

Strategizing For...



Church Health

Teacher's Notes

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Strategizing For Church Health

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NOTE: This Ten Session course is designed to be used for team/leadership development and can be utilized as a ten week course, ten month course for monthly board/leadership meetings, or even a weekend leadership retreat.

SECTION ONE

Strategically Building Healthy Leaders



“How healthy is your church?” What a great question to start off with! After all, the health of a church or lack thereof, is in large part the determining factor of a church’s success in fulfilling its God-ordained purpose in its community. However, an even better question would be, “How healthy are the leaders of your church?”

Why? Because as John Maxwell is noted as saying, “Everything rises and falls on leadership.” And that is precisely the topic that we will cover over these next few sessions.

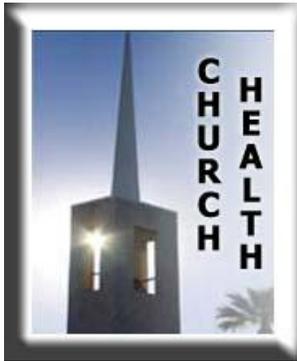
If ever there was a time that the church was in need of healthy leadership, it is TODAY! We need men and women who are full of the Holy Spirit and fire; that have a deepening love for the Word of God; and a greater awareness of the Presence of God in their daily lives. Our community needs a church that is filled with productive, growing, healthy followers of Christ, who, although are not perfect, yet are yielding themselves to the leading of the Holy Spirit in new and exciting ways. Then, and only then, will the church be healthy, fulfilling the plans and purposes of its Founder, the Lord Jesus Christ!

In the coming sessions, we will discuss the importance of church health, as opposed to the more popular topic of ‘church growth.’ The reason is simple: Healthy things grow. And as one can see all throughout the book of Acts (which by the way was as healthy as the Church has ever been) it was in fact a growing church, with “the Lord adding to their numbers daily.” Until the local church can say that of itself, I would say it’s safe to say that we have some growing to do! So, ready yourself for a journey that will prepare you for a lifetime of effective leadership the healthy way – built to last!

Growing together,

Pastor James

Session 1 CULTIVATING CHURCH HEALTH



Church splits often hurt the many individuals involved and bring reproach upon Christ Himself. Breaches in relationships must be repaired if the church is to be seen for what it truly is: the body of Christ. Real differences from the world and real spiritual power must be demonstrated in God's churches. While a number of dynamics are involved in church health, practically speaking, we must learn how to minister to individuals in the church who are facing differing problems. In so doing, we will then be in the process of cultivating and maintaining a healthy church. So, how can we do our part?

How Can We Develop and Maintain a Healthy Church?

I. Understand our union with the body of Christ.

- We must see and treat one another as family. This concept is foundational and ties the following implications together because too often persons in the church see one another as adversaries.
- These implications are grounded in 1 Thess. 5:14-15.
 - *Brothers and sisters, we urge you to warn those who are lazy. Encourage those who are timid. Take tender care of those who are weak. Be patient with everyone. See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to all people (NLT).*
- We are brothers and sisters and in union with one another by virtue of our union with Christ. In light of that reality, there are practical issues in terms of relationships with which we must deal.

II. Understand our focus on the body of Christ.

- Our focus must be others and not ourselves.
 - When conflicts arise, the most common response is a focus on oneself by way of anger, an unwillingness to seek reconciliation, or the slander of a brother.
 - In his word to the Thessalonians, Paul emphasizes a focus on others. Elsewhere he says, *"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 2:3-5, NKJV).

III. Understand our ministry to the body of Christ

- As we focus on others, we will minister to others.
- Paul offers a word of exhortation in terms of helping those within the body who face different issues leading to different dispositions or heart attitudes.
 - Paul writes, *“Get along among yourselves, each of you doing your part. Our counsel is that you warn the freeloaders to get a move on. Gently encourage the stragglers, and reach out for the exhausted, pulling them to their feet. Be patient with each person, attentive to individual needs”* (1 Thess. 5:13-14, Message).
- Rather than tear others down, we are to help those within the church who are hurting, and even warning those who have fallen into sin. Highlights may be given here.

