

Our Team's Culture Code

It's amazing how growing your church is so controversial these days. I again read an article this week that stated that a growing church does not mean a healthy church—I believe that to be absolutely true. However they went on to say that if a church is not growing that does not mean it is unhealthy. That's where I would have to disagree.

While no timeline of “not growing” was mentioned I would have to assume they were speaking over a lengthy period of time. If a church has not grown numerically in a year or more, something is not right and something needs to be addressed in order to see numerical growth happen again.

Why do I believe this? Because Jesus gave the mission to the church to “GO into all the world and make disciples...” If we cease to “go and make” we are not on mission and something is wrong. That's why I focus so much on the 7 growth points. These 7 points help me discern what is wrong if our church doesn't grow over the course of a year or two.

To me, the church was designed to grow. Has to grow. That is it's mandate and our vision as a Victory Church is to “Reach every available person at every available time by every available means with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” If we are not growing, we are not following our mission or our vision and we must immediately assess the cause.

One of the greatest effects on numerical growth is the effect of culture. Culture happens by design or by default. What I mean is every church has a culture, just like every home and business has a culture. That culture is determined on purpose or by accident. I prefer to design the culture I want on purpose so that it matches what our mission and vision are.

Three years ago, our staff sat down and over a period of three months in our weekly staff meetings we discussed and designed the culture we wanted to work in. It was one of the most impacting things we have ever done as a team. I love what we came up with, but it was the process of coming to these team values that was the most impacting on our team and church.

Our Culture Code:

1. We lead with _____.

We guard our hearts against becoming reactionary.

Proverbs 29:18 (NASB)

Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained,

2. We make it _____.

We guard our hearts against an attitude of “it's good enough.”

Matthew 25:25-27 (Msg)

“Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent. The master was furious. ‘That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the

best, why did you do less than the least?"

3. We _____ with the methods.

We guard our hearts against the thought of "we've never done it that way before."

Isaiah 43:19 (NIV)

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

4. We keep it _____.

We guard our hearts against over complexity and business.

Luke 9:1-4 (Msg)

Jesus now called the Twelve and gave them authority and power to deal with all the demons and cure diseases. He commissioned them to preach the news of God's kingdom and heal the sick. He said, "Don't load yourselves up with equipment. Keep it simple; you are the equipment."

5. We need to _____.

We guard our hearts against being secret cliques and under-communication.

Ephesians 4:25 (Msg)

"What this adds up to, then, is this: no more lies, no more pretense. Tell your neighbor the truth. In Christ's body we're all connected to each other, after all. When you lie to others, you end up lying to yourself."

6. We're all _____.

We guard our hearts against an attitude of "that's not my job."

Galatians 6:2 (NIV)

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

7. We never waste a _____.

We guard our hearts against being overwhelmed by problems.

Romans 8:37-39 (NIV)

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

8. We make each other look _____.

We guard our hearts against gossip and being publicly critical.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV)

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

9. We _____ ourselves.

We guard our hearts against selfish ambition.

2 Timothy 2:1-2 (Msg)

So, my son, throw yourself into this work for Christ. Pass on what you heard from me—the whole congregation saying Amen!—to reliable leaders who are competent to teach others.

10. We _____ our culture.

We guard our hearts against division & hypocrisy.

Proverbs 4:23 (NIV)

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”

Books:

[Cracking Your Churches Culture Code](#) (Sam Chand)

[Look Before You Lead](#) (Aubrey Malphurs)

[Creating Your Church’s Culture](#) (Stephen Blandino)