

How Healthy is Your Church?

Take the Church-health **Report Card**



Overview:

Pastoring a church can be filled with peaks and valleys but most of the time it is routine, a Tuesday to Sunday routine. Sure, you would love to be inspired by a fresh Word everyday but sometimes that is not the reality. We can cry out to God but sometimes we don't get the answer we want in the timeframe we want it. We want a 'healthy' church but maybe we don't even know what that looks like, or maybe we see it in another congregation but not ours.

There are two things that are critical to evaluating the 'health' of the church, these aren't the only two, but they are big ones for me. Obviously, nothing will ever replace hearing from God directly and sensing the direction of the Holy Spirit.

The first thing that I believe is critical to your church health is balance, you might wonder what that means but I believe that almost every church is strong in one of the following five categories:

- Evangelism
- Worship
- Ministry
- Fellowship
- Discipleship

Almost no churches are strong in all five. If you are in a small church, you might argue that big churches can offer to pay attention to or even put full-time staff members to oversee that area. If you are a big church, you might think that it would be so much easier if you knew everyone and had a greater handle of

the people. Either way, I believe that we would all be better if there were more balance in our churches.

Before I go into detail on each one let me explain how I have used this in the past.

I would create a real informal 'report card' and judge each area using a 1-5 or A-B-C grading system and I would take it myself.

Reflect or grade your ministry based on how much time you spend doing it or preaching to it, how much of the budget is spent on it, and how many people are attending it.

In which way is it trending, is it a strength of the church or does it need a boost.

Category	Grade	Comments	Ideas
Evangelism (Outreach)			
Worship			
Ministry			
Fellowship			
Discipleship			

Name: _____ Date: _____

Keep your results!



Next, I would give this 'report card' to some of my leaders, explain the preface of this evaluation but encourage them to be open and honest, by writing it down you keep their thoughts, or you can give it to them anonymously.

After compiling and averaging their results, see how your results match or differ from theirs. Please be cautious not to be offended, this is not a reflection of you as their leader, it is an honest evaluation from their perspective and that perspective may be shared by many others.

Then once you get all that data and pray over it, then you give it to a few more people that you trust. All this input is valuable, what you are seeing in the church might not be what others are experiencing. This is a tremendous opportunity, savor this feedback, how you treat this information will determine the amount of truth you receive in the future.

Let me give a brief explanation of these five categories:

Evangelism (Outreach)

Outreach ministries are focused on evangelism and community engagement. They may involve missions work, community service, and efforts to spread the Gospel message beyond the church walls.

Do you reach out to the community, or do you hang a sign or promote an event from within and expect people to come to you? Jesus didn't sit back and



wait for the behavior of others to change; He met them where they were at.

Maybe your gift isn't outreach but I bet someone in your flock is. Do you only promote or encourage the things you are gifted at?

Take an inventory of your church and see what God has placed in your congregation. It's like having a foodbank with no labels on the canned goods, you aren't sure of what you have. It is your responsibility to know where your people are gifted, you are their Sheppard and spiritual steward.

Last word on evangelism, I have heard many pastors speak to their people about speaking to their friends and sharing the Gospel, but have they ever been instructed on how to. Do you ever provide practical messages or specific tactics that would instruct them?

You are the pastor, don't assume your people know anything.

Worship

Worship ministries focus on leading the congregation in worship and praise through music, song, and other forms of artistic expression. This may involve musicians, singers, and worship leaders.

This is a tricky one because your church might be singing hymns or attempting the latest song from KLOVE or

anywhere in between, but either way, you must model and show your people how you want them to worship.



Worship can be a personal experience but as pastors we are called to model for our flock. You must lead the way, they are watching.

Listen to what your trusted evaluators have to say, maybe they have insight to something that you haven't thought of. Enlist your worship team or musicians and gather feedback from them.

I was the worship leader for a church that was not only multi-generational but there was a substantial gap between the 40 and younger crowd and the 60+ crowd. The senior pastor had in the dead of night, brought in a young worship leader on staff while pushing out the matriarch worship leader of the church.

It was ugly and the tension was palpable.

After a few months, the young guy left, and I was appointed the 'new' worship leader. I knew I had to bring everyone together, but it was not easy.

I went on an 'apology tour' to combat the hard feelings even though it was not my doing. By the grace of God, we managed to avoid a split and further division.

Worship is not yours; it is to usher your people into His Presence.

You might have to get out of the way.

Ministry

Ministry can be defined into at least two types:

Prayer Ministry: These ministries emphasize the importance of prayer in the life of the church. They may organize prayer meetings, intercessory prayer teams, and prayer chains.

Healing and Deliverance Ministry: Some churches have ministries dedicated to healing and deliverance, often emphasizing the belief in the Holy Spirit's power to heal physical, emotional, and spiritual ailments.

If this doesn't fit into your beliefs or if this makes you uncomfortable, as a pastor you must be obedient and led by the Holy Spirit even though your first impulse is to avoid getting your hands 'dirty.'

