

Why Big Churches Get Such a Bad Rap

Big churches get a bad rap.

Let's define a big church as a congregation of over 500 in attendance.

The thoughts about big churches are all over the map. Some positive. Some negative. Few neutral.

A strong suggestion: Let's make sure our thoughts about big churches are our own and not secondhand. Many Americans have a negative opinion about the big church. The bigger problem is, most people believe everything they ever heard about "them large churches."

How often do we believe what we've heard rather than reaching for our own experience?

When we stay in one paradigm, we get stuck in one experience and stay on the same level.

Most believe:

- Big churches are only after your money.
- Big churches have rock-star preachers.
- Big churches have cookie-cutter services.
- Big churches are all about big buildings.

Yes, some of this can be true. And yes, it's easy to believe all or part.

It's not true that big churches are only after your money. Actually, all churches are after your money. Because, without money, they are crippled to do anything meaningful.

In "Church: Absolute or Obsolete?" I wrote: Pastors love people with money and people without money. Most pastors are not in ministry for money. They are in ministry to love and serve people.

Consider the thousands of pastors with no staff, budget or amenities. They serve God and sacrifice their lives for others. Many pastors receive little or no salary.

We rarely hear stories of the sacrificial pastor. We hear stories about overpaid pastors and the pastors who fall into sin.

Those who venture out and visit a larger church discover they are far more different than they imagined.

Most find that larger churches serve, love and care for people. They also found robust benevolence programs reaching hundreds and thousands of families.

Most of this goes on under the community radar and the local news rarely covers this activity. Large churches also post thousands of volunteer hours in the church and their surrounding community.

Without finances this is not possible. The more money, the more can be accomplished.

Larger churches have a larger audience. This results in greater income and means they can help more people.

This does not mean the large churches are better. All churches are needed. Before we spew falsities about the larger churches, make sure we know the facts. Most don't.

Big churches have a larger staff to serve more people. This is good. Right? Well, some don't think so. Open your mind. Do some homework. Those who do their homework and have the courage to visit a bigger church find a great atmosphere. They also find loving pastors.

Church Services

The normal mindset is that large churches with over one service have cookie-cutter services and each service is a duplicate. This is partially true, but not true for every large church.

The services in large churches are not cookie-cutter at all. Most every service has its own inference and presence.

Some pastors allow the Holy Spirit to move and the gifts of the Spirit are in operation. A church coined this as “church out loud.” More on this in the next post.

“Church out loud” is leaders moving with the Holy Spirit as He moves on trained, gifted, anointed and appointed men and women. These leaders share and declare what they believe God is doing in that particular service.

Big Church Buildings

Buildings cause much tension in the church today. But everything harvested needs a building. Crops, animals and people. We store the harvest of our corn in a silo. Right?

We store all the harvest from the fields. We harvest it, salvage it, sell it and it provides nourishment for others. Buildings provide a place to empower and train people—both large buildings and small ones.

Buildings (large or small) provide a training center and a place of worship. We call the training *discipleship*. Discipleship occurs in homes, small buildings and large buildings

Why are big buildings not OK?

Large churches are willing to pay the large overhead because of their vision to reach a larger audience. They also care for people and desire to reach as many people as possible with the

gospel of Jesus Christ.

The large church is not better than the small church. Every church is vital and a blessing to someone. If God goes after one, He cares about the church that reaches only one.

The larger church just does it on a larger scale. We like large cars, large burgers and large houses. We like large salaries, large drinks and large coffees. Maybe, just maybe, a large church might be for you.

But more importantly, choose the church that's right for you.
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