

5 Reasons Christians Burn Out on Church

“I just did not have the energy to keep coming back to church.”

Though my consultation with the church took place many years ago, I remember vividly my interview with a member of the church who had recently dropped out. Her departure stunned the members and leadership. She was the one member you could count on. She was there “every time the doors were open.”

And then she never showed up again.

She simply sent an email of resignation of all ministries and left.

This church member experienced classic church burnout. And, as a consequence, she put herself on the sidelines of local church ministry, unsure if she would ever come back to active church life.

Burnout among church members may not be as obvious and dramatic as this example, but it is real. Some members gradually become less and less involved until you don't see them anymore.

Such are some of the symptoms of church member burnout. But what are the causes? Here are five common causes.

1. The church does not have clear purposes or vision. Many times the busyness of church life is not the problem; it is the lack of clarity of the vision of the church. Give church members a clear “why” to the ministry they do, and many will never grow weary of the work.
2. The church has certain activities because “we’ve always done it that way before.” Few things lead to burnout

more quickly than asking a member to be a part of something that has ceased to be useful to the church. “I was on a committee that met every month,” one church member told me. “But our committee never accomplished anything. If the committee disappeared tomorrow, very few people would notice.”

3. Too few members doing most of the ministry. This issue is both a symptom and a cause. In most established churches, about 90 percent of the ministry is done by one-third of the members.
4. The church does not celebrate enough. Celebrations are great motivators to continue the labor and ministry. They remind us of God’s provisions and His victories working through us.
5. The church has no clear expectations of membership. In most of our churches, we expect little or nothing of our members, and that is exactly what we get. It is imperative for churches to have a new members’ class or entry point class that provides both information and expectations.

Burnout is common with so many church members.

But it does not have to be.

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