

T H E L E I S U R E S U I T S E R I E S

The Leisure Suit Trap

8 Reasons Your Church Is Stuck

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The Leisure Suit Trap: 8 Reasons Your Church Is Stuck

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I believe you have to be willing to be misunderstood if you're going to innovate . . . If you're going to do something that's never been done before—which is basically what innovation is—people are going to misunderstand it just because it's new.

—Jeff Bezos, Amazon.com founder & CEO
([BusinessWeek.com](https://www.businessweek.com))

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PREFACE

When I work with churches for the first time, I think sometimes their leaders are frustrated with me because I'm not willing to help them fix something specific. Sometimes they want me to tweak their internal systems. Other times they want me to speak into improvements in their Sunday service environments. Other times they want me to provide feedback on their Web site, music, or facility. I've found that churches can become convinced that they know why their church isn't growing.

There comes a point when it's healthy and appropriate to address specific environments, systems, or tactics; however, these eight aspects of a declining ministry have to come first. If we're unwilling to address these critical elements, then we're not going to shift the downward trends.

The crazy thing about this is that there are many churches more willing to close their doors than make the necessary changes it would take to have a positive effect. Why is it that we put our personal preferences ahead of our ministry impact?

This eBook is the first in my Leisure Suit series. This installment addresses why churches are stuck. It defines the challenge. Future eBooks in this series will address the next steps to help ministries move forward.

Here's what's driving this for me—I'm not satisfied with churches being stuck. It's time we set our preferences aside and prioritize making disciples of Jesus. Are you ready to hang up your "leisure suit" for good?

INTRODUCTION

History of the Leisure Suit

My dad used to own several leisure suits. Had I been smart, I would have raided his closet and kept one of them. Since I wasn't smart enough to do that before I left home, I decided to purchase one of my own using eBay. I paid a chunk of money for it. Needless to say, Dad could have gotten rich if he would have held on to his leisure suits.

At one point the leisure suit was trendy, highly functional, everyone was wearing it, and it was easy to care for. It served a purpose: people needed to wear clothing that was functional and fashionable at the same time. What better solution than a polyester suit?

Eventually, the leisure suit went the way of the pet rock and the cassette player. They disappeared because better ideas came along. That's the way history works.

Some churches are still wearing their leisure suits. Figuratively, of course. Many churches are stuck. Though they may have had a season where their kingdom impact was expanding, things have slowed down or started to decline. They know something has to change, but many times they're unwilling to change. They'd rather keep wearing the leisure suit.

The leisure suit disappeared as fashion trends changed. Anyone caught wearing one was immediately branded as out of touch with reality or irrelevant. Sure, the leisure suit still serves a purpose, but almost no one wears them. Unfortunately, many churches still do! They sit comfortably watching the disco ball spin overhead wondering why the congregation is growing older and smaller. What they are doing is no longer connecting with today's culture. They are not seeing the fruit.

By the way, whatever you perceive to be "traditional" churches aren't the only churches that are stuck. Your church may have started one hundred years ago or ten years ago or even just ten months ago—but stuck is still *stuck*.

We can grow so accustomed to what we are doing that we are no longer aware that the rest of the world wandered off into the future. While we were counting nickels and noses, the world changed.

It's easy to strut around proclaiming, "I like my leisure suit." But does it really matter what I like? Am I here to exclaim the awesomeness of my personal preferences, or am I here to focus on those people I am called to impact? It's one or the other.

Sometimes we don't realize we aren't connected. We need fresh eyes to see that we are stuck in one or more of several ways.

What's the point? Until we look at our methods, our message really doesn't matter. When we keep trying to use the same systems—hoping and praying for different results—that's when we know we've fallen for the "leisure suit trap."

Over the last several years, I've had the opportunity to study and work with churches across the country. What follows is a list of the common attributes of churches that end up being stuck. What's your story? Are any of these attributes present in your ministry environment?

Let's unpack eight reasons why your church may be stuck.

