

Your Church is Struggling, But Do You Recognize It?

Often in church leadership we get so busy working “in the church” that it becomes harder to work “on the church”. We’re focused on making weekends happen and caring for people that we lose perspective on whether we’re seeing a difference in our community.

The reality is as church leaders we can be consumed with lots of activity but a lack of focus on pushing us forward.

Sometimes it’s hard to see if we’re making any difference and slipping into irrelevance. Here are a few **early warning signs** that your church might be struggling to fulfill it’s full redemptive potential.

- **More Memories than Vision //** A sure sign that your ministry is slipping into atrophy is when you pine for the “good ole days” or you look back fondly on what happened did years ago. If what has happened seems better than what is going to happen ... you may be slipping into irrelevance. Is the view in your rear view mirror bigger than the one in the front window?
- **No Sacrificial Giving to Next Generation //** No one is going to pass on the message of Jesus to the next generation than you and your leadership. If you can’t identify the areas where you are preferring the next generation over your generation than you might be creeping towards your demise. Does your senior leadership team actively support and resource ministries with younger generations?
- **Never Say No //** A sure sign that a church has lost its way is that it’s lost it’s ability to discern what activities push it towards it’s mission and which don’t. The end result is a church with a lot of activity but no progress. Busyness does not equal effectiveness. Churches with clear vision are defined more by what they avoid doing than what they choose to do. When was the last time your leadership decided against a good idea to pursue the great one?
- **Form Over Function //** Organizations that have lost their grip on making a difference become more concerned with the “how” of ministry rather than “why”. Policies, procedures and past practice drive the activity of the church rather than the mission you are called to. This is a delicate balance because systems help churches grow ... but if they become the obsession of leaders they will destroy your organization. Are you more concerned with the wineskin than the wine?
- **Lack Faith Based Risks //** Churches that make an impact are taking risks ... actual risks. They put stuff on the line to accomplish what they believe God is calling them to. They step out in trust asking God to give them clarity for the next steps. When was the last time your pulse quickened because of something you risked as a church?
- **You Don’t Eat Your Own Dog Food //** If the staff of the church wouldn’t attend if they weren’t getting paid ... it’s a sure sign something is seriously wrong. Why are you taking money from a church that you don’t love? What does that say about you?
- **Narrow Donor Base //** On a practical note ... if there is a very small donor pool funding the mission of the church it’s a sign of the church’s inability to engage a broader community. Why hasn’t your church been able to connect with more than a handful of

donors?

Read more from Rich [here](#).