rather liturgical in what they desire in the Sunday morning service: The singing of anthem type hymns, a definite and consistent order of service, the singing of "Amen" at the end of hymns. The concern for

the "atmosphere" seems to be paramount for some rather than the Spirit-empowered preaching of the Word.

The good thing that comes out of this is a strong emphasis on genuine worship. In many churches that is an element that has been long missing. The bad thing that comes out of this is that it seems the form becomes more important than the reality of a relationship with God.

These are the factors that identify the worship style at First Baptist Church as a strange and yet a rather effective combination of expositional, congregational and liturgical.

### III. PASTORAL STYLE OF MOTIVATION

Flavil R. Yeakley categorizes pastors into three types of communicators: (1). The Manipulative Monologue Model ("salesman preacher"), (2). The Information Transmission Model ("teaching preacher"), and (3). The Non-manipulative Dialogue Model ("relational preacher"). I identify myself as a cross about midway between the Information Transmission Model and the Non-manipulative Model.

I feel very strongly about communicating accurately and clearly biblical truth. I want my people to know exactly what the Word says so that they are interfacing with God, not with the meaningless opinions of man (either mine or some other's).

At the same time I believe that the truth of God's Word will be more effective in changing and molding lives if taught with a good dose of practical application and accompanying exhortation. In other words, I want to communicate not only, "Thus saith the Lord," but also, " Thus saith the Lord to me!"

All of this must be bathed in a kind but firm, sweet but strong, winsome but watchful, spirit. I want my hearers to know and to sense that I care for them very deeply and that I am expecting them to respond positively to the truth presented to them in this manner.

I do not have a problem dealing with issues from the pulpit, but I do believe it can easily be overdone. A people are not fed spiritually nor do they mature when their diet is made up primarily

of issues. Issues can best be dealt with by identifying biblical principles, not by name-calling.

#### IV. BARRIERS TO CHURCH GROWTH

The barriers to growth at First Baptist Church fall into three categories, many of them which can be addressed, some of which cannot.

##### A. E-1 - "Stained Glass Barrier"

There are several such barriers at the church presently that need the attention of the leaders and the congregation.

##### 1. Inadequate exterior lighting

This problem is in the process of being addressed with four high-pressure sodium flood lamps being placed at strategic locations around the perimeter of the church property.

##### 2. Inadequate maintenance of facilities

The church and property is in a state of deterioration as a result of "benign neglect" over the years. This was brought about because of a declining congregation, thus revenues to pay for the work and personnel to do it. The church is now growing, but has to pay the price for the lack of proper upkeep over the years. A clearly-defined program for renovation has begun, but still has a long way to go.

##### 3. Inadequate parking

This is one of the greatest logistical problems faced by the church. Attendance is now approaching 250, but the parking lot will hold no more than fifteen cars. That demands parking on the street, and probably walking some distance to church.

There is no easy solution to this dilemma as the

church is hemmed in by multi-apartment houses on each side, resulting in prohibitive cost factors relative to finding new parking space. Creative solutions must be pursued.

#### 4. Poor location

The location is good in that it is in a high-density population area, and accordingly, the opportunities for outreach are limitless. The location is poor because it is a high-crime area with an undesirable element constantly present and a certain amount of potential danger after dark.

This problem could be addressed by a contingent of ushers outside of the building before and after the evening services.

### B. E-2 - "Culture and Class Barriers"

#### 1. Congregation class level differs from the community

The congregation is made up primarily of upper-middle and lower-middle class people, but the community itself is made up primarily of upper-lower and lower-lower class people. Most of the congregation comes from outside of the community itself.

To bridge this gulf, the congregation must first desire to do so and then commit itself to doing so by a tangible program of outreach to the community.

#### 2. Ethnic diversity

The congregation is primarily white with a growing black population and only a sprinkling of other minorities. The community itself is primarily black and Hispanic with a definite minority of whites.

Again, the church to effectively reach its community, must actively and creatively formulate a program for doing so.

### 3. Experiential diversity

The congregation comes from a great variety of backgrounds, thus expectations: ultra-fundamental, evangelical, neo-evangelical and liturgical; anthem-style music, old-fashioned hymn singers, and lovers of more contemporary style; those that desire hellfire and damnation preaching, others looking for Bible exposition and still others looking for little sermonettes. It is a great challenge to draw all of those expectations together and satisfy them from the pulpit.

#### C. E-3 - "Linguistic Barriers"

There is a sizable segment of the community that is of other nationalities and tongues. Two such groups are present: Hispanics whose native tongue is Spanish and Haitians who speak French.

A legitimate concern for the community would manifest itself in development of ministries to reach out to these two nationality groupings.

## V. WALWRATH CHURCH TYPE

First Baptist Church has some elements of both an Outer Urban Neighborhood Church (W-4) and a City Suburban Church (W-5).

#### A. W-4 - Outer Urban Neighborhood Church

The church is located in a residential area with many multi-family dwellings. Many residents belong to distinct ethnic groups. The church membership crosses class lines. The church is experiencing limited financial problems.

#### B. W-5 - City Suburban Church

This community in the past had been affluent and is still to some degree considered prestigious. Some in the congregation may be living on the former glory of the community and the church.



## VI. PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TYPE

Of the seven New Testament words used to define the office and ministry of the pastor, four of them primarily characterize me and my ministry: pastor, teacher, preacher and servant.

I love my people. My heart's desire is to see them grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. I want them to not only understand, but also to live the Christian life to the fullest.

I enjoy teaching the Word of God in small enough or intimate enough of a setting that there can be meaningful give and take. I believe this greatly enhances the learning process.

I love to preach, to communicate the truth of the Word of God via the pulpit, and to lead my people into a worship of praise to the Most High.

I am very conscious of people's needs and hurts and like to minister to them as I am able.

Coupled with these pastoral characteristics listed above are some other personal characteristics that have a definite impact on my ministry.

I tend to be laid back and rather undemanding. I want things done right and attempt to do things in such a manner myself, but find it very difficult to force others to the same standards. I have no difficulty in making my expectations known, but demanding it or harassing until it is accomplished is not in me. On the basis of agreed compliance to my first request, I expect it to happen. Since people do not always respond that way, I am frequently disappointed leading to inner frustration.

I am an encourager. I want to help people to do their best. When something is hurting them or bothering them, I want to help rub salve on the wounds.

## VII. GREATEST NEEDS IN THE CHURCH

As I evaluate the needs of First Baptist Church, the following seem to be paramount in importance.

- A. A clear order of structure and chain of command so that decisions can easily be made, direction given and authority and responsibility be designated.
- B. A much improved sense of confidence by the congregation in deacons, officers, committees and other leaders of the church.
- C. A much greater, effective and cohesive evangelistic outreach.
- D. The building and grounds to be cleaned up and restored to the beauty and dignity that they are both capable of and worthy of.
- E. An evaluation and alteration of the church program to more effectively minister to the present age and to our particular community.

## VIII. GOALS FOR COMING CHURCH YEAR

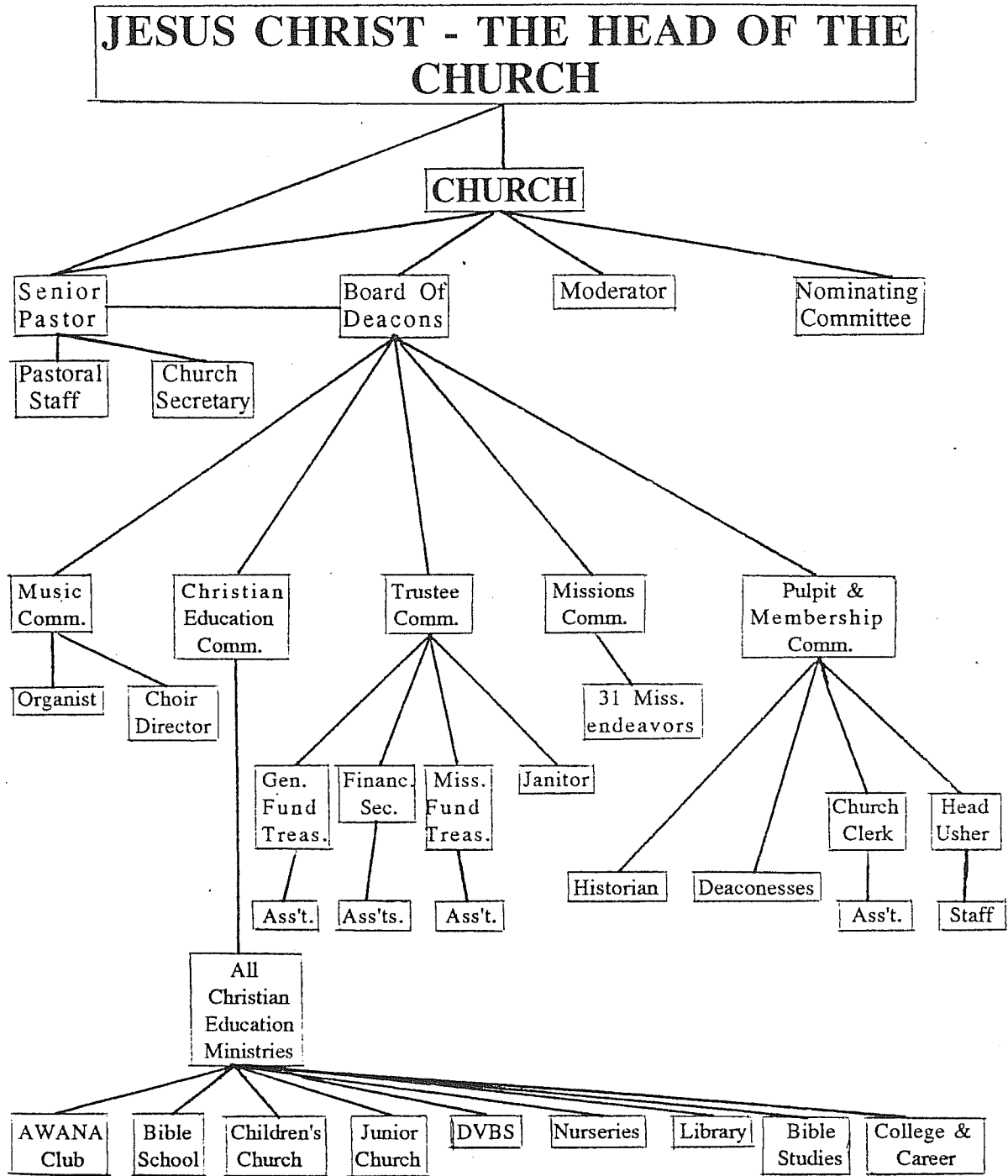
- A. More effective pastoral leadership.
- B. Clarification and streamlining of the church infrastructure.
- C. Beginning the lengthy process of building restoration.
- D. A greater personal emphasis upon prayer and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
- E. A gentle and gradual alteration of the church program as the age, the congregation and the community demand it.

