

5 Warning Signs of a Dying Church

Change or die.

Imagine hearing those words from your physician. I hope you would be motivated to change. Eat well. Exercise. Stop smoking.

You get the picture.

Okay, I have some tough news for you who are members or leaders of about 100,000 churches in America.

Change or die.

You read that correctly. In fact, if your churches don't make substantive changes in the next few years, your church will die.

So what churches are at risk? Instead of naming the specific churches, I have listed them in five categories. The categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

1. **Shallow roots.** These churches are no longer rooted in Scripture. They have drifted from the clear teachings of the Bible to a secular or social approach to ministry, which is really not ministry at all.
2. **Self-entitled.** Another name for these churches are "country club" churches. The members demand the church serve them. They have to have things done their way, or they will leave. After all, they pay their "dues" (offerings) for their perks and privileges.
3. **Negatively critical.** The members of these churches spend more time criticizing than they do evangelizing. They are in regular conflict. Some run off pastors. They wear out pastors and staff and "good" church members.
4. **Ignorantly idolatrous.** It's easier to get away with heresy in these churches than to make certain changes. No one can use the parlor. We can only have a certain style of music. We better not mess up my service by adding another service. In each of these cases, the members have idols, though they would deny it vociferously.
5. **Evangelistically anemic.** The Great Commission is the great omission in these churches. Church members no longer share the gospel. Maybe the pastor is not evangelistic either. There are no new Christians in the church.

Nearly one of three churches will die in the next few years. They must change. Or they will die.

I wrote [Who Moved My Pulpit?](#) to provide leaders a roadmap to lead change in their churches. I wrote out of conviction and a broken heart. I wrote it with the prayer and hope that it can be used to make a difference.

Maybe I wrote it for your church.

Maybe I wrote it for you.

Change or die.

For many of you, there is a choice.

But time is quickly running out.