

“10 Principles for Growing a Dynamic Church”¹

Principle #1: Truth

Proclaim God’s Word as truth and apply it to people’s lives.

Principle #2: Worship

Worship God every week in spirit and truth.

Principle #3: Leadership

Develop Christ-centered leaders who lead by example.

Principle #4: Excellence

Do your best in every area of service.

Principle #5: Faith

Be willing to step out with a bold faith and take risks.

Principle #6: Harmony

Maintain a spirit of harmony.

Principle #7: Participation

Expect the congregation to participate in every ministry.

Principle #8: Fellowship

Continually practice agape love for one another.

Principle #9: Stewardship

Give generously of God’s resources as a church and as individuals.

Principle #10: Evangelism

Commit enthusiastically to evangelism as your primary mission.

¹ Russell, Bob. *When God Builds a Church: 10 Principles for Growing a Dynamic Church*, (Howard Books: 2015), vii.

How do I put these principles into practice in my church?

1. Pray for a vision of what your church can be.

2. Discuss the ten principles with your leaders.

- ◆ Does the preaching at our church consistently teach people biblical truths and how they apply to our daily lives?
- ◆ Do our weekly worship services help people connect with God?
- ◆ Are our leaders people of character who have the spiritual gift of leadership?
- ◆ Are we doing everything with excellence?
- ◆ Are we willing to step out in faith, trying something so big that if God isn't in it, we will fail?
- ◆ Is there a spirit of harmony and cooperation among the leaders and the congregation?
- ◆ Are the members of our congregation actively involved in every facet of ministry, viewing themselves as ministers and participants rather than the recipients of ministry?
- ◆ Do our people love one another, and are they seeking to meet one another's physical, spiritual, and emotional needs?
- ◆ Are the members of our congregation giving sacrificially to the work of God's Kingdom, and are our leaders setting the example?
- ◆ Is evangelizing the lost our primary mission?

3. Realistically evaluate your situation.

4. Develop a mission statement.

5. Develop a five-year plan for change.

6. Work on the one hour of weekly worship.

Your Sunday service is the most important hour of the week. More visitors and members are present, and the tone of the entire ministry of the church is usually set in that hour. Make sure everything that surrounds that one hour is done with excellence and bathed in prayer. The building should be clean, the greeters friendly, and the nursery clean and well-staffed.

In the service, make sure the sermon is biblical and applicable, the worship songs are meaningful, the special music well-rehearsed, and the prayers carefully thought out. Cut out dead time, encourage all the leaders to do their best, pray with the leaders beforehand, and expect God to be present. Create an atmosphere that is both reverent and friendly.

When that one hour is done with excellence every week, there is a trickle-down effect.

7. Find a worship leader.

8. Get the men involved in leadership.

I don't intend for this to be a theological debate over the role of women in the church, only a reflection of reality. When men are in leadership in a church, they bring their families along with them. When women are in leadership, the men often stay home. Men attract other men, and those other men bring their wives and children with them.

9. Start a "What We Believe" class.

- ◆ Your people – old-timers and newcomers – need to know the basic beliefs of your church. Begin to offer a three-to-six week course on your basic beliefs.

10. Love one another.

11. Give up control.

- ◆ Follow the biblical guidelines for authority, state them clearly, and then get out of the way. It's time to trust that God is in charge and let go of your power.

12. Visit other churches that are alive and growing.

13. Celebrate victories, giving God the glory.

APPENDIX²

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These are the core values that represent what we believe about ourselves and our organization. They represent how we will interact with each other to accomplish the Mission Statement and Visionary Goals.

1. We believe the Bible to be our final authority for faith and practice.
2. We believe service to Christ merits excellence in everything we do.
3. We believe both corporate and individual encounters with God are vital.
4. We believe all people have worth and value to God and therefore to us.
5. We believe in the development of our God-given gifts and talents for service to Jesus Christ.
6. We believe the family is God's primary unit for ministry, and therefore, the family should be nurtured.
7. We believe in manifesting the love and grace of Christ in practical ways in the community and throughout the world.
8. We believe that it is God's will that every believer grow to maturity in Christ.
9. We believe in the submission to and active support of godly leadership.
10. We believe in practicing wise stewardship of God's resources.
11. We believe that God has called us to be a people of prayer.
12. We believe in encouraging a prayer-guided faith that is willing to take bold risks.
13. We believe that leaders are accountable first to God and then to the people they serve.
14. We believe God honors a spirit of humility, integrity, and Christlike character in all areas of service.

MISSION STATEMENT

We exist to evangelize the lost, edify the saved, minister to the needs of others, and be a conscience in the community.

VISIONARY GOALS

How we will go about accomplishing the Mission statement over the next three to five years.

In the Area of Evangelism

1. To relentlessly pursue evangelism for Jesus Christ in every aspect of ministry.
2. To create a community that is welcoming and friendly to all people.
3. To provide excellent facilities, infrastructures, parking, and traffic flow for everyone.

² Russell, *When God Builds a Church*, 285.

4. To continually improve the quality of every aspect of worship, teaching, and preaching for adults, youth and children.

In the Area of Education

1. To create an environment where the congregation and leadership are focused on daily prayer and Bible study.
2. To create an environment where everyone belongs to a group that provides a caring place.
3. To provide for the spiritual development of our children and youth in a safe, caring and nurturing environment.
4. To create an environment in which all individuals use their God-given gifts in service to Christ.

In the Area of Leadership

1. To build and nurture highly competent, responsive, and accessible leadership.
2. To become a more intentional church through a process of strategic planning.
3. To enlist leaders to a high level of spiritual discipline.
4. To create an informed and unified congregation relative to our mission and ministry.
5. To create a relationship of clear and open communication between elders and staff regarding roles and expectations.
6. To develop a succession plan for key leadership.

In the Area of Ministering to Those in Need and to the Community

1. To understand and respond to community need in every area of ministry.