The previous evaluation is done not so much for the church as it is for the pastor and perhaps the other spiritual leaders. Change will not be initiated until the need for change is understood and appreciated. The need for change must be recognized by the spiritual leaders of the church or any hope for revitalization of ministry is false. The old adage that "Everything rises or falls on leadership" is certainly true in this case.

Once the pastor is convinced of the need for change, that fact must be demonstrated convincingly to the other spiritual leadership of the church. In the case of First Baptist Church, the ones to convince were the men who made up the nineteen member board of deacons and who in turn held key positions on the five standing committees of the church: Pulpit and Membership (6), Trustees (7), Christian Education (2), Missions (2) and Music (2).

The organizational flow chart of First Baptist Church is given on the following page. A great deal of time and effort was spent in formulating this chart since the church organization is rather complex and no such chart had ever been made before. The value of such a chart is seen in assessing responsibility and chain of command.

# FIRST BAPTIST FLOW CHART



Convincing the Church Leadership to "Buy In" to a Program for  
Change Leading to Revitalization of Ministry

If such a program for change were to take place, the church leadership had to be unitedly behind it, convinced of its value and willing to take the initiative to bring it to pass. In order for these things to take place the church leaders would need time away from other distractions to digest, think, pray and to seek the Lord's guidance.

It was determined that the best course of action would be to organize an overnight retreat where those involved could think, plan, pray, fellowship and focus on the issue at hand without interruption. A local retreat center provided the ideal atmosphere for just such an endeavor.

The pastor led the discussion as he presented the following matters for consideration:

Session #1: Planning Principles

Session #2: The Planning Cycle and Proposed Agenda for  
First Baptist Church

Session #3: Establishing a Mission Statement

Session #4: Discussion, Feedback and Prayer

The purpose in Session #1 was to bring the spiritual leadership to the place of understanding that their church is unique from all others with its own distinct set of problems and opportunities, that they dare not attempt to muddle through with the status quo having no described purpose or goals, that if they do the church is doomed to stagnation or even decline and that the only reasonable approach

to the future ministry of the church was to begin a realistic process of planning for change and growth.

Session #2 was used to explain the Planning Cycle for a church and the proposed agenda for implementing that cycle at First Baptist. It was at this point that the interest level of the deacons raised dramatically. As they saw concrete steps planned and dates established, they began to "buy in" to the program for change, began to get excited about it and began to visualize this program as theirs.

Session #3 saw the steps begun toward hammering out a mission statement. Though this work was not completed at the retreat, a good start was made. Work continued by the deacons on formulating that statement at specially called meetings until agreement was reached on a statement that could be presented to the church.

Session #4 was a time to share thoughts concerning this whole endeavor, to build on the eagerness and enthusiasm generated and to spend time in prayer asking for God's direction in beginning the revitalization of ministry at First Baptist Church.

The following pages are a copy of the materials distributed and used at the retreat to lead the deacons to "buy in" to a program for ministry revitalization by clarifying the church's mission.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION  
BEFORE CONSIDERING  
PLANNING PRINCIPLES

1. "Form must always follow function."
2. "Why are we doing the things we are doing  
(in the church program)?"
3. "Let us not become ritualists."
4. "Every church program should justify its  
existence every year."

## PLANNING PRINCIPLES

1. The three greatest reasons for church growth based on the order of their importance:
  - a. The pastor's confidence both in himself and in the future and his effective communication of that confidence to his congregation.
  - b. A genuine sense of personal church ownership by the congregation - "This is my church!"
  - c. The congregation's sense that the church leadership has a clear, sharp focus of purpose.
  
2. The three most common mistakes in church planning:
  - a. Not planning at all: "As the Lord leads"...Whatever will be, will be."
  - b. Setting goals, but not establishing effective strategies for reaching those goals.
  - c. Getting the cart before the horse: planning detailed strategies before determining the church's purpose for existence.



THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWERED HONESTLY AND FULLY BEFORE WE CAN GRAPPLE WITH GOALS AND STRATEGIES

I. WHO ARE WE?

Doctrinally, theologically, denominationally?  
Economically?  
Ethnically?  
Socially?  
Culturally?  
Other?

II. WHOM DO WE SERVE?

To whom do we intentionally minister?  
Whom do we intentionally omit?  
Whom do we unintentionally omit?

III. WHAT ARE OUR STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, PROBLEMS?

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Opportunities:

Problems:

## THE PLANNING CYCLE

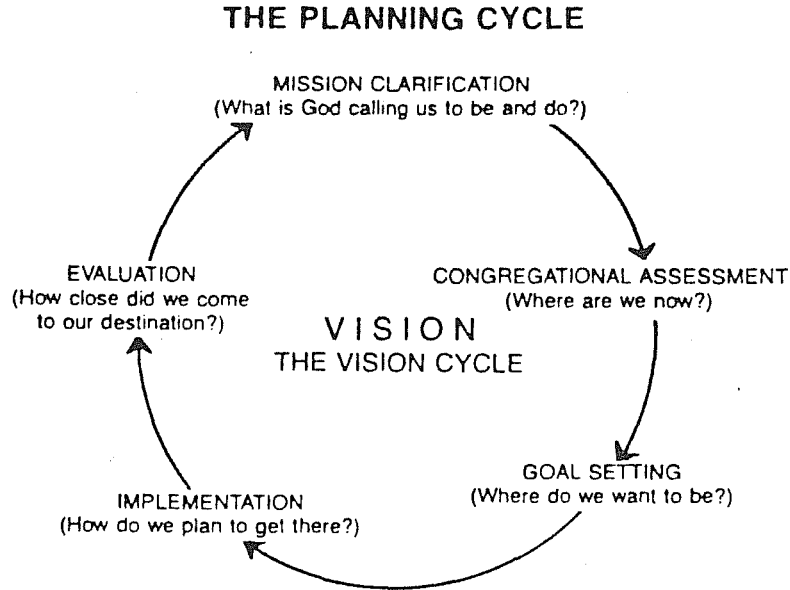


### MY PLAN

1. To involve the entire congregation in church assessment - ("Where are we now?")
  - a. What are the strengths of our church? What's going on around here that we feel good about?
  - b. What are the weaknesses of our church? What's going on around here that we don't feel good about?
  - c. What are our hopes and dreams for our church for the next few years? What suggestions could we make for improving our church?
2. To appoint a special Planning Committee to establish goals ("Where do we want to be?") and specific strategies ("How do we plan to get there?") based on our mission statement and our congregational assessment.
3. To implement an organizational structure for carrying out those specific strategies.
4. To review and evaluate our progress after an appropriate period of time.
5. To consider new and appropriate goals and strategies for reaching them ( a continuing cycle).

## MISSION CLARIFICATION DEACONS MEETING - May 6, 1989

### I. A REMINDER OF OUR PLAN OF ATTACK



### II. PROPOSED AGENDA AND TIME FRAME

#### A. Mission Clarification

By the board of deacons - Saturday, May 6, 1989

#### B. Congregational Assessment

1. Congregational Assessment Training Meeting  
Friday, May 26, 1989 - at the church  
Approximately 182 people may attend  
Need approximately thirteen homes
2. Congregational Assessment Meetings  
Friday, June 9, 1989 - in thirteen homes  
Chosen on the basis of concern, desire and location
3. Evaluation and Classification of Assessment Data  
Saturday, June 10, 1989  
The pastoral staff and perhaps a couple of others - any volunteers?

4. Formulation of Directional Statements Based on  
Assessment Data  
Monday, June 12, 1989  
Deacons plus home meeting leaders

5. Publication of Directional Statements  
Sunday, June 18, 1989  
Allow further input from the congregation  
at this point

C. Goal Setting

Wednesday, July 5, 1989 - Congregational meeting  
To elect a "task force" of 10-12 people representing a  
cross section of the congregation: older singles (2),  
older married (2), younger singles (2), younger marrieds  
(2), deacons (2), pastors (2) = 12  
Purpose: to establish 2-4 goals for each category based on  
the particular directional statement for that category  
To report back to congregation at Quarterly Business  
Meeting on Wednesday, September 21, 1989, for  
discussion and approval of goals

D. Implementation

Task force selects individuals and/or committees to be  
responsible for carrying out particular strategies to  
accomplish the designated goals  
Time frames not possible to evaluate at this time

E. Evaluation

Task force responsible to keep on top of all strategizing  
committees in the following areas:  
-Strategizing - What activities are being used to reach  
the goal?  
-Scheduling - When will each activity take place?  
-Recruiting and Assigning - Who is responsible to see  
that it happens?  
-Resourcing - What are the equipment, space, money and  
workers needed to carry out the activity?  
-Monitoring - How will we check up to be sure the plan is  
functioning properly and on time?  
Task force report to deacons regularly  
Task force report to congregation at regular business  
meetings or in public services, if advisable