You Lack a Leadership Empowerment Plan

Outreach magazine interviewed Brad Abare and Phil Cooke about personality-driven churches. Here's a paraphrase of the list of warning signs that they identified in the interview:

- The pastor doesn't go on a vacation for any significant length of time. And, when he does, it isn't announced.
- When the pastor doesn't preach, the attendance drops.
- There's an unspoken fear that if something happened to the pastor, the church would be in trouble.
- The pastor is unwilling to listen to and consult other team members.
- The staff and volunteers are there to carry out the directions of the pastor.
- There's no succession plan in place; therefore, leadership development isn't happening.

So, what other options are there? After all, aren't we supposed to create pastoral rock stars who roam from place to place with an entourage of iPhone-toting handlers? I hate to break it to you, but . . . no. That's not the point.

Real leaders cast vision and train the next generation of leaders. Real leaders empower people to lead, refuse to step in at the last minute, and provide coaching and encouragement along the way.

I'm still a big proponent of clear vision in churches. Clear vision leads to unified effort that results in ministry impact. A clear vision also provides a lot of freedom for people to be empowered to be who God created them to be. I've heard it described as freedom within a framework. That's essentially a picture of the Christian faith. There's actually more freedom for us if we stay within God's designed framework.

We see this reflected in Paul's writings on spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 as well. Each believer is given one or more gifts. Paul uses the human body as a metaphor to express how the various parts of the body of Christ are indispensable. In other words, we have failed as leaders in the church if we do not embrace

the unique gift-mix that God designed. And we won't fully know the power and impact of the local church until people are empowered to be the people God wired them up to be.

We aren't telling them what to do to accomplish the vision. We are helping them discover their gifts and freeing them to use them to fulfill the vision. It's not delegation. With delegation, I'm still responsible. It's empowerment. Someone else is responsible, but as a leader I still hold them accountable.

At a recent meeting with a church staff, one of the members asked me about leadership growth. Having worked with churches of various sizes between 100 people and more than 10,000, they wanted to know how leaders change to grow with organizations. Here's what I summarized with a little bit more detail. Some of this reflects my own experiences in the churches I've served. Some of it reflects the conversations I've had with leaders in other churches.

Lead by Example. This is the type of leadership that is required when new ministries launch. During this season, leaders have to do most of the work themselves. That happens out of necessity because no one else is around. It also happens to establish a foundation for the future. "Leading by doing" gives leaders the opportunity to shape the mission, vision, values, and strategy of their churches. These folks may not necessarily be gifted as leaders, but they are in a positional leadership role. They are the "leaders of tens." Ministries with this style of leadership can grow to about one hundred people.

Lead Other People. During this season, leaders recruit other people to join their ministry team. Rather than doing all the work on their own, leaders begin to delegate tasks and responsibilities to other people. The leaders still own the responsibility for making things happen, they're just including other people in the effort. These are the "leaders of fifties." Ministries can grow to several hundred people with this style of leadership.

Lead Other Leaders. This is when a transition happens, where leaders begin to empower other leaders. Instead of a hands-on role where they're on top of all the tasks, they shift to a role where they're really more concerned about leading, caring for, and raising up other leaders. They don't give up responsibility for the outcome, but they begin to release team building, decision-making, and execution to other people. These are the "leaders of hundreds." Ministries can grow to several thousand people with this style of leadership.

Lead by Vision. At some point, there are leaders who may continue to embrace functional leadership of specific areas of ministry, but their focus is really on the overall health of the church. Rather than a ministry-specific focus, they have a global perspective that encompasses every aspect of the organization. These folks are leading other leaders, but they also have influence that reaches beyond their direct reports. They are coming alongside the senior leader to champion the vision that God has given the

church. These are the “leaders of thousands.” Ministries can grow to tens of thousands of people with this style of leadership.

By the way, all of these approaches to leadership are vital in a healthy, growing church. Even if I’ve moved to a place in my leadership where I’m primarily leading by vision, there will be instances when I need to lead by example. Where churches get stuck, though, is when only one style of leadership is evident in the top leadership team.

