

Growth Points

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Number of Unchurched Friends

Research demonstrates that the best way to reach new people for Jesus Christ is by targeting the family and friendship networks of existing church attendees and members. However, in order for a church to grow, church members must be in regular contact with a critical number of friends and family members.

There is a direct correlation between the average number of unchurched friends and family

among a church's regular worshipers and its growth or decline. The basic guideline states that if the people in a church have an average of three or fewer non-churched friends and family members, the church is most likely to be declining. If the average is around six, then the church is likely to be plateaued. Yet, if the average number of non-churched friends and family members is nine or more, then a church is very likely to be growing.

Average number of non-churches friends and family members:

Growing Church: 9

Plateaued Church: 6

Declining Church: 3

The longer a church has been in existence, the more likely that current worshipers will have smaller networks or friends or relatives that they can reach for Christ and the Church.

The growth of new church plants is often silently empowered due to the large

extended networks that members have with non-churched people in the community. As a church ages, the members tend to invest more of their time within the church, gradually losing contact with people outside the life of the church ministry. Over time, members and regular worshipers develop fewer connections with those who do not know Christ and, with fewer contacts, there is less potential for effective evangelism to take place.

Activating outreach through the social networks of current members and worshipers is key for effective evangelism in a local church. Pastors can help their regular attendees to discover their networks by using the following strategy.

Worshipers
in growing
churches
have an
average of
nine non-
churched
friends and
family
members.

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

New website address:

www.churchgrowthnetwork.com

Participate in discussions at

[churchgrowthnetwork.com/site/
blog](http://churchgrowthnetwork.com/site/blog)

Make a list of all non-churched friends.

Pray for one year for all your non-churched friends.

First, design a sermon series on a theme such as *Making Friends for Jesus*. A six-part series seems to work the best, as it is long enough to cover the subject, but short enough not to lose people's interest. Use passages that show how others invited friends and family members to find Jesus. For example, John 1:35-51 tells how Andrew found Peter and Philip found Nathanael. Acts 16 tells two delightful stories of how Paul and Silas brought the Philippian Jailer and his family to Christ, as well as Lydia and her family.

Second, after the final sermon in the series, ask those in attendance to make a list of all their non-churches friends and family members. One way to do this is to distribute two three-by-five cards to everyone in attendance. Ask each person to think of everyone they know who lives within a ten or twenty mile radius of your church facility, and who is not currently active in church, and to write their names down on the cards making two duplicate lists. Then challenge the congregation to commit to praying for all the people on their lists each week for the coming year. As a sign of their commitment to pray, have them place one of the cards into your offering plate. Be sure to tell them that you are not going to contact the people on their list in any fashion, but that you want to know how many people your church will be praying for in the coming year. Collect the cards, asking those in attendance to keep the other card in their Bible, purse, or other place where they will remember to pray.

Third, after collecting the cards, add up the total number of people listed and divide by the number of cards you receive. This will tell you the average number of friends and family members your people know. Compare this to the averages

listed above to determine if you are on the way to being a declining, plateaued, or growing church.

Fourth, the Sunday following the one in which you collected the cards, announce the total number of people your church is praying for in the coming year. Then on a regular time schedule, say, at least once a month, remind the congregation to be praying.

Fifth, once a quarter during the coming year, offer an event to which your people may invite those whom they are remembering in prayer. A Christmas Eve candlelight service, Easter Sunday worship services, summer outings-camping, swimming, camps, etc.-alternative Halloween gatherings, are all types of events that are user friendly, and to which your members will feel comfortable inviting their friends and family members.

What is the average number of unchurched friends and family members per worshiper in your church? What does it mean for your church?



Adapted from *What Every Pastor Should Know: 101 Indispensable Rules of Thumb for Leading Your Church* (Baker Books April 2013), by Gary L. McIntosh and Charles Arn.

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It Only Hurts on Monday

Ministry Insights for Church Leaders

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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.

Drs. 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 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

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.

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.



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