### III. MISSION CLARIFICATION

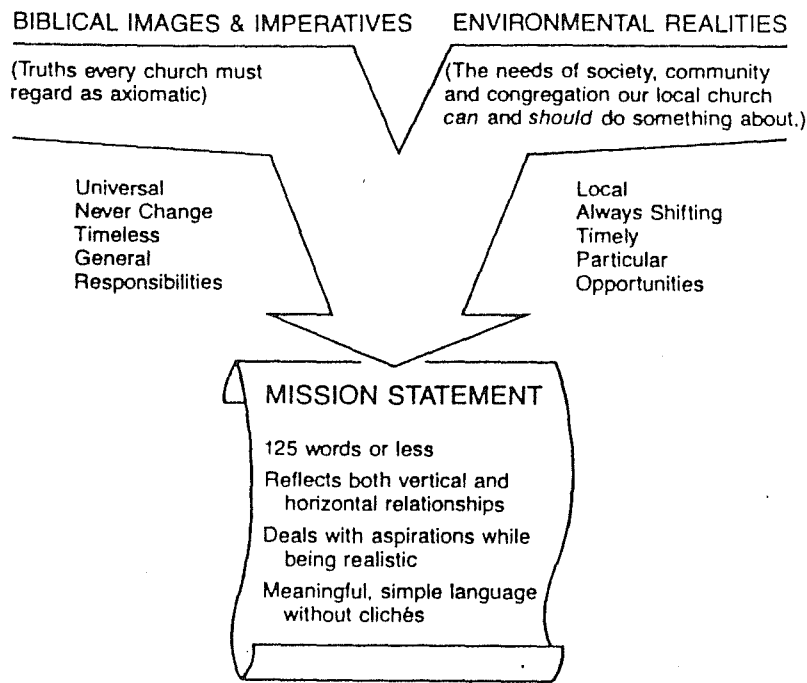
The need is a clear and focused statement of why we are here, stated simply but comprehensively - "What is God calling us to do and be in this particular time and place?"

You will notice that we identify four issues which must be considered in making this statement: (1) Scripture, (2) Congregation, (3) Community and (4) World. Mistakenly, most consider only (2), (3) and (4).

Scripture defines our "what" and "who" in general terms, but the needs of the congregation and the community and the world define the "what" and "who" in concrete, specific realities. Jesus always tailored His ministry to the needs of the Luke 4:17-21.

If we look to Scripture alone for understanding our mission, we will tend to see our church only as a "field of ministry, but if we look also to meet the needs of our congregation and community prayerfully, we will begin to see our church as a "force for ministry." The apostles all had needs and flaws, but were chosen to minister anyway. Let's attempt to get God's perspective.

## Components of the Church's Mission



### MISSION CLARIFICATION

This is our purpose in light of our concrete environmental realities. It should be concise and comprehensive. It should be written out and authorized by the congregation. That statement will be based on four factors:

1. What Scripture and our denominational tradition tell us about our mission.
2. What unique and specific needs and interests our congregation looks to the church to fulfill.
3. What specific needs in our community our church can and should do something about.
4. What specific needs in our society and world our church can and should do something about.

Missions Statement Worksheet:

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

### BEFORE CONSIDERING

### MISSION CLARIFICATION

1. "The fact that most church leaders do not evaluate their efforts is due not so much to a lack of skill as it is due to a lack of nerve. Many church leaders do not want to know how well, or how poorly, they are doing."
2. "Goal-setting is important only for churches who want to go somewhere, who want to succeed in their ministry. For all other churches, it is a waste of time and effort."
3. "The major intent of the planning process is to give the congregation a clear-cut sense of purpose for ministry. That sense of purpose will give the congregation vision and power. Nothing can substitute for common purpose."
4. "It is a quality of visions that they come to people who are goal-minded, not to muddlers who excuse their lack of planning and work by saying they are waiting for the Lord to direct them."
5. "We urge you to put away from your thinking once and for all the idea that goal-setting hinders the Holy Spirit. Scripture simply does not bear this out."
6. "You will not find meaning in a purposeless organization."
7. "Multitudes of pastors with their lay-leadership are leading their congregations to set goals, but fail to create the organizational structures necessary to carry out those goals. Goal-setting alone is not enough."
8. "We need to look at the church not just as a field of ministry, but more importantly, a force for ministry."

## THE MISSION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

"Individually and corporately, the purpose of First Baptist Church of Asbury Park, New Jersey, is to love, honor and glorify Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as both Savior and Lord.

"We commit ourselves to making disciples unto Christ, by the empowerment of the indwelling Holy Spirit, both in our community and throughout the world.

"We also commit ourselves to the humble worship of God; to edify, exhort and encourage one another by the faithful teaching of the Word, by prayer and by fellowship, seeking to equip each believer to serve God and man."

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The above statement of "The Mission of First Baptist Church" was formulated by the deacons of the church in May, 1989, for presentation to the church to consider for adoption at the specially-called business meeting on July 5, 1989.



The suggested mission statement was presented to the church for their consideration and input and changes were made that were considered wise. The tentative statement was given all-church coverage by placing it as an insert in the church bulletin and by mailing it to all the homes with an explanatory cover letter. The finished product was unanimously adopted by the church at a business meeting.

In conclusion to this appendix several matters need to be explained. First, the deacons' retreat demanded a great deal of thought and preparation. Not only did the program need to be thoroughly planned and materials printed and copied for handouts, but also the tentative schedule for involving the church had to be worked out without upsetting the church calendar. It was much easier to get the deacons to become enthused about the program for change once they saw the thoroughness with which it had been planned. (As an aside, the first deacons' retreat proved such a success they are now eagerly calling for one annually.)

Second, the plan presented to the deacons at that retreat must allow plenty of time for questions and answers, discussion and input. Only in this way can the program become "theirs" and not just "yours." People always place a much higher premium on that which they own.

Third, from the very beginning the church was informed that its leadership was considering a program for change, that they would be sharing their ideas with the congregation while seeking input, and that above all else were needed the prayers of God's people in seeking divine guidance.

Fourth, at approximately the same time this whole planning process was begun and the church was informed about it, the pastor began a series of messages on Sunday morning concerning the spiritual gifts and the need for every church member to recognize his/her gifting and become personally involved in ministry. This procedure lent credence to the planning process and filled the members with eagerness as they anticipated their personal involvement in the proposed changes for ministry.

APPENDIX B  
THE MATERIAL USED IN ANALYZING THE PROGRAM AT  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Appendix B highlights the basic steps taken at First Baptist Church to analyze its present program. The hearts of both the church leadership and the congregation at large were prepared for this step because of the procedure already carried out as explained in Appendix A. Everyone was eager to get moving at this point.

Once again, a reminder of a principle of paramount importance: leadership must be convinced first. The material in the following pages was used at a follow-up deacons' retreat to get them involved and thinking about church assessment. That material was divided up and presented in different sessions as follows:

Session #1: Leaders Who Are Prepared to Lead

Session #2: Meeting People's Needs in the 90's

Session #3: Deacon's Church Assessment Form

Session #4: Discussion of Above Material and Season of Prayer

Sessions #1 and #2 were basically lecture with give and take, Session #3 was spent in writing out their assessments and Session #4 was discussion of the issues they addressed and prayer. These exercises proved profitable in four ways:

(1) The deacons began to recognize and to grapple with the reality that something special really was expected of them as church leaders both by God and man.

(2) They began to understand that their purpose was to minister to God's people as servants, not just as "fat cats" who had been elected to a position of prestige and power.

(3) They began to realize that "business as usual" really was not all that great.

(4) They began to consider potential change in the church in a much more positive manner.

The Church Profile Questionnaire on page 144 was not used, but is well-written and could advantageously be given to the congregation.

## LEADERS WHO ARE PREPARED TO LEAD

1. What do our church members think of the board of deacons and the pastoral staff of their church?
2. What kind of leadership do they have?
3. What kind of leadership do they deserve?

Any leader worth his salt wants to be a quality leader. The reputation of excellence in the leader produces an assurance of quality in the mind of the follower. We must strive to be quality leaders.

### I. THE DEFINITION OF QUALITY LEADERSHIP

#### "WORTHY MODELS to follow"

- A. The Life Style of Church Leadership Is The "Role Model" For The Church To Follow - I Corinthians 10:31-11:1
- B. The Life Style Of Church Leadership To Be Effective Must Be Based on Mutual LOVE.

John 13:35 (paraphrased) -

"By this shall the congregation know for certain that the church leaders are true disciples of Christ (and therefore worthy models to follow), if they have love for one another."

I Corinthians 13:4-7 (Williams Translation, substituting "leader" for "love") -

"The leader is so patient and so kind;  
He never boils with jealousy;  
He never boasts, is never puffed with pride,  
He does not act with rudeness, nor insist on his rights;  
He never gets provoked,  
He never harbors evil thoughts;  
He is never glad when wrong is done,  
But always glad when truth prevails;  
He bears up under everything,  
He exercises faith in everything,  
He keeps up hope in everything."

II. THE DEMANDS OF QUALITY LEADERSHIP - I Peter 5:1-3

- A. They Must ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY For The Welfare Of The Flock
- B. They Must Minister Because They CHOOSE TO - Not Because They HAVE TO
- C. They Must Minister With No Motive To PERSONAL GAIN
- D. They Must Never PULL RANK To Accomplish Their Purpose
- E. They Must Exhibit A DISTINCTLY GODLY Way Of Life
- F. They Must Learn To Live INTENTIONALLY

III. THE DEMONSTRATION OF QUALITY LEADERSHIP -  
I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-10; I Peter 5:2

- A. Demonstrated By Right Responses to CIRCUMSTANCES and PEOPLE
  - 1. Temperate
  - 2. Not quick-tempered
  - 3. Self-controlled
  - 4. Not violent
  - 5. Gentle
- B. Demonstrated By Right Relationship to THINGS and PEOPLE
  - 1. To money
  - 2. To his mate
  - 3. To his family
  - 4. To his God
  - 5. To good

C. Demonstrated By A Right REPUTATION Before Others

1. A life seen as above reproach
2. A life that is respectable and well-ordered
3. A life that is appreciated by the non-believer

D. Demonstrated By Right CHARACTER Communicated To Others

1. A settled conviction concerning the authority and the centrality of Scripture
2. An honest application of Scripture to his personal life
3. A capable communication of truth in a kind, gentle, unquarrelsome manner.
4. A personal model of authenticity

Such church leadership is excellent; it is quality!

