

QUALITIES OF A HEALTHY CHURCH¹

By Dr. Timothy B. West

“What would your church look like if you took away the pastor(s), the music and worship, the buildings, the favored programs, the sacraments and ceremonies, as well as the events and Sunday School? What would you have left?”²

The issue of longevity concerns how the church passes _____ generation to generation.

Critical Issue Questions:

- ★ What kind of influence is the church having on the culture?
- ★ Is its voice meaningful in the world today?
- ★ Are people finding a new relationship with Christ that truly changes them into holy servants of God living out the missional way of Jesus?



1. THE CLEAR TEACHING OF GOD’S WORD

“How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me your decrees”. (Psalm 119:9-12)

2. IMPACTING WORSHIP

“I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; before the “gods” I will sing your praise. I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word. When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stouthearted. May all the kings of the earth praise you, O LORD, when they hear the words of your mouth”. (Psalm 138:1-4)

The key is to embrace a form of worship that is _____ to the persons who you are ministering to and/or trying to reach.

6 main “styles” of worship

1. Traditional
2. Liturgical
3. Praise and Worship
4. Seeker-Sensitive
5. Blended
6. Emergent

¹ This teaching was produced with input from the following sources: Dr. Richard J. Krejcir (http://70030.netministry.com/articles_view.asp?articleid=32733&columnid=3881); Christian Swartz, *Natural Church Development*.

² Question posed at Gospel.com Blog (<http://www.gospel.com/blog/index.php/2008/07/01/what-makes-a-healthy-church/>).

3. UNDENIABLE PASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY

"I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ--the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead."(Philippians 3:9-11)

4. HEARTFELT PRAYER

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful." (Colossians 4:2)

5. MAKING DISCIPLES

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."(Matthew 28:18-20)

Ideally, a disciple is considered "discipled" when they _____
with someone else.

6. LOVING RELATIONSHIPS

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:30-31)

7. EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP (AND DEVELOPMENT)

"Prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-13)

8. OUTREACH AND MISSIONS

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

9. EFFECTIVE STRUCTURES

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for." (Hebrews 11:1-2)

10. GIFT-BASED MINISTRY

"So it is with you. Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church." (1 Corinthians 14:12)

11. GENEROSITY (OR EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP)

"Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine." (Proverbs 3:9-10)

12. HOLISTIC SMALL GROUPS

"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." (Acts 2:42-43)

13. MULTIPLICATION

"The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you." (Titus 1:5)

Like healthy organisms, a healthy church reproduces _____.