IV. Understand our benefits from the body of Christ.

- At least four beneficial implications can be gleaned from the foregoing:
 - 1) We will bring much glory to the Lord
 - 2) Aid in the sanctification of others
 - 3) Watch unto our very own souls, and
 - 4) Bear witness to Christ's changing power
- With Paul's teaching here, there is a sense in which we are getting a crash course in shepherding souls, biblical counseling, and/or pastoral discipleship.

As we take Paul's teaching to heart in these practical ways, we will not only reap the noted benefits, we will also be doing our part to develop and maintain a healthy church body for the glory of God. May we catch the vision to shepherd one another to and for the health of the church.

Session 2 WHERE IT ALL BEGINS



A healthy church is made up of healthy leaders who are reproducing themselves by living and demonstrating the strategy of Jesus:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." Matthew 28:19, NIV.

A healthy church is one that reflects the church that its Founder originally intended when He [Jesus] said, ***"As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you"*** (John 20:21, NLT).

Three areas that we must consider:

I. The Dilemma of the Church

- The statistics are staggering: 85% of all Christian churches in America are either plateaued or are in decline.
- Recent statistics suggest that only 18-20% of the American population attends church on any given Sunday.
- The largest segment of society that is un-churched is the 18-30 age-bracket.
- What's worse is that many churches today have become lethargic and visionless, and have no plan of action to counteract this trend!

II. The Demand for Healthy Leadership

- As has often been quoted, "Everything rises and falls on leadership." And the best leaders in the church are those who are led by the Spirit of God (Romans 8:14) and not by their own carnal nature.
- Earl Creps, in his book *Off-Road Disciplines*, writes, *"Missional leaders see the world through the eyes of Jesus and see Jesus in the world."*
- A healthy leader is a missional leader, one who takes part in the *Missio Dei*, or the **"Mission of God"** in the world.
- What is the Mission of God? It is God's plan to redeem the world! As missiologist David Bosch explains, it is "God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit, which is expanded to include yet another 'movement': Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world."
- The fact is, those in leadership positions in the church are called to a higher standard than the average lay person. We are called to exemplify the missional life through servant leadership.

III. The Development of Healthy Disciples

- One of the greatest problems facing many churches today is the severe lack of strategic discipleship. At best, most churches haphazardly produce disciples, even by accident sometimes, without having a clear path for new believers to take once they begin their faith journey.
- A healthy church is a missional church that is driven by the *Missio Dei*, or **Mission of God**—“As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you!”
- Christ’s mandate is our mission! Jesus said, “*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you*” Matthew 28:19-20, NIV.
- Acts 2:42-47 gives greater clarity to the foundation of a healthy Pentecostal church:
 - *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved* (NIV).

Since we are a Pentecostal, Spirit-filled church our focus will be on discovering, developing and deploying Healthy Spirit-Filled Leaders.

A HEALTHY SPIRIT-FILLED LEADER...

1. Embraces the Word of God

- *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching*
- LEADERSHIP APPLICATION: If the church is going to grow in the knowledge of the Word of God, it begins with those in leadership developing a healthy appetite for God’s Word.

2. Encounters God through worship and communion

- *Praising God ...and prayer*
- LEADERSHIP APPLICATION: As leaders, we must personally connect with God in Spirit-filled worship and times of meaningful prayer in our daily lives... not just on Sunday!

3. Expects miracles, signs and wonders

- *...many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.*

- LEADERSHIP APPLICATION: How big is your God? Is there anything your God cannot do?

4. **Excels in the grace of giving**

- *...they gave to anyone as he had need.*
- LEADERSHIP APPLICATION: All leaders must practice biblical stewardship in the areas of not only tithes and missions giving, but in their time, resources, gifts, and talents.