They will love one another;  
they will be indivisible;  
they will be grounded;  
they will lead as they should  
because they are prepared to lead!

## MEETING PEOPLE'S NEEDS IN THE 90'S

Two families, the Smiths and the Joneses, start attending First Baptist Church about the same time. The members of both families know the Lord, come from likeminded backgrounds and are growing Christians. Both families are enthused about becoming a part of our church family.

After a few months, it is obvious that while the interest and excitement of the Smiths continues, that of the Joneses is rapidly fading. The Smiths are faithful, involved and enthused while the Joneses are irregular, uninvolved and blase.

Why? What makes the difference? With all outward circumstances seeming to be the same, why does one family stick and another not? It is easy and unfair to criticize the Joneses for their obvious lack of spirituality and blame that for their departure, absolving ourselves of all responsibility.

A more pertinent question is this: **DID WE AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH DO EVERYTHING WE SHOULD HAVE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE JONES FAMILY?**

There can be many reasons why people fall by the wayside. Those reasons can lie within themselves or in the circumstances around them. But far too frequently, people drop away because needs the church could and should meet are not being met.

It is vital that church leadership understand the dynamics of people's needs and do everything in their power to see that the church attempts to meet those needs. The church is a service organization; we are here to reach out to people and meet their needs.

Are we at First Baptist, to the best of our abilities, responsibly and responsively reaching out to meet people's needs? This session is designed to accomplish three things:

1. To gain an understanding of people's basic needs.
2. To show how a church can help address those needs.
3. To evaluate our own success or failure at meeting people's needs.

Only at this point can we wisely begin to make necessary and proper adjustments.



## I. THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN MOTIVATION

- A. A Person's Motivation Comes From Within Himself,  
Not From Someone Or Something Else
- B. A Person Is Motivated By His Needs
- C. A Person's Behavior Is Seldom A Response To A Single Need
- D. Human Needs Can Be Arranged In A Definite Hierarchy of  
Importance
- E. Only As Basic Needs Are Met, Do Other And Higher Needs  
Take On Importance

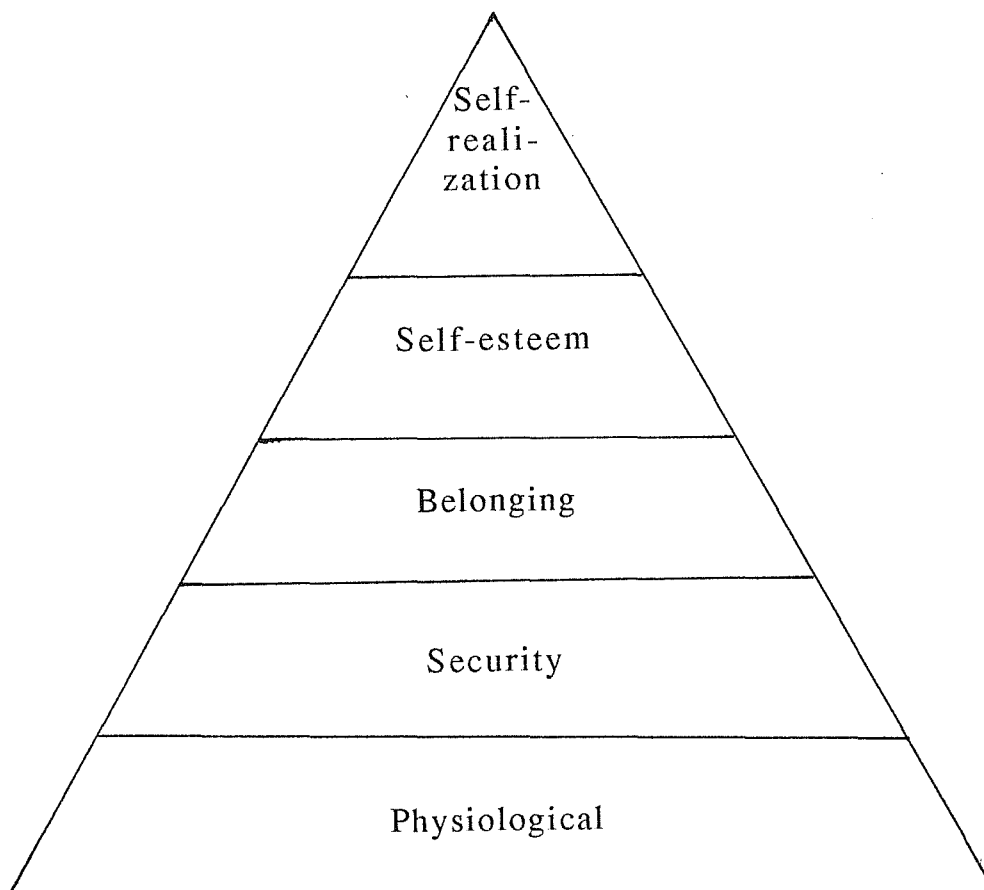
## II. HUMAN NEEDS

Human needs fit into five categories as pictured in the Hierarchy of Needs diagram on the next page of this handout. The strongest needs are at the bottom of the pyramid. The needs near the top will be addressed only when the ones near the bottom are satisfied.

The goal of the church is to help people toward self-realization, that is, to become all that they have the potential to become for God. The problem is, most people are not ready for self-realization because other more basic needs are unmet.

It is vital for the church to recognize its responsibility to try to help to meet people's needs all the way up the ladder. That will help to keep both the Smiths and the Joneses interested, active, faithful, growing and serving.

## HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



1. **PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS:** The innate desire for the preservation of life and health
2. **SECURITY NEEDS:** The desire for safety, order, structure and stability
3. **BELONGING NEEDS:** The desire to be a part of a group and to be accepted by one's peers
4. **SELF-ESTEEM NEEDS:** The desire to feel oneself of value or importance
5. **SELF-REALIZATION NEEDS:** The desire to become all that one has the potential to become (for God)

### III. MEETING PEOPLE'S NEEDS AS A CHURCH

Let us look at these five categories of needs individually to analyze how we are doing and what we can be doing.

#### A. Physiological Needs

Comfortable pews? Appropriate thermostat setting?  
Air conditioning? Water fountain? Clean, well-kept and stocked restrooms? Adequate lighting? Attractive building and premises? Other?

#### B. Security Needs

Safe neighborhood? If not, what steps to protect?  
Good outdoor lighting? Escorts? Watchful observers?  
Structural soundness of building? Premises in good repair? Other?

#### C. Belonging Needs

Do folk who walk through the doors of First Baptist know they are loved, cared for and accepted? In what tangible ways is that manifested? Do we provide adequate and meaningful forums for meeting those needs? Other?

#### D. Self-Esteem Needs

Do we communicate to all people that we value them, trust them, need them and want them? Other?

#### E. Self-Realization Needs

Do we provide adequate opportunities for all Christians to grow, blossom and serve God freely, joyously and effectively? Other?

It is our responsibility to help people reach their potential for God. By going our part to help meet their needs, we are assisting them along that path. May we covenant together to do so to the best of our ability.

## CHURCH ASSESSMENT FORM

What assumptions do you hold for the future of our church in the next five to ten years?

1. Numerically -
2. Financially -
3. Physical Plant and Property -
4. Theologically (continue as we are or change?) -
5. Weekly Services -
6. Expansion, Change Or Deletion of Present Program or Ministries -
7. New and Different Program or Ministries -
8. Other Assumptions -

SOME PERTINENT THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER  
BEFORE READING THE FOLLOWING REMARKS  
FROM OTHERS ON THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

1. "There are two kinds of fools:  
One says, 'This is old, therefore it is good.'  
The other says, 'This is new, therefore it is better.'"
2. "Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything. The tendency is to think that what I think is best. Dare to think that you may not be right."
3. "When you stop learning, you stop living: 'Here lies the body of John Jones: died at age 20, buried at age 65.'"
4. "Every church should burn its facilities to the ground every twenty years; the needs invariably change that much."
5. "Leadership that is looking to make change must learn how to effectively create 'discontent' in the congregation."
6. "We need a radical restructuring of the program of our local churches in order to give the congregation time to minister. We need to drastically reduce the number of body-related activities. We are too busy meeting to minister."

## REPORTED ASSUMPTIONS OF THE CHURCH LEADERSHIP (5-10 years)

### 1. NUMERICALLY

"8% growth/year"

"Growth will follow if we reach out with evangelism, if we have a good follow-up program and if we pursue cross-cultural ministries"

"8% - 10% per year"

"Growing - attendance to 500 mark"

"Dependent upon individual commitment to the Lord - spiritual growth and prayer are the key."

"5% to 10%/year - more if congregation adapts to changing population mix in the city"

"3% - 5% per year"

"Increase"

"In five years, 350; in ten years, 500"

### 2. FINANCIALLY

"2% per year"

"Budget reaching up to \$500,000/year"

"Need bank reserves for building maintenance and expansion"

"Sufficient growth to meet the needs"

"Enough to meet the needs, plus"

"'Owe no man anything' - to remain debt-free"

"10% increase per year over next five years; 5% increase per year after that"

"10% growth per year"

"May have reached peak because of age and economic status of congregation."

### 3. PHYSICAL PLANT AND PROPERTY

"Acquire adjacent property to our main buildings"

"Prayerfully seek to buy house and lot adjacent to church south on Grand Avenue for classrooms and apartment for missionaries on furlough or for youth pastor. Ask God for property west of church on Third Avenue to turn into a parking lot"

"Sufficient maintenance to keep present plant operating"

"Give prayer and consideration to relocating church to new location and facilities"

"Maintain what we have"

(Assumptions)

"Over next five years clean and renovate existing facilities; after that, add a new education wing and purchase adjacent property for parking or an all-purpose building."