So, before you continue reading, do you agree with my summary of these different stages of leadership growth? What would you add or delete from my descriptions? Also, where are you? What do you need to do today to prepare to step into a new leadership role tomorrow?

2

You Are Unclear About Your Vision and Mission

A church without a clearly articulated vision is a church that's in danger. Vision is to the church what headlights are to a car in the dark. You can't go very far very safely without them. The funny thing is there are lots of churches with vision statements, but I don't think there are very many churches that really have a vision statement that clarifies who they are as an organization. Among other things, a solid vision:

- Clarifies the purpose of the organization
- Pursues a preferred future
- Inspires people to engage
- Makes it easier to define what the organization won't do

Even with that, you may be wondering whether or not your organization has clearly defined and communicated its vision. Here are two surefire ways to know whether or not you've accomplished the goal:

A clear vision that is properly communicated will rally people. People will look at the present situation and agree together that there's a better future that must be pursued. People will give their time, energy, prayer, financial resources, talents, and gifts to help accomplish that vision. Lots of people will do that. If people aren't attracted to your church, your vision either isn't strong enough or it hasn't been communicated clearly.

A clear vision that is properly communicated will repel people. Think of the most successful businesses or churches—Apple, Starbucks, Wal-Mart, Willow Creek, Saddleback, Billy Graham, etc. Each of these businesses or ministries have experienced huge success. If you were to Google the names of each of these organizations and the word “haters,” you'll also find there are plenty of people who consider these organizations evil. Clarifying your vision will help some people determine they don't want to be a part of your cause. (And, don't be surprised if some attack.) If people aren't leaving your church, your vision either isn't strong enough or it hasn't been communicated clearly.

I want to challenge you to think about the purpose of your ministry. Does it rally people to your cause? And, does it repel some people? Of course, a healthy vision worth pursuing must attract many more people than it turns away; however, a strong vision will always help some people determine, “That’s not for me.”

If your sense is that you have a vision that makes everyone happy, you don’t have a strong vision.

3

You Blame Outsiders and External Factors

We live in a culture where no one is responsible for anything that happens to them. If you don't believe me, invest a couple of hours watching one of the multitude of judge shows on television.

It's amazing that people instigate litigation as a result of something that happened because of a decision *they* made. On television, blaming others is entertainment. In the church, it's tragedy.

There is a tendency among church leaders to blame their ineffectiveness on the changing community, the struggling economy, or the big church that obviously watered down its message in order to reach people who are interested only in being entertained. Staff meetings must look a lot like the talks that take place every fall in the locker room of the Chicago Cubs: "This was going to be our year, but the other teams got hot, our star player got hurt, and the wind was blowing in more than out." Maybe it's time to man-up and say, "We didn't get the job done, and we've got to figure out a new approach."

I'm amazed at the "new" ideas that come from some Christian organizations that experienced their best years in the '60s and '70s. If you look closely, those new ideas look a lot like old ideas with new packaging. They are hoping to recapture their past glory by repositioning their past products. Good luck with that!

The problem, according to the organization's leaders, is the increase in competition. In other words, if people didn't have so many options, they'd be perfectly fine buying subpar products. Victims, huh?

Victim-thinking will only lead to bitterness and competition. Leaders who blame outsiders and external factors actually are confessing their own failure to think creatively and inspire their team. Churches in their leisure suits are victims of the changing taste in clothing. When the world returns to thinking the way they thought forty years ago, they'll be dressed for success. Until then, they'll look sadly out of place!

4

Your Structure Inhibits Growth

It's easy to get caught in the trap when your organizational structure and internal processes haven't evolved and are largely the same as they were three or five years ago. Or sometimes you get stuck when your internal processes are too confusing to navigate and stifle new ideas rather than spur innovation.

One of my favorite blogs to monitor is Accidental Creative. Todd Henry wrote a brilliant article about the danger of implementing permanent solutions to temporary problems. This quote grabbed my attention:

The more structures we have to navigate in order to do our work, the more difficult it is to do our best work. When we are required to resolve the dissonance of complex systems, reporting relationships, and accountability structures just in order to get our objectives and check off our direction, we will begin to lose our drive to do brilliant work. Over time, this complexity only pulls entire organizations toward systematic mediocrity.

