

Church Growth

Introduction

I am trusting God that after you have heard this message and start to implement what you heard that God will grow your churches. I want to practically teach you in a simplest way possible, I want to give you one key that will revolutionize your ministry and take it far above and beyond anything you can imagine.

And then I will briefly discuss some other nuggets to growing your church.

Tell the Story of the CAR – No petrol, not car, no battery no car, everything must work for the car to move!

You may say, Martin I am a pastor for 1, 5, 10, 20 or more years, what can you teach me about church growth?

I respectfully agree with you, that you have the experience! I do not disagree with your experience in any way and those methods you learnt at seminary are still valid but today I want to talk about the polish!. The fuel that will take your church from average to extra ordinary!

The truth is no one is too old, too experience, too qualified to learn something new, so please listen, take notes and apply these principles and you will see an even great anointing in your ministry.

If you aim at nothing you will always miss the target! Thus without a target, a plan you will never know if you have been successful!

So today I want to give you one key

Our Standards verse God Standards

We live in a world where our standards of success, are dictated to us by the world system. We feel we have achieved nothing unless people can see and take notice of our achievements. We often build churches as monuments to man and man's achievements of success and not honour and glorify God!

This is normally the area when a church already starts to go wrong! What is your church's foundation?

I remind you that any church not built on the ROCK, JESUS CHRIST, according to **Matthew 16:18, 1 Corinthians 3:11**, can and will never be successful because Jesus Christ must always be the foundation of any church for it to succeed.

Do not look at others

Most of us believe that the mark of success as a Pastor is:

- A large church with large congregations and a good income.
- Beautiful church building
- Flashy Cars, Cloths, Houses, lots of money.
- Many people know you, and you are invited to speak all over the world

- You are on Television or radio
- You write many books on Christian topics.

We often look at these churches and Pastors as models to strive towards and we often feel intimidated when we are in the presence of such prestigious pastors. And yes we need to respect and honour the men and women of God and yes we need to aim for God's best!.

Sometimes we might even think, "What am I doing wrong that I am not a good/successful Pastor?"

- Maybe you think you are not a good pastor because of your training or your lack training which is the problem
- Maybe you think you are not a good pastor because your knowledge or lack of knowledge of the bible is the problem
- Maybe you think you are not a good pastor because the people in church, if they would only give their tithes and offerings this church will grow

These are all worldly standards of measurements because God says He judge our heart, our motives **Acts 15:8** – *"And God, who knows the heart, has testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us,"* **Psalm 7:9 / Psalm 26:2**

Remember we are not in a race against each other, against other churches but we are in a race against ourselves, against what God has called you to do!

Think for a moment, What ahs God called you to do? If you say Pastor, I am not sure, Then brother, sister you need to go to Hi and find out what it is that He wants you to do.

Write it down the vision God gives you, make notes about it, plan about it and aim towards that goal so that you too might receive the prize and hear Well Done Good and faithful servant!

Relationship with God

Few of us realise that whether you are a pastor or member of a small, medium or large church the true measure of your effectiveness as a Pastor or member as a Christian, is the quality of your own personal relationship with God!

The mark of a great or extra ordinary church comes for an intimate relationship with God. The bibles says in **Daniel 11:32**, *"but the people who know their God shall prove themselves strong and shall stand firm and do exploits [for God]."* **AMP**

How do you see God?

How do you experience Him in your daily life?

How much do you trust Him and give your life over to Him?

Do you spend time reading you Bible, praying to God on a daily basis?

Have you put your total faith in Him in everything?

Are you a good steward of what God has given you?

You see NO leader can ever surpass, go beyond what he himself has not experienced! Your relationship with God, your understanding of Him, How much you really trust Him, these are the hallmarks of your success.

See yourself as a success

How you see and experience God will directly influence you how you approach Him.

Do you see God as this angry God who punishes sin? Do you believe that when you sin you cannot approach God?

I have good news for you, remember since you have become born again Jesus' blood gives you access to the very throne room of God.

His death on the cross gives you access to the very throne room of God. Jesus' death and resurrection paid the price once on for all, all you sins past, all you present and all your future sins were ALL paid for by His death and resurrection.

Jesus Christ sacrifice gave us access to God because it removed the problem of sin and gave us instant access to God! Jesus' Christ Death

- **JUSTIFICATION** - Just as if I never sinned – God's act of declaring a sinner righteous.
- **RIGHTEOUS** – Right standing before God – A person has been judge and has been deemed to be leading a life which is pleasing to God.
- **SANCTIFICATION** – Made pure, clean, Holy - Set apart for a special purpose, made sacred or Holy
- **ATONEMENT** - refers to the forgiving or pardoning of sin through the death of Jesus Christ by crucifixion, which made possible the reconciliation between God and creation
- **GRACE** - gift of the **divine** favour in the salvation of sinners – God's riches at Christ's Expense
- **MERCY** - Mercy is a word used to describe compassion shown by one person to another or a request from one person to another to be shown such leniency or unwarranted compassion for a crime or wrongdoing

You see unless you understand that there is nothing, accept your willingness to have an intimate relationship with God that separates you from an intimate relationship with God.

