

Growth Points

with Gary L. McIntosh, Ph.D.

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Improving Morale: Part One

Some years ago George Barna noted that one of the differences between growing and non-growing churches is attitude. His, as well as other's, research posits that growing churches believe they have something to give—the good news of Jesus Christ—to their surrounding communities. This belief builds a positive morale among the congregants that their church is important. Positive morale leads to positive energy to reach out and grow.

“Growing churches believe they have something good to offer the community.”

-Gary L. McIntosh

If you want to raise the morale of your church, you have to help the people give up “I can't” statements, as well as other comments, such as, “We're just a small church.” Comments like those disempower a church making it weaker than it really is.

Evaluating Church Morale

How is your church's morale? Does your church believe it has something of value to offer its city? Town? Community?

Listening to your people and observing their actions can help discover morale. To paraphrase a well-known statement from the Bible, “he who has an ear to hear, or an eye to see, listen and observe.” The following is a guide to help you begin listening to your people.

First, ask direct questions.

Whenever you have the opportunity, ask your leaders, classes, and small groups some of the following questions. How do you feel about our church? Why do you hear others saying

about our church? Are you proud of our church? If so, what makes you proud? If not, what makes you embarrassed?

Second, listen passively to others.

When you are attending church activities, participating in fellowship times, or listening in on other conversations what do they say about your church? Are they excited about your church? Do you hear discouraging comments? Is the tone of their conversations positive or negative?

Third, take complaints seriously.

If you are like many church leaders, you get complaints

Check out Dr. McIntosh's new website for additional articles.

New website address:

www.churchgrowthnetwork.com

e-mail . . . cgnet@earthlink.net

write . . .

PO Box 892589
Temecula, CA 92589

What are leaders saying about your church?

People take cues from leaders.

almost weekly. After hearing complaints on a regular basis, there is a tendency to log them away like an old email and forget them. This may be a mistake. Complaints carry tones of morale or lack of morale. Listen not only to what is being complained about, but also try to hear the frustration, embarrassment, or discouragement within the complaint. If complaints include overtones or undertones of anger, it almost certainly means a negative attitude exists in the church.

Fourth, catalog what leaders say to the congregation.

What do you hear other leaders saying to the congregation or in classes and small groups? Is the tone of comments positive or negative? Leaders reflect the attitudes of the people they lead, and people reflect the attitudes of the people who lead them. What attitudes are reflected from your leaders?

Fifth, observe non-verbal behavior.

Are congregants taking pride in the ministry? How do they care for the building and grounds? Are people chronically late to events? Do they invite their friends, family members, or colleagues to church events? These things, and others, demonstrate pride of ownership or lack of such pride. What does the non-verbal behavior of your people say about morale in your church?

When analyzing your church's morale, be sure to take into consideration your people. Some may just be negative, while others are perpetually happy. Check out your perceptions with others in the church to see if they are sensing the same

attitudes or to see if you are misinterpreting impressions. Feedback is an important aspect of interpreting the morale of your church.

How is the morale in your church? Are leader's comments positive or negative?

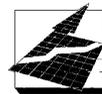
Strategies for Building Morale

Here are ten practical ideas you may use one-at-a-time for building a new sense of morale in your congregation.

First, be positive yourself.

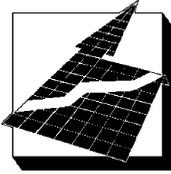
People take cues from leaders. When leaders are positive people begin to think in a positive manner. Follow the example of Jesus, who saw beyond the disciples' problems and invested in their possibilities. Monitor your language to make certain it sets a good tone about the church. Show your ownership and care for the church by keeping your office neat, picking up trash, and being on time for meetings.

(Continued Next Issue)



Gary L. McIntosh, D.Min., Ph.D. is
President of the Church Growth Network
For information about training workshops,
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It Only Hurts on Monday

Ministry Insights for Church Leaders

P.O. Box 892589 Temecula, CA 92589-2589
www.churchgrowthnetwork.com

It Only Hurts on Monday

Pastors are quitting! Some leave for what they hope will be greener pastures in another church. Some drop out of ministry altogether. Why?

The pressures of ministry are such that many pastors spend their days off simply trying to recover. When a fellow pastor was asked how things were going in his ministry, his wry answer was, "It only hurts on monday."

Evidence suggests that pastors are moving or dropping out at an increasing rate. The authors have researched over 60 ex-pastors and their churches to discover some of the causes of this crisis in pastoral ministry.

Dr. McIntosh and Edmondson's book, ***It Only Hurts On Monday*** will answer the question: Why pastors are quitting and what can be done about it? The authors explore nine key problems facing modern pastors:

- Burnout
- Tight Finances
- Loneliness
- Spiritual warfare
- Poor pastoral accountability
- Professional isolation
- Inadequate education
- Unrealistic expectations
- Resistance to change

Also addressed are four pressures which constitute the "facts of life" for the average pastor.

- The pressure of never being "off duty"
- The pressure of being in "crisis mode"
- The pressure of being responsible for more than one controls
- The pressure of an inadequate measure of

Using practical examples, the authors describe the issues and problems that most likely cause pastors to leave a church and ministry.

Each chapter concludes with a section on how you can help to protect your pastor and make his ministry life fruitful and fulfilling.



Gary L. McIntosh

Drs. McIntosh and Edmondson build on their personal experience, as well as that of numerous other pastors, to share practical ideas and insights that will assist pastors to remain faithful servants wherever they serve.

**Order today by calling toll free
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