

## Why You Should Listen to Your Congregation When They Vote with Their Feet

It's an old phrase, but one that I find extremely helpful as a leader.

It's "**voting with their feet.**"

So many times we wonder about the validity or value of something when the answer is patently clear: people have voted with their feet. Meaning they aren't coming, supporting, inviting...you fill in the quantitative blank.

The point is that **they have given you the feedback you need.**

I've had numerous conversations with leaders over the years about the value of this or that, and in the end, it comes back to a simple assessment: *people have voted with their feet*. They don't want it, need it, or care about it. It doesn't matter how good the idea was on paper, how passionate a particular individual might have been for the enterprise, or even the handful of "fruit" stories that might have emerged from its efforts.

Now, let me qualify this in two important ways.

First, **this does not mean you only give people what they want.** That is a consumer-driven church, and that leads to heresy. Or at least a superficial faith.

So I'm not talking about doctrine, disciplines or anything else that would be put on a "doesn't matter whether it's popular it's essential" list.

But I am talking about programs and ministries that are in the "good" but "non-essential" camp that people "vote" on in a way that good leaders should pay very close attention to.

Here's why:

You have a limited amount of energy, resources, finances, volunteers, square footage and time. You are called to fulfill the Great Commission with both tenacity and wisdom. As a result, **it would be foolish to allocate anything to a non-strategic path.**

Now the second qualifier applies to the above-mentioned "handful of fruit stories" comment. Jesus was very clear in the parable of the talents that we are to be shrewd investors of time, talent, treasure...anything that is ours to be managed. Of course I can mobilize 100 people to fan out across a city for door-to-door visitation and witnessing and get one or two stories of receptivity.

But what if I took that same mobilizing energy and used it in a way that resulted in over 1,000 lives changed for Christ? **Isn't that what we should be wrestling with?** The Holy Spirit will honor Himself as the Word is proclaimed in whatever fashion (at least, I believe He will), but that

doesn't mean He doesn't honor even more those efforts that seek to maximize His witness to the world in ways that are most effective.

So here's the leadership question:

**Where aren't you paying attention to the vote?**

Read more from James [here](#).