

HEALING A TROUBLED CHURCH

Norris Smith

1. View the church family as sick.
2. Create a safe environment for people to express their feelings.
3. Purposefully change your vocabulary from negative to positive.
4. Use your leadership position to model relational health.
5. Visit the sin-sick and relationally wounded in a spirit of love.
6. Fix the system.
7. Celebrate your church as a family.

RESEARCHING THE CHURCH

1. Read their Constitution and By-Laws.
2. Read all Policy Manuals.
3. Contact the Director of Missions.
4. Contact the Former Ministers.
5. Study their Budget.
6. Review their Sunday School Attendance.
7. Review their Location and Building.
8. Read all of the Annual Church Profiles for the Past Three Years.
9. Ask Theoretical Questions and Evaluate Their Answers.
10. Talk to the Funeral Director.

Questions as Examples

Ask: *If I wanted to start a bus ministry, how would I go about doing it?* Just wait and listen for their answer. If they send you to deacons, you know they are powerful in making decisions.

Ask: *If I wanted to have a Bible Conference in the spring rather than a regular Revival, how would I go about doing that?* If they send you to the deacons again, you know they have a lot of decision-making power.

Ask: *If I wanted to start a new Sunday School Department, how would I go about doing that?* If they send you to the deacons again, then you know that the deacons make the key decisions. If you go there, you will have to work with the deacons as the decision-makers.

These are just three theoretical questions you can ask along with getting information from the sources above.

CHURCH ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

1. What is the problem as you see it?
2. What are the factors causing the conflict?
3. Are there underlying factors that are different from the apparent causes?
4. To what extent is the problem an issue in the congregation?
5. Is this problem measurably affecting the church numerically, financially, etc.?
6. Has the conflict worsened in the last several years? If so, at what point did it get worse?
7. What needs to be done to resolve the problem or is it possible to resolve it?

SPIRITUAL CYCLE OF HEALING

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Fractured Relationship

- An event or issue that created the break in relationships.

Confrontation “face to face”

- Assertion-Someone has to take the initiative to share the hurt.
- Compassion-The attitude is to help not hurt.
- Redemption-The motive is to heal the relationship.

Communication “to understand”

- Hear-Listen to an explanation of the facts about what happened.
- Feel-The sharing of how one feels about what happened.
- Understand-The willingness to walk in the other persons shoes.

Forgiveness “to release”

- Desire-A willingness for healing to take place.
- Choice-An act of the will absorb the hurt.
- Release-A conscious decision to release the offender of the responsibility for the hurt they have caused you.

Reconciliation “to restore”

- Negotiate-Both parties can now agree to disagree.
- Restructure-Both parties restructure how they will relate in the future.
- Friendship-Each desiring the best for the other.

Fellowship “friendly again”

- Each are now speaking in kindness, looking each other in the eyes and relating in love.