Unless you approach Him with the blood of Christ and Christ's sacrifice, we will not get intimate with God.

As I said before you as a pastor or leader cannot never take you congregation past what you have experience

Cultivate a relationship

We have to learnt to cultivate a love for Him, where you love Him with all your heart, mind, soul, unless you put your full trust and faith in Him

This is the key area where we get things wrong. This is the area where we get it wrong because we forget that God's measurements are not man's measurements, in fact God's says in many place throughout the bible that His ways are not our ways,

Proverbs 16:25 say "*There is a way that seems right to man, but in the end it leads to death*".

Each one of us here today has to make a choice, will you do it God's way or your own idea of what you think is the right way. Will you decide in your own heart that you love God with all your heart, soul and Spirit?

Will you take a bold step and say, okay God I have done it my way and it has not worked, now I want to do it Your. Will you take this first important step.

Are you prepared to create relationship with almighty God. A relationship with communication, we speak and hear God speaking to us? God says in **John 10:27** "*My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*"

So the first step in church growth, the way you start growing your church is building your relationship with God! From that relationship with God, with your personal experience will come the message that will change your church.

Your personal change and the way you allow God to change you will determine the change in your church. When you replace my idea with God's idea things will follow and the change and growth will come.

Share the load

Many church leaders make the mistake of not being approachable to their members. We end up having endless meetings and other important things to attend to for the ministry.

We have a diary ,we plan but we are just so busy! All these things might be important but not all of them are necessary.

We run from here to there making ourselves our lives just more, busy. We have no time for our church, our church members, our family. We might even skip time with God or our quiet time just to make more time available for the ministry.

STOP!!! Satan is using your busy schedule to destroy you. STOP!!! He want to make you so busy you are an ineffective father or mother to your children. STOP!!! He want you to be so busy so that he can steal you health, your time, your joy and much more.

In **Exodus 18**, we see Moses being the judge of Israel, judging all the cases and issues! Fortunately Moses' father-in-law, Jethro saw that Moses was over working himself, he suggested to Moses that he choose able bodies men to judge the small cases and only bring him the difficult ones. Immediately Jethro's advise brought relief to Moses' schedule.

It is time that you start choosing able men and women according to **1 Timothy 3:1-13**, and allow them to assist us in the ministry and take the load off us and to share the load.

Pastor, are you sharing the load or are you doing everything? IT is time to become more effective and share the responsibility. You need to raise up leadership in your church, you need to have a succession plan in your ministry, what will happen to your ministry if you died today?

You need to plan, so that your sheep are not scattered or destroyed by the wolves!

Be approachable

The best thing that any pastor can do to grow his or her ministry is to be approachable. The people in your church need to know they have an open door to you! They need to know you are there for them!

Home and hospital visitation should be a priority in your church! Is someone sick in your church, you need to visit them or send someone to visit and pray for them.

Jesus was so effective in His ministry because He walked between the people. He did not have bodyguards, people always had access to Him and they touched Him, spoke to Him and ate with Him.

He moved among the people, visited them and had a relationship with them.

Now I know many of you are saying but Pastor I have a church of more than a 100! That is great but then you need to start raising up the Godly men and woman in your church to help. **YOU CANNOT DO IT ALONE!**

And even if you have a church of 5,000 people you always need to be approachable!

People will always trust and follow leaders who are approachable and human! Often we get proud and arrogant and so we miss this important concept and cannot understand why our congregation feels distant and we feel out of touch with them!

Be a Visionary

The bible says in **Hosea 4:6** "God's people perish from a lack of knowledge". Without a vision your church will just be ordinary and your congregation will be confused and eventually it will die!

According to **Proverbs 1:7** that the fear of God is the beginning of all Knowledge. So any vision you may have, must be based on God, His faithfulness and the fear of God.

Do you have a vision for your church? Are you a visionary?

Do you fear God, then ask God to show you, your future and the plans He has for you and your ministry. **Jeremiah 29:11-13** *"For I know the thoughts and plans that*

I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome.¹² Then you will call upon Me, and you will come and pray to Me, and I will hear and heed you.¹³ Then you will seek Me, inquire for, and require Me [as a vital necessity] and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart”

Closing

I have only shared four basic points, you might say no pastor it cannot be that easy, we must do this and that etc.

But I assure you:

- When you allow God to change you first, He will change your church.
- When you start to apply Godly principles in your ministry, He will grow your ministry
- When you humble yourself and do these basic steps I have shared with you today!
 - Build a relationship with God
 - Share the load in your ministry by raising up Godly men and women of God to help you!
 - Be approachable
 - Be a visionary and Godly plan

I want you to go back to your church, I want you to record the size of your church and ministry. Then apply these four nuggets in your ministry and see God move in your church.

Please keep in contact with me and let me know how it is going and share your vision with me so that we can pray and agree with you!

Let's Pray