One of the attributes of a church in decline is a complex structure. The natural tendency of organizations is to add complexity to their structure and systems. The longer an organization exists, the more complex it typically gets. (Think government, big business, denominations . . . and older churches.)

One of the reasons I think new church plants are so effective reaching new people is because they are typically very lean. The structure is simple. The ministry strategy is very focused. The mission is clear. Then, as the church ages, the ministry strategy gets more complex as multiple new programs and events get layered on. Eventually growth slows or plateaus as the complexity increases. Ironically, then, our solution, oftentimes, is to create new structure or systems or rules to fix the problem.

- If there's a problem, our natural tendency is never to do less—we always try something new.
- If there's a problem, our natural tendency is to increase controls—we think people are the problem, and we implement rules and policies to make sure they get it right.
- What if the solution to the problem is fewer controls? What if the fix is less complexity?

Are you willing to get focused and lean again? Are you willing to attack complex structure and rules?

5

You Worship Your Past Success

It's easy to get caught in the trap when you stop seeing yourself as responsible or accountable for the ministry results you produce. I read a fascinating article from Forbes about how General Motors destroyed its Saturn division. Among other things, David Hanna, the author of the article, suggested:

Saturn, a GM company that had great promise in the early 1990s, ultimately failed because senior GM leaders couldn't see the benefits of new ways of doing things and a new kind of organizational culture.

We're all familiar with the demise of GM, so this is a very vivid image of what can happen when an organization becomes so stuck in its traditional approach of doing things that the world passes it by. Ultimately, when organizations stick to "the way we do it," the safe approach of avoiding innovation and change becomes the riskiest approach.

Hanna goes on to explain:

There were just two underlying forces behind Saturn's demise: GM's insistence on managing all its divisions centrally with a tight fist, and the demand by leadership at both GM and the UAW that Saturn get in line with traditional ways of doing things.

That highlights one of the biggest challenges in leadership. Leaders have to choose between control and innovation. You can't have both. You can define the desired outcomes. You can create the boundaries, but you can't expect your team to be creative, innovative, or artistic if you try to control every element of the execution. If you must have full control, you just need to know that you are also choosing to shut down new ideas and innovations in your organization.

Unfortunately, the church is notorious for religiously keeping things the way they've always been but hoping we'll somehow achieve different results. Avoiding new approaches. Top-down, centralized leadership. Preserving the traditional ways of doing things. Sound familiar?

It's a great reminder that our past successes can be one of the greatest contributing factors to our future demise. GM used to have a winning formula. It worked in previous generations. Recently, though, it's not been working so well.

I used to drive a powder blue Chevy Impala. Thirty years ago that was a great ride. They may be coming out with some new, innovative automobiles now, but it wasn't too long ago that it seemed GM still wanted to make cars as though it were 1979 while expecting to get the same results. By sticking with that approach, they dropped from 45 percent of the market share thirty years ago to hovering around 20 percent today. In fact, back in 2008, Toyota ended GM's seventy-seven-year reign as the world's largest automaker.

It's easy to look at churches that might still be "driving the Chevy Impala" and easily draw conclusions for why they are in decline. Before you do that, though, I think it's good to remember that GM was once a very successful company. When you experience success, it's tough to let go. You want to control the formula because it works. You are reticent to try new approaches. The only problem is that eventually the world around us is going to change

6

You Focus on Activities Instead of Outcomes

While many church leaders are full of vision and passion, they lack an effective strategy to accomplish their mission. That leads to a feeling of disorganization, and ultimately they feel stuck. When this happens, you'll spend more time focused on activities instead of outcomes. How do you know you're focused on activities? When you find yourself focusing on *bigger* versus *better*.