5. **Encourages other believers**

- *They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.*
- LEADERSHIP APPLICATION: Relationship development takes time, energy, and determination and does not happen accidentally.

6. **Endeavors to win the lost**

- *The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*
- LEADERSHIP APPLICATION: Before we can lead others to be missional, we ourselves must live with a conscious awareness of the lostness of humanity and our never ending obligation to share Christ with them.

The cultivating of a healthy church begins with the development of healthy leadership. Former Assemblies of God assistant general superintendent Charles Crabtree writes:

“If the American church is going to produce authentic disciples who will stay true to God, it cannot cut any corners, weaken the divine standards, or cheapen the materials put into the Church of Jesus Christ.”

Note: As leaders, called by God to serve this church, may we endeavor to maintain our spiritual passion and fire as we continue to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18, NIV). Let us recommit ourselves to the healthy habits of Spirit filled living!

Session 3 THE ART OF SELF-LEADERSHIP



Before any leader can effectively lead others, he or she must learn the discipline of leading him/herself. In fact, the best gift you can give the people you lead and serve here at the church is a healthy, energized, fully surrendered, focused self. And no one can do that for you. You've got to do that for yourself.

A Biblical Case Study in Self-Leadership

Bill Hybels offers the following scenario:

Consider 1 Samuel 30. David, the future king of Israel, is a young emerging leader at the time. He is just learning to lead his troops into battle. He's green. But God is pouring his favor on David, and most of the time the battles go his way. One terrible day though, that pattern changes. After returning home from fighting yet another enemy, David and his men discover soldiers have attacked and destroyed their campsite, dragged off the women and children, and burned all their belongings.

This would define "bad day" for any leader! But it's not over. His soldiers are tired, angry, and worried sick about their families. They're miffed at God. A faction of his men spreads word that they've had it with David's leadership. They figure it's all David's fault, and they decide to stone him to death.

In this crisis David's leadership is severely tested. Suddenly, he has to decide who needs leadership the most. His soldiers? The officers? The faction?

His answer? None of the above.

In this critical moment he realizes a foundational truth: he has to lead himself before he can lead anybody else. Unless he is squared away internally he has nothing to offer his team. So "David strengthened himself in the Lord his God" (1 Samuel 30:6). Only then does he lead his team to rescue their families and what's left of their belongings.

Note: We are on a rescue mission of our own. There are multitudes of souls that are hanging in the balance within our reach. If we are ever going to effectively reach our culture and have a lasting impact on our community, it will be a direct result of us learning the art of self-leadership, thereby qualifying ourselves to lead others more efficiently.

Great Leaders Demonstrate Self-Leadership:

1. They monitor their thought life

“...take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5, NIV).

2. They manage their household well

“For if a man cannot **manage** his own **household**, how can he take care of God’s church?” (1 Timothy 3:5, NLT).

“A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well” (1 Timothy 3:12, NIV).

3. They maintain their spiritual life

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15, KJV).

“Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation” (1 Peter 2:2, NLT).

4. They master their emotions

“Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one (Titus 1:7-8, NIV).

5. They motivate themselves and others to mission

“A good leader motivates, doesn't mislead, doesn't exploit” (Proverbs 16:10, Msg).

“My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit” (Galatians 5:16, Msg).

6. They model a disciplined life

“...conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ” (Philippians 1:27, NIV).

“You are dead to sin and alive to God. That's what Jesus did. That means you must not give sin a vote in the way you conduct your lives. Don't give it the time of day” (Romans 6:11-12, Msg).

Session 4 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A STRATEGY



“When we look at churches God is blessing, we find that they all have carefully thought-through strategies. Strategy matters!” – Aubrey Malphurs

In order for a church to effectively reach its community, it must be purposeful in how it creates and designs its specific ministry environments, or it runs the risk of becoming irrelevant and unproductive.

The Strategy for a Healthy church

The Church’s mission is clear. Jesus provided the mission when he instructed the disciples, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20). The strategy, then, is the process that determines **HOW** a particular church will accomplish this mission.

