

10 Troubling Statements Pastors Make

If you want your church to move toward a slow yet certain death, make certain your church leadership and membership affirms most of these 10 statements. They are troubling statements. Indeed, they are proclamations that virtually assure your church's decline and probable demise.

What is troubling is that these statements are not uncommon. They are articulated by both staff and lay leaders at times. See if you have ever heard any of these 10:

1. We hire our pastors and staff to do that. "That" can be evangelism. Or discipleship. Or caring for others. Or visiting people in the hospital. Some lay leaders view pastors and staff as hired hands to do ministry they should be doing themselves.

2. We have enough churches in our community. I rarely see a community that is really "overchurched." The number of unchurched people in any one community is typically increasing, not decreasing. This comment usually comes from church leaders who view new churches as competition.

3. We are a discipleship church. Or an evangelism church. Or a ministry church. Church leaders who say their churches are focused on only one area of ministry are offering excuses not to be obedient in other areas.

4. We have never done it that way before. Yes, it's cliché. But it's still a very pervasive attitude among change-resistant people in the church.

5. We don't have the money to do that. More times than not, the church does indeed have the money to focus on necessary priorities. The problem is that some church leaders don't have

the courage to reallocate funds toward those priorities.

6. We really don't emphasize small groups. Churches that do not give a priority to small groups or Sunday school classes can count on a big exodus of people out the back door. Those in groups are five times more likely to stay involved in a church than those in worship services alone.

7. We have enough people in our church. This is a tragic statement by leaders of inwardly focused churches. And it is an excuse not to do evangelism and ministry.

8. We aren't a church for those kinds of people. Though similar to number seven, this statement is an appalling declaration made by church members who really believe people of a certain race, ethnic group, income group or other descriptor should be excluded from the congregation.

9. We really shouldn't expect much of our members. Low expectation churches are far too common. Too many church leaders communicate unwisely that it's OK for members to do nothing, give nothing and not be concerned about growing spiritually.

10. We focus only on our members, not guests and others. Many church leaders make this statement either explicitly or implicitly. Sometimes the facilities, the worship services and the small groups shout, "Guests not welcome!"

What do you think of these 10 troubling statements? Are they accurate? Are they fair? What would you add or change?

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