Truett Cathy, the founder of Chick-fil-A, said, "when we get better the customer will force us to get bigger!" In the church world, this means that we must take time to improve what we do, not just come up with bigger versions of what's mediocre. Instead of trying to outdo your last event, set design, or sermon illustration, get together with your team and improve the little things.

You've got too many ideas and too little action. It's more fun for leaders to brainstorm and dream, but that's not the hard work of the ministry. Real effectiveness comes when we organize volunteers around a mission, create processes to follow up with guests and givers, and lead our staff with intentionality and intensity. Visionary leaders often make the mistake of thinking that their church can grow on vision. While vision is helpful and necessary, getting organized may have more long-term positive effects.

At some point, you have to just do the hard work and stick with it. A quote from Calvin Coolidge noted in the program at his memorial service in 1933 described it this way:

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination are omnipotent. The slogan "press on" has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

Are you distracted? As a church leader, there are many things that you can do. Even good opportunities can sidetrack us from doing what matters most. Instead of chasing new opportunities, go to work on your worship services, children's ministry, and community service. Keep your eye on the ball. Don't let too many new ministry opportunities dilute your core purpose.

Stop and ask if the activities on your schedule contribute to, or support, your core values and mission. If you don't know your core values and mission, you've discovered one of your most glaring weaknesses!

7

You Fail to Equip God's People

It's easy to get caught in the trap of growing your staff without proportionately cultivating your volunteer assets. There are certain common refrains I hear as I'm talking with growing churches across the country. This is one of them—we fail to equip God's people to do the work of God.

I've heard many leaders in recent months acknowledge that they're trying to shift the ministry to volunteers rather than continuing to hire more staff. Likely, the economic challenges have precipitated that shift in strategy. Whatever the case, I think it's a good thing.

Eric Geiger offered this thought as it relates to engaging volunteers in ministry. He explains how pastors and other paid staff may actually be hampering spiritual growth by holding on to ministry:

People who are gifted by God and called to serve Him are put on the bench as they watch the professional ministers make the ministry happen. Instead of fostering a serving posture among believers, this kind of "ministry" develops consumers. By keeping ministry from the majority of the people, they are taught to be moochers and consumers of the faith rather than participators and contributors. As their spiritual gifts go underutilized, they miss the joy of experiencing Christ by serving others.

Wondering where your church stands on this topic? Do a little math. Take the number of people who volunteer somewhere in ministry at any given time each month. Divide that by the total number of students and adults at your church. That'll give you a percentage. Here's my suggestion:

- If the percentage of students and adults serving is over 45 percent, you are in a healthy range for engaging volunteers in ministry.
- If you are in the 30- to 45-percent range, you're doing okay but there's room for improvement.

- If you are under 30 percent, you need a volunteer strategy adjustment.

Now, I can hear the critics and skeptics already. They're probably saying, "The larger a church gets, the more likely they are to have a big staff team handling the ministry of the church." It might surprise you to learn I see the direct opposite. For whatever reason, smaller churches I work with have a tendency to rely on the pastors and paid staff to carry the ministry load.

Many churches have a vision for getting more people to volunteer and serve in the ministry. Fewer churches actually make it happen. One of the reasons is because they lean on staff to do ministry.

With that in mind, Lifepoint Church in Fredericksburg, Virginia, needs to be on your radar. They've grown by over 50 percent in the last twelve months. But that's not what's most unique about this ministry.

What's unique about Lifepoint is their commitment to giving ministry away to volunteers. They have several strategies for making that happen, but let me highlight the most obvious one—they don't hire staff to *do* ministry.

Of all the churches I've worked with over the last couple of years, Lifepoint has the lowest staff-to-attendance ratio. They only have 1 full-time equivalent staff member (that includes all staff, not just ministry staff) for every 150 people in attendance. Only about 35 percent of their budget is spent on staff expenses.

Because they have very few staff, they are forced to empower volunteers to do the ministry. Almost 70 percent of their adults volunteer. That's the highest percentage of adults volunteering of all the churches I've worked with.

So, if you're following at home: Lifepoint has the record for the fewest staff compared to attendance, and they also broke the record for the most people volunteering. Coincidence? I don't think so.