- *“The church needs to solidify its market and expand at the edges”* – Dr. Paul Walker, former Overseer, Church of God (Cleveland, TN).
- If the church is ever going to effectively reach its community it must have a strategic plan and intentional approach, with a specific target in mind, or it will eventually become irrelevant and lose its focus.

The Scriptures are clear, “Where there is no revelation (or prophetic vision), the people cast off restraint” (Proverbs 29:18 NKJV).

- Why are so many people walking away from the church today? I believe that it is the direct result of visionless churches that have lost sight of the original purpose for which they were birthed and consequently are merely “struggling to maintain the status quo.”
- God has not called the Church to simply “hold its ground.” Rather, we have been given marching orders from Heaven to “take new ground” for the Kingdom of God!
- All healthy churches that are progressively taking new territory for the Kingdom have a clearly defined strategy for achieving the purposes of God for its assembly. I believe that ***every church is perfectly designed to achieve the results it’s getting!***

So, why should a church take the time to develop a strategy for ministry? Aubrey Malphurs offers the following 12 reasons:

- 1) Accomplishes mission
- 2) Facilitates understanding
- 3) Provides a sense of momentum
- 4) Properly invests God's resources
- 5) Displays what God is blessing
- 6) Enables you to be proactive, not reactive
- 7) Forces wrestling with purpose/values/mission/vision
- 8) Identifies strengths, weaknesses and threats
- 9) Faces the reality of change with a healthy process
- 10) Fosters a positive approach to ministry
- 11) Reveals trends and their implications

If we are going to continue growing toward greater health as a church, we need leaders who embrace the concept of developing a *Strategy for a Healthy Church*, and who in turn lead others into a clearer understanding of their need for greater health as a Christ follower, in order to accomplish our mission as a church.

Discuss the Following as a Team

1. Give examples from Scripture where God's people implemented an effective strategy in order to fulfill His purposes.
2. What is our church's current ministry strategy?
3. Understanding that God has a unique plan and purpose for this local congregation, what can we do to discover and implement our unique strategy?

Session 5 THE CONCEPTION OF CORE VALUES



A church's Core Values explain why a church does what it does, and perhaps even more importantly... why it doesn't do what some think it should do. They are the deeply imbedded principles that drive us and consume us in our ministry to the Lord and to people.

DEFINING CORE VALUES

A church's primary values are defined as its constant, passionate, biblical core beliefs that drive its ministry. This definition has five key elements.

1. **Core values are constant.** Core values change very slowly. Change usually takes from 2 to 4 years. This is why it is hard to revitalize an established church. It takes time to change people's values. Consequently, it's critical that you begin with the right values.
2. **Core values are passionate.** *Vision* is a seeing word; *passion* is a feeling word. Core values touch the heart and elicit strong emotions. They stir feelings that can move people to biblical, Christ-honoring ministry.
3. **Core values are biblical.** The true test of a credo or values statement is: Does it square with Scripture? The statement doesn't have to be found in the Bible, but it shouldn't contradict the Bible.
4. **Core values are core beliefs.** People use various synonyms for values: *precepts, principles, tenets, standards, or assumptions*. (Some of these terms may not equate with values.) Values are your primary or core beliefs. A belief is a conviction or opinion you hold to be true based on limited evidence or proof.
5. **Values drive the ministry.** Values are the deeply ingrained drivers behind the behavior of a church. This includes the decisions made, money spent, risks taken, problems solved, goals set, and priorities determined.

* Source: http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200004/018_discover_core_values.cfm

DISCOVERING OUR CORE VALUES:

- 1) What are some words and phrases that describe the culture we desire to see reflected in our church?
- 2) How might these be summarized in an expression of church values?
- 3) What are our strengths? What are our greatest weaknesses?

- 4) Should we spend more energy building on our strengths, or eliminating our weaknesses?
Can we afford to do both?

- 5) Any other suggestions?

DEVELOPING OUR CORE VALUES

Once we have discovered the core values that drive us as a church, we must then turn our attention to developing and cultivating these values into the very fabric of our church culture.