Your congregation wants and needs your care and attention, not just after the service or going to lunch. You are the spiritual resource in their lives and sometimes people need to be prayed for, they need the laying on of hands, they need their shepherd. Do you make room on Sundays for prayer or laying on of hands? Is that in the schedule?



I recently visited a church where the congregants mentioned out loud their prayer requests and then someone would generically pray for the 15-30 requests.

Could the pastor have wrote them down so the congregation could pray for them through the week, could he had prayed for each person individually?

Are we so tied to our service schedule that even God can't work His way in?

Listen to what your evaluators say, it might be sobering.

Fellowship

Fellowship with other believers in churches is vital for several reasons. It offers spiritual support and encouragement, providing a nurturing environment where individuals can share their faith journeys and find solace in times of difficulty. Church communities foster a sense of



belonging and accountability, as members hold each other to their faith's moral and ethical standards. Through corporate worship and communal prayer, congregations unite in praising God and seeking His presence, deepening their faith collectively. Church fellowship is not only a source of personal growth but also a way to fulfill the biblical

call to "encourage one another" and demonstrate faith to the world.

Most churches do well in this area, for many congregations have one person that can cook, but is this the highest score of the five for you? Can we eat and talk, and fellowship better than we evangelize or worship?

Make sure that this area isn't always at the top of the list, remember you want balance, you want a healthy church.

Discipleship

Discipleship serves as a catalyst for spiritual growth, guiding believers on a path toward deeper faith and understanding of God. Through the discipleship process, individuals are transformed to reflect the character and teachings of Jesus Christ, fostering spiritual maturity.

This may be your Sunday School or your Wednesday night service but is it hitting the mark. Is it effective?

Do you see the fruit of your discipleship efforts? Are you making disciples or reading through a book of canned material? Have you surveyed your people to see what they want or need to learn about, have you prayed and sought God over what He wants. This can be the most over-programmed part of your week, but should it be?

These are the folks that are putting in extra time, they are striving for more. This



may be the most important part of your service. When we make disciples, we are replicating ourselves. We need to delegate and do more, making disciples will allow you to do just that.

Have your Sunday School numbers grown, if not, it may be dying.

Lastly, a healthy church must have a vision. **Vision** is one of the first things I ask a pastor that I just meet. Vision gives us our identity, it gives us our purpose, it gives our congregation a sense of direction. Vision aligns us to the things that we do and the things that we say. Vision separates us from those who are playing church.

When I started my first youth ministry job, I remember asking the senior pastor what his vision for the youth was, he told me that *“I don’t have one, whatever you want to do was fine with me.”* I remember walking away so confused and disappointed, I was wondering what I was supposed to do. I could either do no wrong or I could do no right.

Imagine how your congregation feels, do they know where you are leading them? I visited a church recently and when I was asked the question, I received a vague response that told me everything. They don’t know where they are going.

I would rather have a pastor with mediocre speaking skills and a strong sense of vision, than have a Billy Graham-type with no vision. Vision brings clarity, everything you do should fall under the parameters of your vision. This clarity helps members align their efforts, fostering a sense of unity and purpose.



If you know vision is so critical, then how often do you speak to it?

Is it on your website, Facebook page, or on Twitter (X).

The vision is part of your brand, if it is God-breathed, then treat it as such.

If you don't have one, or you inherited one, or if it is less than God-breathed, then get a multi-generational committee together and craft something that everyone believes in and is excited about. If you can involve others, then that promotes ownership among the members of the committee. Then with vision in hand Promote it, Promote it, Promote it!

Conclusion:

I understand ministry is a lot of work. Is it worth it, absolutely. But sermon-prep shouldn't take all your time, you have many gifted and talented people that desire your attention and approval.

If your church needs a fresh vision or a renewed sense of purpose, use this committee to help craft a new vision statement that incorporates your desires for all five categories.

Here are some examples:

1. "Our mission is to provide a nurturing and Christ-centered environment where people can grow in their faith, develop meaningful relationships, and discover their unique God-given purpose. Through engaging activities, relevant teaching, and intentional mentorship, we aim to equip our

congregation with the tools and values they need to make a positive impact on their communities and the world."

2. "At our church, we are committed to leading people on a transformative journey of spiritual growth. Our mission is to cultivate a deep and authentic relationship with Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and biblical teaching. We encourage youth to embrace their identity in Christ, connect with others in a loving community, and actively serve others in the name of Christ, fostering a lifelong commitment to faith and service."

Value this committee, look to them, they are probably the answer, or they might have insight to what ails the church. Remember you aren't the only one who hears from God. Give away ownership, don't think you have to do everything.

Give this report card and listen to your trusted people, what you hear may shock and surprise you.

I would bet that they know what the church needs, humbly listen to them and learn.

Category	Grade	Comments	Ideas
Evangelism (Outreach)			
Worship			
Ministry			
Fellowship			
Discipleship			

Name: _____

Date: _____

