

Do You Need Some Holy Ghost Dr?no?

We can't reach

the younger generation with yesterday's stale religion. It's time to unclog our wells.

Last

week I spoke to a group of ministry leaders associated with a particular

Pentecostal denomination in South Carolina. Many of these men and women are

hungry for a fresh move of God, but they are also aware that they aren't

effectively reaching people for Christ. Most of their small congregations are

getting grayer by the day.

I

told these folks they have only two options: Change or die.

"Don't get stuck in an old place. The Holy Ghost offers the best Dr?no for your clogged wells. Open up your life and ministry to the new things God is doing in this exciting hour."

Using

a story from the life of Isaac, I reminded them that we should never build our

ministries with only one generation in mind. God identifies Himself as “the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” (Ex. 3:6, NASB). He wants His work to advance from one generation to the next. And this requires us to be flexible and open to change.

After Abraham’s death, Isaac journeyed to the land of Gerar during a famine. While there he rolled up his sleeves and did some backbreaking work. Genesis 26:18 says, “Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he gave them the same names which his father had given them.”

This passage reveals a clear spiritual principle. God wants to open spiritual wells of blessing, but He doesn’t want to limit that blessing to one generation. Our enemy loves to stuff our wells with all kinds of garbage—religiosity, tradition, legalism, denominational politics, strife, jealousy, cold-heartedness, pride and immorality. If we want our wells to flow continually, then we must unstop them.

While Isaac did not change the names of Abraham’s wells, he renovated them so they could be a blessing to his generation. In the same manner, we must be willing

to remodel our ministries (even totally gut them if necessary) so the younger generation will want the drink we offer. We can't change our core message, but we won't effectively reach the Isaac generation with a stale, outdated presentation.

We need an extreme makeover. Here are just a few areas where you may need renovation, remodeling and unclogging:

1.
Genuine, authentic spirituality. During the Pentecostal/charismatic movement, we overdosed on hype. We celebrated preachers who wore shiny suits and helmet hair. We thought it was acceptable to push people to the floor during altar ministry times. We developed our own set of strange pulpit mannerisms. But all this must go. Young people today are nauseated by fakery and pretense. We don't have to act weird to be supernatural.

2.
Music styles. Worship causes war in some churches because we become so attached to the music of our generation. I want to scream to people my age and older: "It's not about you!" If we want to reach younger people then we must update our playlists. Don't be selfish; you can listen to your golden oldies in the car or at home. But don't build your church services around the music of 1972.

3.

Dress codes.

Casual Friday has become the norm in most businesses, but a lot of churches never got the memo. Young people feel out of place when everyone looks like they are at a funeral. Many young guys today can't afford to buy a dark suit (nor would they be caught dead wearing one) and most young women don't want to be forced to wear a feathered hat, white gloves or a skirt that covers their ankles. Nothing will clog up your well faster than yesterday's religious garb.

4.

Team leadership. The one-man show was the norm in churches in 1980, but we've proven that benevolent dictatorships have no place in the church. That system didn't work and it wasn't biblical. Young people today want interaction and connection. In the New Testament, Paul had a multigenerational, multiethnic team that included men and women (see Rom. 16:1-16). So should we.

5.

Relational discipleship. In the past season—which was dominated by television—Christians tended to be spectators who built their spiritual lives around big events. But church will not work that way in the digital age. Young people don't want to learn from a guy who arrives at the church in a limousine, sits on a throne on the stage, preaches from a pedestal and then disappears into his green room. They

want a real relationship with a real spiritual father (or mother) who is willing to spend time with them.

6.

Technology.

You would never go to a foreign country to serve as a missionary without learning its language. Yet today many churches try to reach the younger generation without mastering digital media. Don't be intimidated by change. If a child can use an iPhone you can learn how to tweet. God wants to use all new forms of communication to spread His truth.

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