"Must find off-street parking - as vital to growth in the city as sufficient room in the pews"

"Need parking and better lighting"

"Upgrade building generally, perhaps air-condition auditorium"

"Improved parking facilities; church remodeled"

#### 4. THEOLOGICALLY

"Continue as we are - perhaps seek topical aid from deacons - pastor present his proposed agenda, if known"

"Continue as we are"

"Increased teaching, evangelism and community outreach ministries"

"Remain the same"

"Keep the same"

"A solid teaching ministry - worship and doctrine"

"Continue what we are"

"Continue being Christ-centered, Bible-preaching, teaching and believing"

"Absolutely no departure from fundamentals of Scripture doctrine - may have to adopt new terminology for more effective outreach to the unchurched"

#### 5. WEEKLY SERVICES

"Same"

"Change times, not format: Sunday School at 10:00-10:45 A.M. (no opening exercises, all go directly to classes); Morning Worship at 11:00-noon (side chapel not used until 300 in attendance); Evening Service at 7:00-8:00 - even numbers easier to remember"

"Evangelistic home Bible studies in place of Sunday evening service; all other services remain the same."

"Keep the same services with additional cottage meetings for prayer and Bible study"

"Combined Wednesday prayer service for everyone; stronger emphasis on Sunday evening service"

"Same general pattern; hopefully, eventually two morning services"

(Assumptions)

"Basically the same, but willing to adapt to meet congregational needs"

"No change at present, but be alert for need to change time and format of Sunday School, Sunday evening service and youth programs"

"Stimulate with more varied topics on Wednesday night"

6. EXPANSION, CHANGE OR DELETION OF PRESENT PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES

"Consider plans for visitation program when Pastor Paul is no longer able to fulfill the responsibilities; outreach program informing the community of our services and ministries; we're aiming in the right direction of seeing how God can use individuals; better shut-in care; ladies Bible study to expand to MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers); reorganization of ladies missionary group; Home Builders Class divide into 35 and down and 36 and up with each having a social calendar; training for Sunday School teachers; larger youth ministry with dedicated sponsors"

"Divide Home Builders into two age groups"

"Elective Sunday School classes for everyone from 11th grade and up"

"Men's Bible class; a stronger senior ministry; more organized visitation of members; encouragement of young people to missions; Sunday School emphasis and encouragement"

"We're making a promising beginning - strengthen the over-all Sunday School; need a good College and Career program"

"Not change for change sake, but after prayer and seeking God's face, change as He leads for a purpose"

"Consider home Bible classes or Sunday Bible classes in a restaurant or other strategic spot"

"Need to involve the younger generation in leadership"

7. NEW AND DIFFERENT PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES

"Evening service livened up with instrumentalists and mini-concerts; special speakers on contemporary issues"

"Church orchestra accompaniment on Sunday evening"

"Fulltime worker in neighborhood to establish a satellite church (after survey); food or clothing bank for members or neighbors"

"Outreach to people new in the community; home Bible studies"



(Assumptions)

"Give support and opportunities to grow for new members and young marrieds - prayer support and physical help"

"Consider: visitation evangelism program (i.e. Evangelism Explosion) ; deaf ministry; radio ministry (live or taped); church newspaper or news sheet; extended direct-mail program for ministry and publicity"

"Church needs to be made aware of all of the diverse and separate ministries currently operating in the church or through church members and friends right now - may be achieved by a special publication listing all ministries, their respective leaders with a brief description of purposes and needs - might be appropriate at end of messages on spiritual gifts with a synopsis of those gifts and their application"

"Prayerfully consider any ministries that people are burdened for, that meet a community need and that are in harmony with our church purpose"

"Start a monthly church newspaper"

"When our size permits it, prayerfully consider mothering a new church"

## 8. OTHER ASSUMPTIONS

"Acquisition of the corner property (now vacant) for future parking or expansion; computerize church office and records"

"To really encourage and pray for our youth ministries and their leaders"

"Counseling program; day-care center; work program to assist needed employment/housing/food; special interest groups - deaf, mentally retarded, autistic, etc.; Spanish to English literacy through Bible study; singles group or active college and career"

"Musts: attendance records at services for visitor and member followup; tighter control of church expenditures"



Undoubtedly, the most meaningful activity undertaken by the church in this entire process leading to ministry revitalization was the Home Congregational Assessment Meetings. At these meetings the congregation was asked to assess itself, its programs and ministries. As never before, the church en masse came to realize that we meant business about positive change and that we desired their honest input concerning that change.

The church leadership had already been prepared for this step by discussing it and approving it at a deacons' retreat as described in Appendix A. The Home Congregational Assessment Meetings were announced publicly from the pulpit and via personal letters to all regular attenders of the church. An air of charged excitement began to envelop the congregation. The process we decided to follow in setting up these home meetings was as follows:

- (1) The date of the meetings was carefully chosen so as to minimally conflict with both the church program and people's personal activities.

- (2) We felt it imperative to hold the meetings in private homes to avoid the quietus that people frequently manifest in church. We wanted people to openly and honestly express their concerns and feelings. It was concluded that a home setting with fewer present would lend itself to involvement and expression.

- (3) The estimated maximum number who would attend was determined and allowance was made for a maximum of fifteen people at each home. We established a top figure of 182 who would attend so we concluded that we needed thirteen homes.

(4) The thirteen homes were chosen for their geographical accessibility to all who wanted to participate.

(5) The date for the home meetings was announced about a month in advance with a lot of fanfare. We wanted people to know this was their best opportunity for valuable input that would be heard.

(6) It was determined that no deacons or pastoral staff should attend any of these home meetings. This may seem like a strange procedure, but our particular situation called for it. Over many years the confidence of the congregation in its deacon board had terribly eroded. It was felt that the congregation would more freely express itself if the deacons were not there. Since the deacons already had given their input concerning these issues at the deacons' retreat, there was no real need for them to attend. Neither did we want the presence of the pastoral staff to have a negative influence on the meetings.

(7) The procedure at the home meetings was to be like this -

- (a) The meeting was given a two-hour limit with a definite starting and stopping time.
- (b) The meeting was begun with a time of greeting, introductions, prayer and instructions.
- (c) Those assembled were instructed to honestly and clearly put on paper their answers to the following three questions:
  - What do you like about our church?
  - What don't you like about our church?

- What would you like to see different about our church?

No signatures were to be attached.

- (d) The papers were collected and discussed while watching the time parameters.
- (e) A season of prayer was spent together asking God to give clear direction for the future.
- (f) Dismissal - some went straight home and others remained for more coffee and discussion.

(8) Prior to the Congregational Assessment Home Meetings, the hosts were provided a training meeting in the above procedure. They were also reminded that all concerns were to be put on paper, not vocalized. That kept the meetings from turning into gripe sessions. Because there were many things they were pleased about in their church, all of the sessions were upbeat and positive.

(9) It was decided that all regular attenders even if not members would be invited to the meetings. Their potential membership might hinge upon our interest in hearing their concerns. Since these matters were advisory only, we felt there was no danger from including them in the process.

After the home meetings were concluded, the written data was assembled and brought to the church leadership for compilation. All of the information was processed, categorized and printed out for the congregation to see just as quickly as it could be done. The parenthesized [#] number after each observation tells us how many of the thirteen groups addressed that particular issue and informing us of its importance in the eyes of the participants.

The statements are given in the following pages, broken down into the following categories: Christian Education, Congregational Programs, Facilities, Fellowship, Finance, Lay Leadership, Missions, Staff and Worship. A Directional Statement is attached to each category, which is simply condensing the basic concerns addressed by the participants. A cover letter from the pastor is attached to explain to the congregation concerning this material.

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

THIRD and GRAND AVENUES  
ASBURY PARK, NEW JERSEY - 07712

REV. RICHARD T. CARNS, PASTOR  
Office Telephone - 775-2662

CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH . . .  
THAT IN ALL THINGS HE MIGHT HAVE THE  
PREMINENCE. COL. 1:18

REV. PAUL BRAMHALL  
Minister of Visitation

DON TEEARS  
Youth Pastor

July 2, 1989

Dear Member and Friend of First Baptist,

The enclosed material is eagerly presented to you as a summary of that which was compiled at the Church Home Meetings in June. How your frankness is appreciated as you expressed your joys, your concerns and your visions for the future here at First Baptist Church.

Some observations, reminders and exhortations need to be made at this point:

1. The number in parentheses after each statement informs us how many of the 13 groups spoke to a particular issue.
2. There is much food for thought and prayer in this material. Let us be sure to do so.
3. Let us refuse to take any comment as a personal attack or insult. That spirit was never manifested at any of the Home Meetings. Rather, let us look upon these suggestions as constructive criticism that may enable us to better serve our wonderful Lord.
4. As we consider the mentioned needs in light of our own spiritual gifting, we may well see one or more areas where we can effectively begin serving the Lord. Follow up on it - there is joy in serving Jesus!
5. Pray for wisdom in the makeup of the Task Force.
6. If you did not attend a Home Meeting to put in your two cents' worth, quit complaining - you had your chance!  
(Just kidding, sort of!)

May we together see God's hand of blessing upon us in a way we have never seen it before as we unitedly strive to serve our lovely Lord.

Sincerely in Christ,

Richard T. Carns, Pastor

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### I. STRENGTHS

- A. AWANA program (8)
- B. Good adult Sunday School classes (3)
- C. Adult Sunday School classes changing to electives (2)
- D. Good Sunday School teachers (1)
- E. Good Children's Church program (1)

### II. WEAKNESSES

- A. Need a Christian Education Director to oversee and coordinate all programs; could be the Youth Pastor (2)
- B. Need to build, strengthen and contemporize our Sunday School (2)
- C. Need to utilize the Youth Pastor more fully (1)
- D. Need more outreach ministries to kids (1)
- E. Need to see the young people in the church services more consistently; sometimes seem almost nonexistent (1)
- F. Need to gear the Wednesday evening service more to meet the needs of the 30-40 age group (1)

### III. VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. A Christian Education Director to set up and direct all youth planning: Sunday School, teens, AWANA, youth sponsors, etc. (1)
- B. Youth in Prayer Meeting service when outside special speaker present (1)
- C. Children's Church services more contemporary (1)
- D. More outside "specialists" address various groups in the church: i.e., Crisis Pregnancy Center staff address teens, etc. (1)



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### Directional Statement

Our Christian Education program is strong in certain areas such as AWANA and the adult Sunday School classes, but many people felt that weaknesses in certain areas need to be addressed. Concern was expressed in four categories: leadership, style of programming, outside speakers and youth.