This is another simple reminder that you can have a strong vision, but it's good systems and strategies that shift behaviors. This is just one example of that principle.

Your Ministries Ignore People Outside the Church

This excerpt from Jason Fried and David Heinemeier Hansson's recent book *Rework* keeps reverberating in my mind:

When you stick with your current customers come hell or high water, you wind up cutting yourself off from new ones. Your product or service becomes so tailored to your current customers that it stops appealing to fresh blood. And that's how your company starts to die.

That's consistent with one of the key attributes of churches in decline. When churches become inward-focused and start making decisions about ministry to *keep* people rather than *reach* people, they also start to die. In Luke 15:4, Jesus said it this way:

If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it?

Why do you think some churches slip into the mode where they're so focused on keeping people that they neglect trying to reach people who are outside the faith? As I was reading the Bible, I stumbled upon 1 Corinthians 10:33:

I, too, try to please everyone in everything I do. I don't just do what is best for me; I do what is best for others so that many may be saved.

Fascinating perspective, *isn't it?* Typically, we don't operate like that. We put personal conviction or preferences ahead of what may be best for others. Think about it . . .

- It isn't worship if the music is too loud or too fast or the wrong genre.
- It isn't discipleship if the content is delivered in a home or online instead of in a classroom.
- It isn't missions if we help a neighbor who has wealth instead of focusing on people who live in poverty.
- The message is good if it calls out the sin of *other* people, but we're offended when it's our sin.
- Rather than embracing the ministries that are impacting the most people, we want the church to embrace our personal projects and passions.
- We're more inclined to give when we can direct how the money is used.

Crazy! You'd think we'd be intentional about living out our faith to do what's best for others. Instead, we make ministry decisions to try to keep people happy. That's how we end up with churches full of happy Christians. That's why churches stop growing. We start doing church for us instead of trying to impact the lives of people outside our walls.

The reality is that if we're going to reach people outside the church and outside the faith, we're going to have to be uncomfortable. And, once we figure out what's best for others today, it'll be different tomorrow. That will involve change. That means we'll have to get uncomfortable again.

Let's face it. It's a lot easier doing ministry when our only goal is to keep people happy. Doing what's best for others makes life and ministry messy. We have to be willing to rock the boat. We have to be willing to watch people who don't have a "1 Corinthians 10:33" mindset leave the church.

When I stop doing what's best for me and focus on what's best for others, though, that's when real life-change happens. It's worth making "happy Christians" mad so that many may be saved.

People who walk through the doors of our church every Sunday may look okay on the outside, but many are dealing with some tough stuff on the inside. Addictions. Marriages collapsing. Kids heading in a wrong direction. Medical challenges. Financial crisis. Lack of purpose. Let me challenge you with these thoughts:

- When you teach on “felt needs,” you aren’t watering down the message. You are helping people find forgiveness and healing and a new direction for their life. It’s easy to preach through the Bible. It’s much harder to preach to hurting people who need to understand how the Bible applies to their lives.
- When the person sitting beside you is dealing with a marriage crisis that’s leading to a crisis of faith, it makes your preferences of music and volume seem pretty insignificant.
- When you neglect the mission field in your neighborhood because of your sole desire to help people across the ocean, I wonder if you’re just choosing the path of least resistance.
- When you choose to focus on your theological differences at the expense of helping people find healing and hope, could it be that you haven’t spent enough time *living out* your faith because you’re too busy *defending* your faith?

I’ve looked in people’s eyes and heard many stories. They are the real stories of real people experiencing real pain. Let’s not forget why we do what we do.