- 1) How can we assimilate the team to help our pastor and church leaders express our church's values?

- 2) What do our stated values look like? Have we rehearsed them and repeated them to the point that we are beginning to understand and rally around them with genuine agreement and excitement?

- 3) What areas and/or wording could be edited or changed?

- 4) Any other suggestions?

DEPLOYING OUR CORE VALUES

Once our core values have been discovered, developed and then are ready to be shared with the entire congregation, we will implement the deployment of these values. This will be an ongoing process as we continually revisit our core values and reassess how we're doing in making them know, clarified, and embraced by the church as a whole.

SECTION TWO:

Purposefully Implementing A Plan That Works



Now that we've discussed the importance of building healthy leaders, discovering our values and the purpose of developing a strategy for church health, it is now time to look at ways of initiating and implementing the overall Master Plan of the church.

There are at least **four major components** that make up the overall Master Plan of a healthy church:

- 1) Spiritual Life Development
- 2) Assimilation
- 3) Facilities
- 4) Finances

Over the next few sessions we will be discussing and implementing an effective plan for realizing the full potential of our church, and you are the key to making this dream a reality.

Working together,

Pastor James

Session 6 SPIRITUAL LIFE DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN



Discipleship is the missing link in the average church today. Many churches are good at making converts; however, that's not what Jesus commanded us to do. He has called us to make disciples, and this is a deliberate process; it does not happen accidentally. Therefore, our top priority as a church is the spiritual development of every single person whom God entrusts to our care.

It is the goal of the Spiritual Life Development Master Plan committee to answer **three vital questions** concerning the spiritual development of every attendee, both present and future of Radiant Life Church.

The following is adapted from Andy Stanley's book, 7 Practices of Effective Ministry.

Three Questions That We Must Consider:

I. What do we want people to become?

- What do we want the result of our efforts to be? When it's all said and done, what do we want to happen in the lives of the people we influence?
- This will help us clarify our mission.
- Thankfully, we don't have to look too far to define the mission of the church. We find it in (Matthew 28:19-20a), "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (NIV).
- Jesus made it clear that our mission is to make disciples. Therefore the obvious answer to the question "What Do We Want People to Become?" is: "*Passionate followers of Christ.*"

II. What do we want people to do?

- This answers the How? How are we going to do the first step? How are people going to become what we want them to be? How are they going to develop spiritually?
- This is where we lead people into "living out" the mission of the church. We can bring it into laser-like focus by narrowing it down to three imperatives.

AT RADIANT LIFE CHURCH WE SEEK TO DEVELOP THREE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS:

- 1) ***Intimacy with God***—This fulfills the purposes of worship and discipleship
- 2) ***Community with other believers***—This fulfills the purpose of fellowship
- 3) ***Influence with unchurched neighbors and friends***—This fulfills the purposes of outreach and ministry

So, what do we want people to do?

ANSWER: Continually pursue three healthy relationships—intimacy with God, community with believers, and influence with the unchurched. Once we strategically plan with these imperatives in mind, the church will continue to grow in greater health.

III. Where do we want people to go?

- Andy Stanley writes, “Answering the question ‘Where do we want people to go?’ allows you to clarify the ‘win’ for your organization.”
- In his book “7 Practices of Effective Ministry” Stanley writes, “Unfortunately, churches have a reputation for doing ministry without an end in mind.”
- The purpose for discussing this question will be to determine what a “win” looks like for our particular church.
 - *Example: For some churches, their “win” might be a membership class; a Sunday school class; a ministry position; etc.*
 - *Discuss where we, as a church, want people to go. How do we clarify a “win”?*
- This question can only be answered through honest discussion and ongoing dialogue among the leadership team of the church.

• **THINK TANK:**

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Session 7 ASSIMILATION MASTER PLAN



The Assimilation Master Plan will help us carefully articulate and design a blueprint for helping new attendees get assimilated into the life-flow of the church. We want to make it easy for newcomers to get connected. This may also be referred to as “Closing the back door.”

