

5 Reasons Churches Have an Incredible Window of Opportunity

As congregations return methodically to in-person services, something else will be taking place. It will be obvious to some churches; it will be more subtle to others. Simply stated, churches will have an incredible window of opportunity to make substantive and positive changes.

We have been watching closely the responses of congregations and their leaders during the pandemic. We have surveyed thousands of them during our webinars. There seems to be little doubt. God is using this difficult season to prepare churches for unprecedented opportunities.

Why is the window of opportunity opening right now? Of course, the correct answer and perspective is that God is opening the window for our churches. But it is fascinating to see specifically how He is working in our congregations. I see at least five reasons for this new and exciting opportunity.

1. Church members are more unified in the midst of the challenges. This crisis has brought our congregations together. Nitpicking and self-serving have transitioned to praying and serving. More of our members are focused beyond themselves. God is preparing them to move in greater passion and obedience to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

2. Our congregations have been exposed to a variety of worship experiences. Have you ever seen a church member's perspective and attitude change dramatically for the better when he or she went on a mission trip? That church member becomes aware of a world and cultures dramatically different from her own. Our church members have been exposed to hundreds of streaming

worship services. Many of them look and sound nothing like their own. Their world has expanded for the better.

3. Many church members have already made changes. I received a comment from an older church member who made the transition to digital giving during the pandemic. His words were likely meant to be humorous: "I swore I would never give online because I was certain it was the abode of the devil." His willingness to change to digital giving is but a microcosm of the changes many church members have already made. They will likely be receptive and prepared for even more change.

4. The community is more receptive. In most communities, those who don't attend church have been watching streaming worship services. Many of the residents of these communities have requested prayer. Many churches have been highly intentional to reach out to members of the community. The window of opportunity is wide open in these communities.

5. Church members are anticipating and celebrating regathering in person. They are more in the mood of joy and celebration rather than complaining and nitpicking. They are not nearly as focused on themselves. This pandemic has made them realize that their churches, as imperfect as they are, are truly blessings from God. They are not taking their churches for granted.

It is indeed a window of opportunity. If past major events are indicative, this window of opportunity will remain open for several months to a year.

God has given us an opportunity.

We cannot and must not let it go to waste.{eoa}

Thom S. Rainer is the founder and CEO of Church Answers, an online community and resource for church leaders. Prior to founding Church Answers, Rainer served as president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. Before coming to LifeWay, he

served at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for 12 years where he was the founding dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism.

For the original article, visit .