

Churches That Thrive

Session 2

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Alarming stats about churches in the USA

- 80% of churches have plateau or are in decline...
- This year 4000 churches will open and 7000 will close
- Out of the churches that are growing only 1 to 3% is from new converts
- The 10 largest churches in America 20 years ago no longer show up in top 50
- It's estimated that only 15% of population attend church regularly

Churches That Thrive...

1. Have Strong Vision

Prov 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people perish. KJV

Mission of MOVEMENT CH:

1 Cor 12:18 God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. KJV

Heb 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. KJV

2. Are Healthy Not Perfect.

What does a healthy church look like?

A. It helps sick people get well.

B. It grows

A healthy church is one that is 1/3 mature, 1/3 new believers and 1/3 seekers.

- ***1/3 Mature = people that have pushed back from the table and are serving others***
- ***1/3 New Believers' = people that are just beginning their walk***
- ***1/3 Seekers = people that are trying to see what this God thing is all about***

3. Are Not Afraid Of Change.

Judges 2:7-8 The people worshiped GOD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and the time of the leaders who survived him, leaders who had been in on all of GOD's great work that he had done for Israel. Then Joshua son of Nun, the servant of GOD, died. He was 110 years old. MESSAGE

Judges 2:10-12 Eventually that entire generation died and was buried. Then another generation grew up that didn't know anything of GOD or the work he had done for Israel. The People of Israel did evil in GOD's sight: they served Baal-gods; they deserted GOD, the God of their parents who had led them out of Egypt; they took up with other gods, gods of the peoples around them. They actually worshiped them! MESSAGE

The greatest question the church must answer today is, are we willing to change our methods in order to keep from losing the next generation?

Every generation has the right to hear the message of God's love in a language they can understand.

Mark 4:33-34 Jesus presented his message to them, fitting the stories to their experience and maturity. He was never without a story when he spoke. MESSAGE

4. Are Not Afraid To Fail.

Thomas Edison's teachers said he was "too stupid to learn anything." He was fired from his first two jobs for being "non-productive." As an inventor, Edison made 1,000 unsuccessful attempts at inventing the light bulb. When a reporter asked, "How did it feel to fail 1,000 times?" Edison replied, I didn't fail 1,000 times. The light bulb was an invention with 1,000 steps. Never Quit!

Babe Ruth is famous for his past home run record, but for decades he also held the record for strikeouts. He hit 714 home runs and struck out 1,330 times in his career (about which he said, "*Every strike brings me closer to the next home run.*"). (John Wooden once explained that winners make the most errors . . . because they NEVER quit.)

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor because "he lacked imagination and had no good ideas." He went bankrupt several times before he built Disneyland. In fact, the proposed park was rejected by the city of Anaheim on the grounds that it would only attract riffraff.

5. **Have A High Percentage Of People Serving.**

Luke 19:12-13 A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, **Occupy till I come.**

Occupy = busy oneself with the business, matter and work at hand

Rom 12:5 Each of us finds our meaning and function as a part of his body. But as a chopped-off finger or cut-off toe we wouldn't amount to much, would we? **MESSAGE**

1 Corinthians 12:12. "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ."

1 Cor 12:7 Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! **MESSAGE**

6. **Have A Positive Atmosphere That Comes From A Positive Message**

Rom 2:4 Or are you [so blind as to] trifle with and presume upon and despise and underestimate the wealth of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering patience? Are you unmindful or actually ignorant [of the fact] that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repent (to change your mind and inner man to accept God's will)? **AMP**

Matt 9:9 And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, **Follow me.** And he arose, and followed him. **KJV**

Heb 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. **KJV**

Neh 8:10 Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength. KJV

7. Supports the Vision of the Seniors Leaders