

Will Your Church Be a Part of the Great Spiritual Awakening on the Horizon?

I believe God is preparing the church for another reformation. The first reformation focused on what the church believed; this one will focus on what it does.

For too long we've separated the Word of God from the work of God. As the church, we're called to be the body of Christ—the whole body. We're not just called to be the mouth of Christ, but the feet and hands as well.

Every time a new reformation has come, five renewals have preceded it. The awakening and reformation of the global church will begin with churches like yours. The same five renewals will precede this movement in your church:

1. Personal renewal. It starts with the heart. If God is going to renew your church, he'll begin it with you—and then it has to continue with the rest of your church. You might call it rededicating your life, being filled with the Spirit or the “deeper life.” I don't care what you call it. Just get it! Pastor, the bottom line is this—you need to fall in love with Jesus again. Do that and all of a sudden it's not about religion and rituals; it's about a relationship with Jesus. You realize that Jesus doesn't just love you, but He likes you.

2. Relational renewal. After you get right with God, you've got to get right with others. Jesus told us this. He told us to love God with all of our heart and then love others as ourselves. When you have relational renewal in your church, the gossip goes down and the joy goes up.

How do you know when a church has been through relational

renewal? People hang around longer after the service. They want to spend time together. If people don't want to hang around after your services, you have a performance, not a church. The church is more than content; it's a community.

3. Missional renewal. This is when a church discovers what God wants it to do. We have a kingdom assignment. We're not here just to bless one another. God wants to bless the world through us. Specifically, God has given the church five purposes—worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry and evangelism. Missional renewal happens when we focus our churches on these purposes. When your church gets personal, relational, and mission renewal, it can't help but grow.

4. Cultural renewal. In this stage, God renews the culture of the church. I've known pastors who have tried to change the culture of the church without going through the other three renewals. There's a word for that—martyrdom. You cannot change the culture of the church. Only God can. But once the first three renewals have happened in the church, God will change the culture.

5. Structural renewal. After your church has been through the first four renewals, it's going to outgrow your current structure. No doubt about it. I've seen it happen at Saddleback. The structure that works for a church of 100 won't work for a church of 250 and so on. There is no perfect structure in Scripture. Why? Every situation is different. We've got to structure our churches differently depending on our circumstances. We change structures just about every year at Saddleback. You can't put new wine in old wineskins. As your church begins to get healthier and healthier, the structure has to change.

There's a sixth renewal, but it doesn't happen in the local church. **Institutional renewal** happens when Christianity's institutions change. Institutions like seminaries and denominations are always the last ones to change; they never

start the change process. Change always happens first in the local church. Institutions are there to preserve the change of the previous generation. Take a look at a tree. The growth of a tree is never on the trunk. It's always on the new branches. Institutions are like trunks. They provide stability not innovation.

A great spiritual awakening is on the horizon. Will your church be a part of it? Be aware of these five stages of renewal. As a pastor, God has called you to be a catalyst in the renewal of your church. You can't do that unless you know where your church is on its journey.

Exciting days are ahead of us!

For the original article, visit .

Pockets of true revival are breaking out across the nation. Want to know more about the next great move of God? Click here to see Jennifer LeClaire's new book, featuring Dutch Sheets, Reinhard Bonnke, Jonathan Cahn, Billy Graham and others.

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