
Do Your Homework: 9 Questions to Ask BEFORE Leading a Church Revitalization Effort

I am excited about the increased interest in church revitalization. I am heartened to hear from a number of Millennials who are sensing God's call in this direction. As this emphasis grows alongside the great interest in church planting, I have more reasons to remain an obnoxious optimist about our congregations.

But let me state the obvious. Leading a church revitalization is difficult. Indeed, it can't be done outside of God's power. While I wish to discourage no one from moving forward in this direction, we must do so with our eyes wide open.

With that in mind I offer a checklist to consider. Here are nine questions you should ask before leading a church revitalization.

1. **Will I pray daily for my church and my leadership?** I know. The question seems so obvious. But many leaders get so busy doing the work, they fail to take time to pray for God's strength and wisdom to do the work.
2. **Will I see this opportunity as a mission field?** In the recent past, leading an established church was typically leading a culture that aligned well with the leader. No more. Many churches in need of revitalization are acting like they live in the culture of 1985. Moving them to present realities is a culture shock to many of the congregants. Thus both the church and the community are mission fields. We need to approach these opportunities much like an international missionary in his or her new culture.
3. **Will I make a commitment for the long haul?** While we can't presume upon God's timing in our lives, we do not need to enter the leadership of church revitalization as a stepping stone assignment. Change is often painfully slow, three steps forward and two steps backward. Some of the fruit of change often does not manifest until after the leader has been on the field for five years or more.
4. **Will I love my critics?** Genuine leaders of churches in need of revitalization will have their critics. Let me say it again: you will be criticized. But how will you respond to those critics? Will you respond with the love of Christ? Will you pray for your critics?
5. **Will I be persistent?** Leading a church to revitalization is difficult work. Sometimes, the only thing you know to do is to get out of bed and go to work each day. Because progress is not always noticeable on a day-by-day basis, it is easy to get discouraged. Stay with it. Stay the course. Be faithful.
6. **Will I be an incarnational example in my community?** Will I be present and involved in the community where the church is located? Will I show my love to those in the community? Will I demonstrate Christ in deed and words in my community? Will I be an example for the church members to follow?
7. **Will I be a continuous learner about church revitalization?** I am so encouraged about the new information coming forth about church revitalization every month. It reminds me of earlier years when we were getting good data and case studies of new church plants. You now have an opportunity to be a continuous learner in this field. Though I am certainly not the only source of information, I am committed to providing

you ongoing information on church revitalization at this site.

8. **Will I be content?** The Apostle Paul learned to be content in all situations, including shipwrecks and prisons. Will you be content in the Lord to move forward with church revitalization?
9. **Will I be a positive example and encourager for my family?** If you are taking a family with you on this journey, they will need your support and encouragement too. Will you be there for them?

We may be entering a new era of church revitalization. Some of the signs are certainly positive.

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