Are We Ready for Company?

Ready or not, the church will indeed be the recipient of guests who are coming for a variety of reasons. The question then is, “Are we ready for them?” How welcome are people in our church? An honest appraisal of most churches will reveal that they are loving and friendly toward members of the congregation, but not so friendly toward visitors or newcomers.

Statistics underscore the importance of being prepared for guests who come to our church and Sunday School. The first 10 minutes after a guest arrives and the 10 minutes after the service concludes may decide if he or she will return.

What Is a Visitor? (Adapted from WBP by Steve Mills, A/G Northwest District)

- A visitor is the most important person in this church.
- A visitor is not dependent on us; we are dependent on him.
- A visitor is not an interruption of our work or our pleasure. He is the purpose of it. We are not doing a favor by serving him. He is doing us a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so.
- A visitor is not someone to ignore or treat casually. No church has ever been effective without them.
- A visitor is a person who brings us his wants, needs, hurts, and dreams. It is our job to handle him properly so he can become all God intended and our church be counted as wise stewards of the ministry God has entrusted to us.

Discuss the following as a Leadership Team:

CONFUSION:

Being a first-time visitor is not easy! It can be very confusing at times. For example, not knowing where to go, when to go, or who should go where could be a huge obstacle for a visitor, and therefore make them feel uncomfortable and not want to come back.

- What potential barriers are there which might make it difficult for newcomers to connect?

COMMUNICATION:

Since communication is so vital, where can we communicate better? Where are we lacking? Are we communicating by 'secret code' or in a language only understood by insiders?

- Honestly critique everything from the weekly bulletin to the Church's website to the promotional material being displayed.

COORDINATION:

Develop "easy steps" for newcomers to become better assimilated into the church. Possible suggestions include:

- Starting a new converts follow-up class taught by the pastor
- Offering "family friendly" services, such as:
 - Parenting classes
 - Kids sporting events
 - Marriage enrichment opportunities
 - Young couples fellowships
 - Other:
- Developing a systematic Follow-Up Plan
- Offering various recreation/fellowship opportunities

CONSIDERATION:

As a Leadership Team discuss and consider possible opportunities and ideas to help every regular attendee and guest become better connected, or assimilated into the church. Write suggestions in the space provided:

FINAL THOUGHTS:

People are searching for meaningful connections with other people. So, the problem isn't whether or not they want to get connected, ***it's a matter of where they're going to connect.*** If the church fails in the assimilation process, there is little doubt that "other opportunities" (most likely less desirable opportunities at that!) will arise elsewhere. People are going to connect somewhere. It's up to the church to intentionally insure that there are several opportunities within its infrastructure for newcomers to connect. This is all about being good stewards of the people God sends our way. Are we ready for company?

Session 8 FACILITIES MASTER PLAN



A Master Plan for the church's facilities is intended to address the specific needs of the physical structure where the church meets. It's a fact; people don't want to sit in a room where they're crowded, hot, dirty and uncomfortable. So, we will assess the current needs and make improvements where we can.

The Master Plan includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Upkeep/maintenance

- We must develop a system to ensure that the facilities are well kept and properly maintained, both for the safety of our attendees and aesthetics (See Church Safety Booklet).

Parking issues

- Since healthy things grow, and we are focusing on church health, we will one day be confronted with the demand for more parking. Now is the time to prepare for future parking problems, not when we're already turning people away due to a lack of planning in this area.

Grounds-keeping

- Since one of our core values is Excellence in Ministry, it is imperative that we keep the church grounds well groomed, free of debris and weeds.
- Discuss: How are we going to implement this? Who's going to spearhead this dept? etc.