CONCLUSION (NOT REALLY)

This isn't the end; it's really the beginning. You get to decide what you do with what you've read. Maybe you'll forget it, put on your leisure suit, and head back to the 1970s. That's your prerogative. You might take the time to process what you've read. You'll agree with some of it and disagree with other parts. That's good, because in processing the words, you started thinking—and that's the beginning of change.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever worn a leisure suit (or remember your father wearing one)? What did it look like? Would you wear it again if they ever came back into style?
2. What element of your ministry was once in style but is now glaringly outdated and in need of an overhaul?
3. Is your church personality-driven or vision-driven? How can you move from the former to the latter?
4. Why do you agree or disagree that a clearly defined vision actually allows for more freedom?
5. In what ways are you empowering people so they can impact your church and its ministry? If you're not doing so, how can you empower them?
6. Why do you agree or disagree with the description of the four different stages of leadership growth (Lead by Example, Lead Other People, Lead Other Leaders, and Lead by Vision)? Where is your church? Is it where it needs to be?
7. What do you need to do today to prepare to step into a new leadership role tomorrow?
8. When you suffered defeat in the past (or at least did not experience success), how did you respond with victim-thinking or avoid doing so?
9. Considering your organizational structure and internal processes, how have they changed over the past three to five years? If they are the same, why is that?
10. What are the dangers of implementing permanent solutions to temporary problems? When have you done so, and how can you avoid doing so in the future?
11. Is the structure of your church simple or complex? How is that working out for you?
12. Is your church more like a 30-year-old sedan or a late-model sports car? What past successes are you still basking in when you should be looking to future victories?

13. Chick-fil-A founder Truett Cathy once said “When we get better the customer will force us to get bigger.” How do the activities of your church contribute to, or support, your core values and mission? Where do you need to get “better” before doing anything else?
14. What are your core values and mission? How can you make sure everyone on your staff and in your congregation knows what they are?
15. Do you know what percentage of your congregation is volunteering? How can you grow that number?
16. What ministry roles and responsibilities currently on a staff member’s plate (even yours!) need to be handed over to volunteers?
17. Would an outsider say that your church is full of happy Christians or hurting, lost people who need Jesus? What practical steps can you take to move your focus to the “outsiders”?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

TONYMORGAN *live*

Tony Morgan is a pastor at West Ridge Church near Atlanta. He's also a strategist, coach, writer, speaker, and consultant who equips leaders and churches to impact their communities for Christ. More important, he has a passion for people. He's all about helping people meet Jesus and take steps in their faith.

For more than ten years, Tony served on the senior leadership teams at NewSpring Church (Anderson, South Carolina) and Granger Community Church (Granger, Indiana). With Tim Stevens, Tony has coauthored *Simply Strategic Stuff*, *Simply Strategic Volunteers*, and *Simply Strategic Growth*—each of which offers valuable, practical solutions for different aspects of church ministry. In his book *Killing Cockroaches*, Tony shows leaders how they can stop getting bogged down in the mundane and small details of church life to instead focus on making a bigger impact through leadership and life.

Tony has also written several articles on staffing, technology, strategic planning, and leadership published by organizations such as *Outreach* magazine, Catalyst, and Pastors.com. Tony and his wife, Emily, reside near Atlanta, Georgia, with their four children—Kayla, Jacob, Abby, and Brooke.

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CHURCH CONSULTING & COACHING

Tony Morgan loves consulting with, speaking to, and coaching leaders. Based on his fifteen years of strategic leadership experience working for three growing churches and numerous church clients, he can assist you with:

- Consulting & Ministry Health Assessment
- Staffing & Structure Review
- Volunteer Strategy Development
- Weekend Service Review
- Speaking & Training

Additionally, Tony partners with some great organizations to assist churches with creative design, technology, multi-site, executive recruiting, stewardship, facility design and construction, and brand strategy.

Discover how Tony can partner with you:

<http://tonymorganlive.com/consulting>

a healthyCHURCH
requires
FLEXIBLE
technology.

*Think of management software in terms of **building** a **house**: with some solutions the plans are already in place with little ability to **change**. The walls are **already** in place and you have to make your furniture fit their rooms. What sold us on CCB is the flexibility. We can **move the walls** and create rooms to fit our furniture. It has the **flexibility to do church the way we wanted to.***

Steve Boyd

*Connections Director
Christ Community Church
St. Charles, IL*



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