Specifically, people sense the need for an over-all Christian Education Director who will coordinate all of the educational programming. Both the Sunday School and Children's Church need to be built up and given a more contemporary format. Value was seen in scheduling more outside speakers who specialize in certain areas to share with us their expertise. Concern was expressed that teens did not seem to attend all the regular services of the church and that they should be present on Wednesday nights when there is a special speaker in Prayer Meeting.

## CONGREGATIONAL PROGRAMS

### I. STRENGTHS

- A. A good, well-staffed nursery (3)
- B. Fellowship time after the morning service (3)
- C. Present VBS programming (3)
- D. Cross and Crown prayer chain (2)
- E. Men and women sports teams (2)
- F. Good variety of special speakers and musical groups (2)
- G. Good youth program (2)
- H. Full range of Sunday School classes (2)
- I. Good, active total church program (2)
- J. Fundamental heritage (2)
- K. Maintaining a Sunday evening service (1)
- L. Development of ministries for young people (1)
- M. Cross and Crown women's fellowship (1)
- N. New people being encouraged to get involved (1)
- O. Some small home meetings taking place (1)

### II. WEAKNESSES

- A. Need more and better programming for college age, career and singles (6)
- B. Need to get the L.O.V.E. group functioning (6)  
(Love Our Visitors)
- C. Need better communication with the congregation concerning program activities and opportunities and concerning various hurting and needy individuals and families (3)
- D. Need more people involved in the prayer life of the church (3)
- E. Need a L.O.V.E. (Love Our Visitors) type group to integrate church attenders into the flow of activities of the church (3)
- F. Need to revise constitution to strength the governmental structure of the church (2)
- G. Need to make business meetings more business-like: reports unprepared, leaders fail to attend, questioners made to feel out of line, congregation fails to participate as it should (2)
- H. Overall lack of interest by congregation in activities that are going on (2)

## CONGREGATIONAL PROGRAMS

- I. Nursery rules better structured: kids in, parents out (2)
- J. Congregational inertia to change (2)
- K. Large percentage of elderly in church who refuse to hold office (1)
- L. Need more cooperative activities with other churches (1)
- M. Need more summer ministries for teens (1)
- N. Need to have more sensitivity to and outreach to new and baby Christians (1)
- O. Need better follow-up on absentee regulars (1)
- P. Need to use elders for counseling (1)
- Q. Need to get more young adults into prayer meeting and involved in other ways (1)
- R. Children's Church needs to be more structured with more accountability (1)
- S. Toddler Nursery needs to be more structured with more accountability (1)
- T. Need better response to work day/work week (1)

### III. VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. More varied small group ministries (Bible studies, dinners, fellowships, care groups, etc.)
- B. Definite program of discipleship for new believers (4)
- C. Better recognition of new members (3)
- D. More full-rounded teen program, including area rallies (2)
- E. Establish food pantry/clothing shelf for area needy (2)
- F. Establish a coffee house outreach ministry (2)
- G. Young people instructed to give of themselves, to give financially, to volunteer (1)
- H. Greater number and variety of outside speakers (1)
- I. Bus ministry in Ocean Grove (1)
- J. A working, comprehensive (entire church) prayer chain (1)
- K. More evangelistic meetings (1)
- L. More programming for couples (1)
- M. Hold congregational business meetings after the morning service for greater involvement (1)
- N. More athletic programs the year round (1)
- O. A kitchen oversight committee (1)
- P. A radio ministry (1)

## CONGREGATIONAL PROGRAMS

- Q. Establish a talent bank (1)
- R. Expand AWANA into the other grades (1)
- S. Beef up the college and career program (1)
- T. Develop contacts with new area home owners (1)
- U. Schedule work days more realistically (1)
- V. Enhance and enlarge the Keenagers (seniors) programming (1)
- W. Develop a Children's Choir (1)
- X. Develop a full music program from the crib up (1)
- Y. Church activities every night of the week to meet the needs of all: fellowships, programs, Bible studies, etc. (1)
- Z. Development of theater/drama group (1)
- AA. Trained psychological/counseling staff, perhaps paid (1)
- BB. Development of a closer, deeper walk with God by all (1)
- CC. Meetings of this nature to be held on a regular basis (1)

## CONGREGATIONAL PROGRAMS

### Directional Statement

Our church offers a good variety of programs with many strengths: the nurseries, morning fellowship time, VBS, prayer chains, softball teams, special speakers, musical groups, youth programs and a full range of Sunday School classes.

Concern was expressed in the following areas: better programming for specific age groups (College and Career singles, couples), need to see that newcomers are made to feel welcome, development of a discipleship program, better communication within the church and more families to be involved with the activities and the prayer life of the church. Restructuring may be needed in areas such as the constitution, the nurseries and children's church. Business meetings and work days/weeks need to be taken more seriously.

Strong interest was seen in small group ministries (Bible studies, dinners, fellowships, care groups, etc.). Interest was also expressed in various outreach ministries such as a food pantry, clothing shelf, radio ministry and a coffee house.

## FACILITIES

### I. STRENGTHS

- A. A large, beautiful, functional building (7)
- B. The facilities are strategically located (3)
- C. Excellent musical instruments: pipe organ and piano (2)
- D. Facilities are well-cleaned (2)
- E. A well-run, air-conditioned nursery (2)
- F. Maintenance and upkeep is good (1)
- G. Good week-long use of the facilities

### II. WEAKNESSES

- A. Limited parking (7)
- B. Unsafe location (7)
- C. Poor outdoor lighting (6)
- D. Need functional library, not only with books, but also audio-visual material, flannelgraph files, etc. (3)
- E. Need cushioned pews in auditorium (2)
- F. Need to rid ourselves of present useless bus (1)
- G. Need transportation: bus and/or van (1)
- H. Need to obey handicapped parking signs (1)
- I. Need better sound system (1)
- J. Need auditorium air-conditioning (2)
- K. Too must waste space with dust collectors in all closets and storage areas (1)
- L. Need someone specially designated to be responsible for buildings during special functions.
- M. Need closer attention to kitchen cleaning (1)
- N. CJCS (Central Jersey Christian School) is hard on the facilities, especially the kitchen (1)

### III. VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. To see the sanctuary painted and decorated (4)
- B. To see a ramp and other aids for the handicapped (3)
- C. To begin the process of acquiring property for parking (3)
- D. To start a fund for a gymnasium or multi-purpose building over the education wing (3)
- E. To start a fund for auditorium air-conditioning (2)
- F. Greater nighttime security (2)
- G. To purchase a good, trustworthy bus (1)

## FACILITIES

- H. To purchase two good, trustworthy vans (1)
- I. To provide panic bars on all external doors as demanded by law (1)
- J. To prayerfully consider the wisdom of moving from the present location (1)
- K. To start a building fund (1)
- L. To see a better equipped, larger, divided nursery (1)
- M. To repair back door bell (1)
- N. To remodel the kitchen (1)
- O. To repair the outside bell tower (1)
- P. To see more efficient use of our unused areas: balconies, etc. (1)
- Q. To see the men of the church have a greater vision for its upkeep (1)
- R. To form a committee to oversee use and cleaning of the kitchen (1)

## FACILITIES

### Directional Statement

We have good facilities, in a strategic location, well-utilized and cared for, including an excellent pipe organ and piano, and an air-conditioned nursery.

We do need improvement in parking, outside lighting and overall security. Other areas that need improvement are a functional library, designated responsibilities for the use and maintenance of the kitchen, church transportation, better channels of communication and responsibility with CJCS and improved maintenance.

Anticipated improvements for the future include an air-conditioned auditorium, cushioned pews, handicapped aids, a multi-purpose room over the education wing and overall better maintenance.

## FELLOWSHIP

### I. STRENGTHS

- A. A good and improving spirit among the congregation (9)
- B. The spirit and number of young marrieds is growing (7)
- C. A loving, caring people (5)
- D. Men's fellowship group (2)
- E. A praying people (2)
- F. Care for the needy (2)
- G. The many widows included in everything (1)
- H. No "generation gap" (1)
- I. Improving age variation (1)
- J. People drawn from a wide area (1)
- K. Spirit of unity, no factions (1)
- L. Desire among teens to be together (1)
- M. No one "pressured" to become a member, yet accepted (1)
- N. Church increasingly open to new ideas (1)

### II. WEAKNESSES

- A. Need consistent, over-all church fellowship planning (4)
- B. Need to develop primary relationships  
(personal friendships) (3)
- C. Some problem with cliquishness and coldness (2)
- D. Lack of compassion and follow-up for hurting or  
missing (1)
- E. Need to work hard at keeping internal walls down -  
whole church involvement (1)
- F. Unwillingness to function cooperatively with other  
groups (1)
- G. Need for more tolerance and patience with one  
another (1)
- H. Age imbalance, especially 30s and 40s (1)
- I. Need to rethink value and purpose of fellowship time  
after morning service (Strengthened? Eliminated?  
Visitors personally invited and escorted? Sponsors?) (1)

## FELLOWSHIP

### III. VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. Need to improve relations with CJCS  
(Central Jersey Christian School) (2)
- B. More cooperation and fellowship with other Bible-believing churches (1)
- C. More stable, long-term family units (1)
- D. More social functions (1)
- E. A more heterogeneous church mix (1)

## FELLOWSHIP

### Directional Statement

Next to the music program, the improving spirit of fellowship was felt to be the strongest attribute of the church. Some specific "fruits of this spirit" are: loving, caring, praying, inclusion of everyone, unifying, desiring to be together and non-pressure; in short, overall improvement. The special fellowship groups of the church are felt to be real assets: Men's Fellowship, Cross and Crown Women's Fellowship, missionary circles, prayer cells and the young marrieds adult class.

