

Church Revitalization **Albert Mohler**

80-90% of all evangelical churches in the United States are not growing.

Rev. 2:1-7 – “Christ warns the Ephesian church that they have ‘left their first love’ and grown spiritually cold and ineffective in ministry. Jesus told the church to repent and do the deeds they did at first”

Referring to Christians in churches, Albert Mohler states, “what they most lack is visionary, courageous, and convictional pastors and leaders.”

Our central tasks in our generation:

1. Be bold in the vision of replanting churches – helping existing churches to find
 - a. New vision
 - b. New strategic focus
 - c. New Passion for the gospel
 - d. New hunger for preaching the Word
 - e. New love for their communities
 - f. New excitement about seeing people come to faith in Jesus.

Many churches will die by congregational suicide. Unwilling to replant, they simply want a slower decline. THIS IS DISOBEDIENCE TO CHRIST.

Send North America

1. Increase the church birth rate – Goal of 15,000 churches in 10 years
2. Decrease the church death rate.

In 1900 there was one Southern Baptist church for every 3800 people in North America. Today that number is one for every 6200.

Each year about 1,000 SBC churches disappear.

Only 27% of SBC churches are experiencing growth, 43% are plateaued and 30% are in decline.

Some of the churches that die each year need to. They have long since outlived their purpose.

- They have had a hollow, ineffective presence in their communities for years.
- This is a negative testimony for Christ.

God demands holiness from all of his people, and rarely do people rise above their leaders, as the leaders go, so go the people.

- Leaders need to be above reproach...that means unimpeachable character, but it doesn't mean they are flawless.

A Summary of thoughts by Cliff Myers

- What does above reproach look like: I Timothy 3:2-7

“If you’re laboring to revitalize a dying church, you are hunted. You are a target for slander, scandal, and Satan, and being on the frontlines of difficult ministry guarantees you will get blood on your uniform.

When a church needs revitalized it must first assess where it is in its current state

- Not what it once was
- What they wished it was.
- A realistic and accurate appraisal of where the church is right now.

5 Questions to ask to do the self appraisal:

1. “Who is in Charge” - Authority
 - a. Who has the greatest influence in the church?
 - b. Who do church members go to when decisions need to be made?
 - c. Just because the pastor gets paid and preaches does not make him the man in charge.
 - d. The Bible is clear about who is in charge....Jesus Christ.
2. “Whom do I follow” - Leadership
 - a. The problem is not with filling roles of leadership during the absence of a pastor, but with what happens to those roles once there is a pastor.
 - b. There are two Biblical offices in the church: Pastors and deacons. These roles are different when it comes to leadership.
3. “To whom am I accountable” - Membership
 - a. Jesus
 - b. Hebrews 10:25, Matthew 18:16-20, I Cor. 5 and 2 Cor 2:6
4. “Who is my brother?” - Unity
5. “Why do we gather?” - Worship Heb. 10:25, I Cor. 14:24
 - a. Corporate worship is not about the unbeliever, it is about bringing glory to God through the proclamation of the gospel and its implications for all of life.

Jesus Christ is the Glory of the Church. He loves the Church and died for the Church. He loves not just healthy, growing churches, but also sick struggling churches.

A popular saying among church planters, “It is easier to give birth than to raise the dead”.

- Only God by His Spirit can breathe life into death.

God has called Pastors to “shepherd” the flock. Many churches that need revitalization have hurting, broken discouraged sheep that need a shepherd to care for them and nurture them back to health. I Peter 5:2, Hebrews 13:17

“Getting Christians to acknowledge they should evangelize is like getting children to admit they should eat their vegetables.

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Unity – John 17:21...nothing less than the reputation of Jesus Christ is on the line.

PREACH→PRAY→WORK→STAY