

10 Deadly Mindsets in the Church

I've been in church all my life. Along the way, I've seen and learned a lot. Almost all the insight I have into church has come by experience.

I have observed, for example, that paradigms can often shape a church's culture. A paradigm, in simple terms, is a mind-set—a way of thinking. In this case, it's a collective mind-set of the church, often programmed into the church's culture.

If the church is unhealthy, part of the reason could be because it has some wrong paradigms. In that case, it will almost always need a paradigm shift in order to be a healthier church again.

Here are 10 dangerous church paradigms:

1. "This is more my church than yours." No one would ever say that, but a sense of ownership can set in the longer someone has been at a church. They have invested in the church personally and feel, often rightly so, a need to protect and care for it. The negative aspect of this mind-set, however, comes when people don't easily welcome new people. They own seats. *You better not sit there, no matter how much the church needs to grow.* They control programs, committees and traditions. Obviously, the church is not your church or my church. God has not released the deed.

2. "We've never done it that way before." If this is the "go to" paradigm, you probably never *will* do it that way, either. People with this mind-set resist all change—even the most positive or needed change. Small change is big change to these people.

3. "The pastor needs to do it." Whatever "it" is, the pastor,

or some church staff, must be involved at some level. This keeps a church very small. (This doesn't seem biblical to me.)

4. "That's for the big churches." Don't sell yourself short. Some of the greatest people in ministry came from small churches. Maybe your only role, for example, is to raise up the next generation of kingdom-minded leaders. That could be a great purpose for a church.

5. "That's for the small churches." I've seen a few big churches with attitude. Bad attitudes. This mind-set can keep a church from reaching the most hurting people, because their only focus is on growing. A strong, narrowly defined and driven vision is powerful. It builds churches. But a church operating under this fifth paradigm never welcomes any interruptions in their plans. Jesus is our best example of combating this paradigm. He kept the vision before Him, but He was never afraid to stop for the interruption of yelling in the streets.

6. "My comfort level for change is ____." This negative paradigm says, "We will change until it impacts our personal desires." Does it sound self-centered? It is.

7. "My people would never support that." Well, pastor, maybe if they weren't "your people," they'd be more willing to be "God's people." God has ways you can't even imagine of leading His people to do His will.

8. "I can't." Not with that attitude, you can't. But let me ask you one question: Where is your faith?

9. "This is the best we can do." Are you sure? Is that your opinion or God's? Sounds like a dangerous paradigm to me.

10. "We have plateaued as a church." Really? You may have quit growing, but plateaued? The word means "leveled out." That indicates you're stable. In my experience, you're either going forward or going backwards. Standing still is usually not an

option.

Those are just some of the dangerous church paradigms I've observed. You've seen far more, I'm sure.

Do you know of any other dangerous church paradigms? Please share them below.

For the original article, visit . **Ron Edmondson** is a pastor at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky. He is also a church leadership consultant who is passionate about planting churches, helping established churches thrive and assisting pastors and those in ministry think through leadership, strategy and life. Prior to ministry, Ron had more than 20 years of business experience, mostly as a self-employed business owner. Follow Ron on Facebook, Twitter, and his blog at .