Working in cooperation with the Financial Advisory Team

- It is the responsibility of both the Financial Advisory Team and/or Treasurer to communicate
- All building expansions and additions
- Interior & exterior decor to maintain a quality appearance
- A focus on excellence in every area

Session 9 FINANCIAL MASTER PLAN



A professor once asked a room full of Bible college students this thought-provoking question: “How much ministry can you get for \$100?” The students, obviously over spiritualizing the question, suggested several different possibilities. The professor corrected them all by answering, “You get a \$100 worth of ministry for \$100.”

"The silver is mine and the gold is mine," declares the LORD Almighty" (Haggai 2:8, NIV).

"Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!" (Matthew 25:21, NLT).

Like it or not, the church cannot meet all of its goals and expectations without a financial structure that is both healthy and well managed. We've all heard the horror stories of pastors and treasurers battling during board meetings as if they were on WWE. This is extremely unfortunate, for a lost world outside the four walls of the church is depending upon the church to work together in harmony and unison in every area—yes, even in the finances!

While the intent here is not to discuss this issue in detail, the following thoughts are offered for consideration:

1. The pastor and board must be able to work together on all financial issues. There should be full agreement before any major financial decisions are made. When the pastor and board walk away from a meeting, even where there are disagreements, it is imperative that they walk in unity, for their leadership sets the tone for the rest of the congregation.
2. It is recommended that a Budget Advisory Team be established so as to alleviate the stress that comes with the responsibilities of Treasurer.
3. Three qualities that we look for in a Chief Financial Officer (CFO):
 - Competency – Must be qualified to manage the funds.
 - Chemistry – Must be able to work in a team environment.
 - Character – Must be known as a person of integrity.
- 4) The pastor and Budget Advisory Team, if applicable, would develop an overall Financial Master Plan for the church, which would include but not be limited to the following:

Income Handling Principles

In order to maintain the financial integrity of the church, steps must be taken to insure the proper handling of funds. Normal handling of funds in the congregation involves several steps. Some general principles:

- 1) No individual should be required or allowed to handle the congregation's income alone at any time.
- 2) It is preferred that no cash be stored in the church, unless in a secure, fireproof safe.
- 3) It is preferable for several people to be involved on a rotating basis in handling income.
- 4) All income transactions (receipts and disbursements) should be properly recorded and verifiable. It is understood that the recording of income/gifts from individuals of the congregation is a confidential matter and such records are only available to the Pastor, Treasurer, and the Official Board when required.
- 5) When possible, it is preferable that the pastor should not serve in the position of Treasurer nor have check signing authority over any church account. Understandably, this is not always feasible in smaller congregations.

Following some basic guidelines in the financial department of the church will safeguard the individuals involved from any accusations of impropriety, and will breed greater confidence in the congregation that God's resources are being handled with integrity.

** We have a Financial Handbook that covers every topic regarding proper church finances.*

Session 10 COMMUNITY PROFILE: STRATEGICALLY USING DEMOGRAPHICS TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN



Community Profile

Data provided by Percept

The proper use of demographics can greatly enhance the church's ability to reach the community in which it finds itself, by helping it to identify the "felt needs" of the target audience/market, and by helping it to project where the community is going in the future. ***What it all boils down to is being relevant and intentional in our ministry approach!*** As the old saying goes, "If you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time."

** Percept is a full-service demographic information company completely dedicated to church leaders and to resourcing the local church for discovering how best to minister to its community.*

{Hand out Demographics}

What Do These Facts Tell Us?

There are many other statistics that are available, such as generational stats, race and ethnicity stats, etc. However, just from the above listed facts and figures, I believe it is possible to come to some definitive conclusions as to how we might strategically reach this particular area for Jesus Christ! According to the collected data, what have we discovered?

1. Is the area growing, plateaued, or in decline?
2. What is the lifestyle diversity?
3. What is the educational level?
4. What are some of the community issues and concerns (Felt Needs)?
5. What are the faith preferences?
6. How does this information affect our strategic approach?

All God-ordained visions are shared visions. Nobody goes it alone. It takes a ministry team to accomplish a God given vision. May we endeavor, through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, to partner together for the purpose of strategically building a Healthy Church for the glory of God!