

Advice To Young Pastor and Church Planters

Presented by Pastor Jack Cunningham

There are at least ten essentials elements in church building (I consider these to be absolutes):

- 1) **Putting your own family first is essential.** A pastor's time is split between many important people and tasks. You will be called on all hours of the day and night. Emergencies will take you away from important family events. People will demand your time. Much time is spent working on church matters, studying for preaching and teaching, prayer, etc. Make sure you work extra hard to let your family know that you love them and value them. More pastors have resigned and left churches because of family matters than any other reason. Put your family first. You cannot teach church families how to succeed if you are not succeeding in your own home.
- 2) **Prayer is essential.** Everything you do (project, program, preaching) should be bathed in prayer. Where there is much prayer there is much power, where there is little prayer there is little power, where there is no prayer there is no power. Its a fact of ministry.
- 3) **Faith is essential.** Step out of the boat. Try new things. Trust God for the outcome. Refuse to just play it safe all the time. Do something now and then that you believe God spoke to you to do, even if you don't know the end result. Set goals. Stretch yourself and your church.
- 4) **Giving is essential.** Take up an offering in your church and support every national offering (even if only \$20 comes in, send something to every district

department). The principle of "giving and blessing" works for the local church just as it does for individual believers. Pay your tithe/dues to the district faithfully. You preach to your people that God will bless them if they put God first ... the same is true for you and for your church. Giving to your own church does not bring the same level of blessing as giving to people, ministries, missionaries, etc. outside of your local church.

5) **Evangelism is essential.** Carry church cards with you and give them out everywhere you go. Teach your people to invite guests, give their testimony, teach Bible studies, etc. Try new evangelism ideas, don't get stuck doing the same old thing over and over. Plan evangelistic events in the church. I personally preach evangelistic every Sunday morning. 52 Sundays out of the year, sinners there or not, I preach an evangelistic message. 75% of the people who receive the Holy Ghost in our church get it on Sunday morning. Be an evangelist at heart.

6) **Developing a good work ethic is essential.** Great churches don't just happen. Great churches are built by men and women who are willing work hard. I've often said, "A lot of young men and women want to be in the work of the Lord until they find out that it really is the W.O.R.K. of the Lord." I've never known a lazy man who ever did anything significant for God.

7) **Identifying and training leaders is essential.** This should be an on-going process. You should train leaders weekly or at the least monthly. Pour yourself into men and women. Train them. Encourage them. Challenge them. This is one of the most important tasks of a pastor. When I started my first church I didn't have many adults, none that were willing to be in leadership. So, I chose some good teens and started training them for leadership. Most of those teens I trained to be leaders 25 years ago and pastoring and preaching very successfully today. When you train leaders you are multiplying your own ministry.

8) **Building strong families is essential.** Teach on family matters often. There are a lot of good video series available you can use to strengthen families. This is also a good evangelism tool. After 33 years of ministry and leadership I have found that no church will ever be any stronger than the family units that make up that church. If you have a church full of broken, fighting, unloving families ... your church will have a broken, fighting, unloving spirit.

9) **Having a servants heart is essential.** Jesus taught that the greatest among us would be the one who is servant of all. Learn how to serve the people of God. Go out of your way to help people.

10) **Caring about people is essential.** My wife is a fabulous people person. She knows all of our people. She knows them by name. She knows where they work, live, etc. She cares about things that matters to them. She calls them when they miss church, on their anniversaries, birthdays, etc. She prays for them when their sick, visits them in the hospital, prays for them to find jobs, and more. Remember, no one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.

I hope all of this helps. I have a special place in my heart for men and women who are establishing and building churches. You are a hero in the church. If possible, read my book "If I Can Do It Anybody Can." If you don't have a copy, call Home Missions to order, if they can't get you a copy I'll send you the electronic file to read on your computer.

Stay in touch.

Jack Cunningham, Sr. Pastor
Bible World Church

"When we have nothing left but God, then we become aware that God is enough!"