

# Seven Keys to Church Growth

## Smart Church Management

One goal that many churches focus on is growth. Churches want to reach more people and reaching more people is an outcome of growth.

Growing a church requires a vision, thought and strategy. Successful churches are those that follow a God-given vision and mission, define the steps to get there and implement their strategic plan.

The beauty of the body of Christ is that God uses everyone in a slightly different way and those unique qualities, that each church possesses, is what God uses to create a beautiful tapestry of churches.

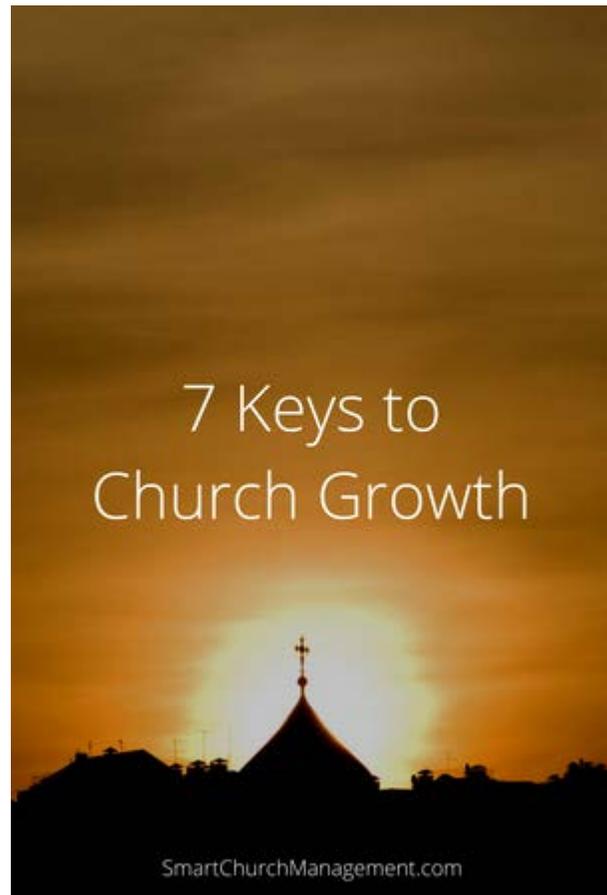
Church growth is not about competing with the ministry down the street but more about developing the people God has planted in the local church to be used by God with their unique gifts.

I believe people are called to churches for a specific purpose. We are all on a journey and the church helps us develop as Christians and supports our unique calling.

In his book, *Purpose Driven Church*, Rick Warren says “....**since the church is a living organism, it is natural for it to grow if it is healthy...If a church is not growing it is dying..**” This can be a scary concept for a small local church.

With growth comes many challenges but the exciting thing is that with God ALL things are possible and He gives wisdom freely!

I have a theory that some churches fail to grow – thrive – because the leadership gets comfortable with the way things are and doesn't do anything to change the status quo.



This may be ok – but it may not be. Could it be that there are people who could benefit from a particular church body that is stagnant?

## **7 Keys to Church Growth**

### **1. Know Where the Church is Going**

There is an old saying ***if you fail to plan, you plan to fail***. This is true in business as well as churches. Having a well defined vision, mission and values statement sets the direction for any organization and developing a strategic plan to map out the steps to get there is how a vision is achieved.

People are drawn to a compelling mission and vision and get excited about being a part of an organization that is making a difference!

It is exciting when a church member can share stories of ***the early days*** and celebrate the journey of how the church matured, developed and grew.

### **2. Create an Inviting Atmosphere**

It is unfortunate, but true, that we we are a consumer driven society and people are naturally drawn to an aesthetically appealing environment. People like to be proud of where they worship so providing an environment that is comfortable, clean and orderly is important.

Paying attention to things like clean, stocked restrooms, clean glass surfaces and freshly vacuumed carpeting can go a long way in creating a comfortable atmosphere for members and guests.

### **3. Create a Welcoming Experience**

There are not many things as awkward for a church visitor as to be ignored or to be overwhelmed with attention. Everyone wants to be greeted but not everyone is comfortable being inundated with unwelcome attention.

Try to remember that most people who visit a church are looking for something – time with God. They might be exploring the Christian faith for the first time or checking to see if the church culture is a good fit. Regardless, it is important to make the experience as positive as possible.

There is a tender balance between creating a welcoming experience and an awkward one. But, with socially skilled people and a little training it can be done.

#### **4. Care for Church Members**

Church members are one of the key customer groups in a church. Understanding their unique needs and ensuring their needs are met – within the scope of the vision – is critical to church growth.

For example, if the church has volunteer opportunities, make sure the application and communication process is a good experience.

Or if a volunteer is given a job or responsibility, try to make sure they know what is expected of them and have what they need to do their job. The goal is to provide the support for their needs.

Having said that, there are people who sometimes make unreasonable demands for things that don't line up with the vision or strategy of the church and can be difficult to deal with.

I had a pastor friend once say he would respond to this kind of person with “***either love me or leave me but don't stay here and fight me...***” Some people are unreasonable and you need to just let them move on.

#### **5. Provide Opportunities to Serve**

At the core of all of us is a desire to serve others. Jesus did it and as Christians we need to be provided with opportunities to help other people.

So whether it is serving meals to the less fortunate, organizing mission trips, or helping others in a time of crisis – opportunities to serve offers members the chance to use their gifts to help God's people.

A well defined strategic plan can help identify the kinds of service opportunities that support the vision of the church.

#### **6. Proper Management of Church Resources**

There needs to be good oversight and management of God's money!

God provides financial resources to churches and there is responsibility that comes with managing those resources. Churches that are good stewards of ministry funds, and are diligent with their budgeting processes, are better prepared financially for the needs of expanding facilities, updating equipment and other necessities to operate a church.

God's money is the most important money in the world to manage well! Being a good steward of ministry funds is an important responsibility of the call.

## 7. Enjoy the Ride

Whether you are the senior pastor, a business administrator or a church secretary, the call should be enjoyable, fulfilling and balanced. Spending time with God is what fuels the call and the anointing to do what needs to be done in a church.

I have a quote written in the back of my bible that says, ***“Don’t get so caught up in the ministry of the Lord that we forget the Lord of the Ministry.”***

If God called you into ministry, don’t take that call lightly, spend time with Him and He will instruct you in the way you should go!

If you take that instruction, write the vision down and map out a plan to get there – biblical church growth is inevitable!