Concern was expressed for planned fellowship programming that involves the whole church and for our compassion for the hurting - those that feel left out of the present fellowship activities. Specifically, many felt a need for more planned fellowship programs providing opportunities to develop personal friendships and helping eliminate barriers between individuals and groups.



## FINANCE

### I. STRENGTHS

All of the church needs are being met by the generous, freewill giving of the congregation (2)

### II. WEAKNESSES

- A. Financial status of the church is not well-known among the congregation because of poor communication, little accountability demanded and poor documentation (1)
- B. Finance Committee members need to look upon church accounts as church accounts and not personal accounts (1)

### III. VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. Improved communication, definite accountability and certain documentation - all of which will improve the confidence factor between financial people and the church (1)
- B. Better means of ascertaining potential church income for wiser budget planning (1)

## FINANCE

### Directional Statement

Joy was expressed that, by the grace of God, all the financial needs of the church are being met by the freewill giving of the congregation.

Mention was made of the need for better and clearer communication of the church's financial status at public meetings, for all accounts to be handled according to the budget and for better budget planning.

## LAY LEADERSHIP

### I. STRENGTHS

- A. Good Bible teaching: Sunday School, etc. (5)
- B. Deacons increasingly more dedicated, visible, positive, attending, supportive (4)
- C. Solid, spiritual people in these positions (3)
- D. People willing to work (2)
- E. Talented congregation (2)
- F. Older, consecrated folk - good examples (1)

### II. WEAKNESSES

- A. Need clearer administrative coherence: definition and communication (3)
- B. Too few people carry too much of the load (3)
- C. Administrative board is too large (1)
- D. Too few leaders attend all of the services regularly (1)
- E. Abundance of skill of past leaders not well utilized (1)
- F. Insufficient forethought given to new projects that are undertaken (1)
- G. Tend to go with the flow and grease the squeaking wheel, rather than attending to prevailing basic needs (1)
- H. Property and Grounds committee needs to function better (1)

### III. VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. Deacons be good role models, take on caring responsibilities for designated families in the church (3)
- B. Development of qualified, responsible youth sponsors (1)
- C. Greater desire to be used of God (1)
- D. Elders be such in character and godliness, not just in name (1)
- E. Church leadership better trained for their responsibilities (1)
- F. Greater use of church leaders in counseling roles (1)

## LAY LEADERSHIP

### Directional Statement

Much appreciation was expressed for the lay leadership of the church, particularly for the increasing effectiveness of the deacons and for the valuable ministry of our good, strong, mature, spiritual and willing Bible teachers.

However, concern was expressed to define more clearly and communicate roles and responsibilities, to spread the load more evenly across the congregation and to tap gifted people who are not being used. The need was also mentioned to maintain the focus on basic and general congregational needs when considering new projects.

Plans for the future should include the following: an organized deacon-caring program that seeks to meet the needs of each family; a lay leadership developed and trained for greater responsibilities in counseling, working with youth and care-giving; and effective use of leaders as role models that demonstrate Christian character and godliness.

## MISSIONS

### I. STRENGTHS

- A. We support many and varied missionaries (5)
- B. A sense of the missionaries being "ours" . . . they are family (3)
- C. Improving attitude toward, support for and relationship with CJCS (Central Jersey Christian School) (2)
- D. Good, strong, dedicated Missionary Committee (1)
- E. Sense of balance - home and abroad (1)
- F. Strong local visitation (1)
- G. Increasing awareness of need to minister locally (1)

### II. WEAKNESSES

- A. Little or no outreach to the local community: minorities, etc. (9)
- B. Need for greater accountability of our present missionaries (1)
- C. Church congregation not self-motivated to reach out (1)
- D. Need more folk to be involved in visitation (1)
- E. Need to begin a deaf ministry (1)

### III. VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. An effective outreach to our immediate community (3)
- B. Development of an Hispanic ministry (2)
- C. Greater evangelistic outreach (1)
- D. More visitation groups: shut-ins, etc. (1)

## MISSIONS

### Directional Statement

The strengths of our missions program are a wide support of missionaries, a good Missions Committee and good local visitation. Other plusses are an increasing awareness of our need to minister in our local community and an improving relationship with Central Jersey Christian School.

Matters deemed needing attention are more local outreach ministries, better accountability of our present missionaries and a revitalized women's missionary group. Increased congregational involvement in these and other outreach ministries is important.

Future ministries envisioned include local evangelistic efforts, Hispanic programs, visitation to shut-ins and a deaf ministry.

## STAFF

### I. STRENGTHS

- A. Good head pastor (6)
- B. Good visitation pastor (7)
- C. Good youth pastor (4)
- D. Pastor an encourager (1)

### II. WEAKNESSES

- A. Need clearer and more precise job descriptions for all employees (1)
- B. Pastor assumes too much personal responsibility (1)
- C. Pastor needs to work more through proper channels: committees, etc. (1)

### III. VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. Pastor should be taking continuing education courses at church expense (1)
- B. Hire a full-time maintenance man on staff (1)

## STAFF

### Directional Statement

Generally, the congregation is very pleased with the overall church staff.

Some consideration was given to pastor and staff responsibilities and delegation.

Mention was made that the pastor take continuing education courses at the church's expense. The need for a fulltime maintenance man was observed.

## WORSHIP

### I. STRENGTHS

- A. Good musical program: choir, specials, organ (1)
- B. Good preaching: balance of meat for Christians and thrust for evangelism (10)
- C. New hymn books provide excellent variety (2)
- D. Ushers are friendly (1)
- E. Sunday attendance is good (1)
- F. People are receptive to the Word (1)
- G. An increasing willingness to express personal emotion and public response to the Word (1)

### II. WEAKNESSES

- A. Need to shorten or eliminate announcement time - it detracts from the sense of worship (5)
- B. Need to update the visitor's packet with valuable pertinent information (4)
- C. Need to get children's church kids in by starting time if they join the regular service (2)
- D. Ushers and others who take part in the service should fulfill their function and be dressed properly (2)
- E. The one who prays at the close of the service should use a microphone so all can hear (2)
- F. Need hearing aid devices available for the hearing impaired (1)
- G. Too much noise and irreverence prior to the service and too much congregational commotion during the service (1)
- H. Need to use a broader group of people leading the various parts of the services (1)
- I. Need to diversify the evening service: more sharing, singing, spontaneity (1)
- J. Need to update the worship style and kind of music (1)
- K. Use of King James Version of the Bible for public and corporate use is archaic (1)
- L. Though altar calls are important, need to reconsider taking respondees to separate room for counseling during the service: embarrassment (1)
- M. Need to keep politics and mention of other religious groups out of the services (1)

## WORSHIP

### III. VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- A. Holy Spirit revival (2)
- B. An exciting, vibrant, challenging evening service (2)
- C. More freedom in the Sunday morning service (2)
- D. More formality in the Sunday morning service (1)
- E. Church full of worshipping, growing Christians (3)
- F. Church services more contemporary in nature (1)
- G. Replace evening service with vespers (1)
- H. Ushers wear name tags and flowers regularly (2)
- I. Teenagers become more involved in the services, perhaps responsible for one service a month (1)
- J. Provide a sound-proof cry room at the rear of the side chapel (1)
- K. Sing the doxology every Sunday morning (1)
- L. Rearrange the choir loft so choir can leave more inobtrusively (1)

## WORSHIP

### Directional Statement

Attendance at our worship services is good, enhanced by friendly ushers, a congregation that is receptive to the Word and a willingness to express their response publicly. The keys to this success seem to lie with an excellent musical program, the new hymnals and a good pulpit ministry.

A primary concern is the need to maintain a more worshipful environment. Areas which need attention are: the late seating of children, ushers not appropriately attired, and excessive noise before and during the services. Changes which will improve our worship experience are: more diversity in worship style, wider use of lay people in the services and greater sensitivity during altar calls.

With the Holy Spirit's empowerment, we look forward to church services which are exciting, vibrant and challenging. They will encourage Christian growth, more greatly involve our young people and develop the worshipful environment we all cherish.



The Home Congregational Assessment Meetings were exceedingly valuable to the church in four respects:

(1) It opened people's eyes to the fact of other First Baptist Church attenders in their area and thus raised the level of fellowship among God's people from the same neighborhood.

(2) It created a sense of satisfaction as people felt for the first time that their voices and concerns were being heard.

(3) It engendered a church atmosphere pregnant with excitement as the congregation began to look forward to revitalizing changes.

(4) It gave the church leadership solid meat upon which to chew as it planned the future direction of the church.

All of which led us directly into the next step: prioritizing the objectives.

## APPENDIX C

### THE MATERIAL USED IN PRIORITIZING THE OBJECTIVES AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Appendix C consists of the third step in the process leading toward ministry revitalization: setting the priorities for our objectives as a church. Three steps that we followed at First Baptist Church are outlined in this appendix: (1) A deacons' retreat dealing with the need to become effective leaders, (2) The election of a church task force to address the issues raised at the Congregational Home Assessment Meetings and (3) A "Sixteen Most Wanted List" of the prioritized items for the task force to focus their attention upon.

As we approached the reality of making concrete and substantive changes in the church's program and structure, we recognized that we would receive some flak. Though the church in general was supportive of the tentative changes, we knew that there would be entrenched forces directly affected by our recommendations that might conceivably fight those changes tooth and nail, and who would probably become very critical of those who were making the recommended changes.

Thus, it seemed reasonable to share with the deacons information concerning effective leadership, and in particular as that leadership learns how to deal with criticism. The material in the following pages was shared with the deacons to help them learn how to face criticism correctly and also how to become the right kind of critics themselves. The material was broken down into four sessions as follows:

- Session #1: Essential Characteristics of an Effective Leader
- Session #2: The Greatest Leadership Principle in the World
- Session #3: Responding to Critics
- Session #4: Learning the Value of Criticism

# DEACONS RETREAT

"EFFECTIVE  
LEADERSHIP"

## THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE LEADER

- I. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER IS CALLED "What I feel"
- II. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER IS A COMMUNICATOR "What I show"
- III. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER IS CREATIVE "What I see"
- IV. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER IS A CONTRIBUTOR "What I give"
- V. AN EFFECTIVE LEADER IS CONSISTENT "What I do"

## THE GREATEST LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE IN THE WORLD

Principle: " What Gets Rewarded Gets Done "

### Behavior That Deserves Rewards:

1. Solid Solutions to Problems, Not Short-Term Quick Fixes
2. Risk-Taking Instead of Risk-Avoiding
3. Applied Creativity Rather Than Mindless Conformity
4. Decisive Action Rather Than Paralysis By Analysis
5. Smart Work Rather Than Busy Work
6. Simplification Rather Than Complication
7. Quiet Effective Behavior Rather Than Loud Squeaking Behavior
8. Quality Work Rather Than Fast Work
9. Consistency Rather Than Charisma
10. Working Together Rather Than Working Independently

### The Ten Best Ways To Reward Behavior:

- |                        |                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Money               | f. Advancement                   |
| b. Recognition         | g. Freedom                       |
| c. Time off            | h. Personal Growth Opportunities |
| d. Piece of the action | i. Special Times Together        |
| e. Favorite work       | j. Gifts                         |

## RESPONDING TO CRITICS

### Three Concepts You Must Grapple With:

How do I see myself?

How do I see others?

How do others see me?

### Problem People You Will Meet

1. *The Sherman Tank* "Intimidation"
2. *The Space Cadet* "Frustration"
3. *The Volcano* "Tension"
4. *The Thumb-Sucker* "Heaviness"
5. *The Wet Blanket* "Draining"
6. *The Garbage Collector* "Mad"
7. *The User* "Manipulator"

## General Rules In Dealing With Problem People

1. Love them - unconditionally
2. Ask God for wisdom - James 1  
    May take real creativity to solve
3. Stay healthy in every way yourself
4. Do not give special positions to help people improve
5. Be honest with God, with yourself and with them
6. Keep only healthy people in positions of leadership -  
    otherwise contamination

## The Six Deadly Sins (No-No's) Of Confrontation

1. Failure to line up your facts ahead
2. Reprimanding in anger
3. Being vague about the problem - be specific
4. Failure to get the other side of the story first
5. Failure to keep clear, comprehensive records
6. Harboring a grudge



## LEARNING THE VALUE OF CRITICISM

### Ten Ways To Handle Criticism Successfully

1. Understand The Difference Between Constructive Criticism And Destructive Criticism
2. Don't Take Yourself Too Seriously
3. Look Beyond The Criticism To See The Critic
4. Watch Your Own Attitude Toward The Critic
5. Recognize That Good People Get Criticized
6. Keep in Shape Physically And Spiritually
7. See Not Only The Critic, But Also The Crowd
8. Wait For Time To Prove Your Critic Wrong
9. Associate With Winners
10. Concentrate On Your Mission ; Change Your Mistakes

## Ten Ways To Criticize Others Constructively

1. Check Your Motive
2. Make Certain The Issue Is Worthy Of Criticism
3. Be Specific
4. Don't Undermine The Person's Self - Confidence
5. Don't Compare One Person With Another
6. Be Creative Or Do Not Criticize
7. Do Not Attack The Individual
8. Do Not Postpone Needed Criticism
9. Look At Yourself Before Looking At Others
10. Always Begin and End Criticism With Encouragement

MOVING FORWARD AFTER THE HOME MEETINGS:  
SELECTING A TASK FORCE

The Congregational Home Assessment Meetings are history and the data from them has been compiled, categorized, copied and distributed to the church. Now, the question is, "How do we, in fact, began to prioritize these objectives and address them?"

Our chosen procedure was to select a Task Force, a cross-section of representatives from the entire congregation. Their job was to examine and consider each issue raised at the home meetings, prioritize them according to the number of home meeting groups that addressed them, make recommendations to the proper organizational or committee heads, make reports of progress to the deacons and to the entire church, and watch-dog the entire process so that these congregational concerns did not just die.

At a specially called church business meeting the following Task Force Guidelines were adopted and a committee of twelve people were elected to the Task Force.

## TASK FORCE GUIDELINES

### 1. Purpose

To formulate and recommend strategies for carrying out the will of the congregation as expressed in the Home Meetings of June, 1989

### 2. Personnel

Twelve people, all members in good standing of the church, a representative cross section of the congregation:

- Four leaders (mixture of pastoral staff and deacons)
- Two "older" marrieds (40's +)
- Two "younger" marrieds (20's - 40's)
- Two "older" singles (40+)
- Two "younger" singles (20-40)

### 3. Duration

Will function as an active committee until the Annual Meeting of November, 1990, at which time the church will evaluate further procedure

### 4. Procedure

- a. Will meet at its earliest possible convenience to elect a chairman, a secretary and other leaders it deems necessary
- b. Will pursue its agenda aggressively throughout the tenure of its existence

### 5. Accountability

- a. To the deacons
  - (1) Will report its progress to the deacons at their monthly meeting through one of their representatives on the official board
  - (2) All strategies recommended by the Task Force must be approved by the deacons prior to their implementation.
    - (a) Strategies referred to other existing officers, committees or others responsible
    - (b) Strategies the Task Force might consider carrying out on its own
    - (c) Strategies necessitating a church business meeting for congregational approval

- b. To the congregation
  - (1) Will report on its progress to the congregation at each regularly scheduled business meeting and by various Sunday announcements
  - (2) The deacons may convene special congregational business meetings at the request of the Task Force for the purpose of implementing strategies demanding congregational approval.

For the next year and a half this Task Force met weekly or bi-monthly to consider these issues and to formulate and recommend strategies for resolving them.

The prioritized concerns as picked by the congregation at the home meetings and to which the task force gave the most of its attention are as follows:

- (1) To select a Christian Education Director whose job it will be to oversee and coordinate all the education programs of the church.
- (2) To build, strengthen and contemporize the Sunday School.
- (3) To create an effective ministry for the college age, career and other singles.
- (4) To develop an effective ministry to those who visit our church services.
- (5) To consider creative alternatives to our limited parking area.
- (6) To increase the safety factor for those attending our services, especially at night.
- (7) To develop a consistent, over-all church fellowship program.
- (8) To provide good opportunities for church attenders to develop close intimate friendships.
- (9) To clarify communication with the church concerning financial statements, accountability and documentation.
- (10) To develop less complex administrative guidelines.
- (11) To develop church leadership into more impelling role models.

- (12) To develop an effective ministry of outreach to our local community.
- (13) To develop Hispanic and other ethnic ministries as needed.
- (14) To develop clear, comprehensive and precise job descriptions for the entire staff.
- (15) To eliminate or otherwise alter the announcement time during the service so it is not such an interruption.
- (16) To formulate an up-to-date, comprehensive packet of material for first-time visitors to the church services.

## APPENDIX D

### SOME INITIAL STEPS IN REVITALIZING THE MINISTRY AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Appendix D spells out some of the many changes that have taken place, are in the process of taking place or at least have been recommended by the Task Force at First Baptist Church. Though not every item on this list can be directly attributed to the work of the Task Force, the ease with which these changes were initiated and their acceptance by the congregation are a direct result of the positive and efficient operation of that committee as it has spearheaded the drive for revitalization of ministry in our church.

Some of these changes have gone very well, some have faltered a little and yet others have not been successful at all. Much of change is experimentation until the right combination is found.

Though the ministry of revitalization at First Baptist Church is ongoing and still has a long way to go, it already has come a long, long way and everyone involved in the process is to be highly commended.

#### List of Changes Taken Place While Pursuing the Goal of Ministry Revitalization at First Baptist Church

1. Sanctuary and side chapel repainted
2. Exterior of church building tuckpointed
3. New roof installed over education wing
4. Multitudinous interior repairs made
5. Handicap ramp installed on interior
6. Handicap lift installed between floors



7. Exterior lighting around church building installed
8. Regular work days at church begun
9. Deacon care ministry recommended
10. Ministry to church visitors formulated
11. Usher recruitment and workshop held
12. College and Career fellowship group organized
13. Junior Church program begun
14. Children's Church program revamped
15. Summer camping program for children begun
16. Sunday School restructured
17. More variety instituted in Sunday services
18. Announcement time removed from the services entirely
19. New personalized bulletin covers now in use
20. Informative bulletin inserts used with frequency
21. Attractive and informative visitor's packets given away
22. Visitor's cards use encouraged
23. Special fifth Sunday events encouraged: socials, films, food, etc.
24. Church library renovated
25. Church newsletter encouraged
26. Church pictorial directory completed
27. Increased involvement at church business meetings encouraged by providing a nursery and covered dish dinner
28. Form letter provided for baptismal candidates
29. Discipleship committee in process of formulation
30. Deacons' monthly meetings streamlined to save time
31. Deacons' training session during monthly meeting (1/2 hour)
32. Clothing giveaway monthly to community needy

33. Form for tabulation of attendance at all services in use
34. Discipleship training class begun
35. Constitution revision enacted and completed
36. Officer and committee annual orientation
37. Officer and committee public recognition service
38. Living Last Supper enacted by church members at Easter
39. Semi-annual all-church day of prayer
40. Deacons' annual retreats
41. Sunday School teachers' appreciation dinner
42. Annual Bible conference
43. Organization of men's fellowship group
44. Organization of youth choir
45. Organization of young mothers' Bible study
46. Organization of young marrieds' fellowship group
47. AIDS position paper distributed to all new members
48. Men's retreat (first one tentavely scheduled)
49. Teen mission trip scheduled each summer
50. Friend Day organized through the Sunday School
51. Praise and Prayer Services occasionally on Sunday evenings

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