

Church Revitalisation

A 10 Week Online Training Course

Session Eight : working on the spiritual dimension

The spiritual dimension

Improving the spiritual health of the church

“Let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us not give up **meeting together**, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more so as you see the Day approaching”

(Hebrews 10.24-25)

We meet together to encourage each other. But does this happen sufficiently at the Sunday worship service?

The Spiritual Dimension

How has the church changed over recent decades?

- ❖ The formal approach
- ❖ The informal « praise » approach
- ❖ What next?

We need

- ❖ A sense of wonder at the greatness and love of God
- ❖ A good knowledge of the Scriptures
- ❖ Encouragement to live out our personal journey through life
- ❖ Teaching on how to live as disciples in today's society.

The spiritual dimension

- Worship is 24/7 (e.g. Romans 12.1 / Philippians 3.3)
- There is no special word for a “worship service” in the New Testament and thus no model of what should happen during a “service”.
- I conclude that when Christians are gathered together, we are free to do more things than we usually do on a Sunday morning.
- The need for relevance as Christians face the challenges of today just as the missionaries of the early church as they spread the Gospel around the Mediterranean
- We need to do the same when most of the church meets together on a Sunday



A HEALTHY CHURCH



centred on the gospel



where Christians learn :

- to love God
- to love others



within its cultural context

These features are valid for both aspects of a local church



GATHERED CHURCH



SCATTERED CHURCH

Organised events

MAIN CHARACTERISTIC

Personal initiatives

Edification and training events for church members.

- Services
- Small group meetings
- Discipleship

+ Outreach events

Doing good and sharing the gospel in these 4 relational networks :

- Family
- Place of work or study
- Local community
- Leisure time / friends

Attractional church

EVANGELISM

Missional church

The spiritual dimension

The four ingredients of a church meeting - our AIMS

- **Adoration** : worship, in amazement at God's grace towards us
- **Issues** : Training disciples to live in today's world
- **Mission** : Sending out the congregation as the scattered church
- **Scriptures** : Biblical teaching

The spiritual dimension

Training disciples to live in today's world

Today's society

Postmodern thought

Secularism

Ethical issues

- Beginning and end of life
- LGBT
- Ecology
- Racism

Religious questions

History of the church

- Augustine
- The Crusades and Wars of Religion
- The Reformation
- Missions

Other religions

Persecution of Christians

The spiritual dimension

Training disciples to live in today's world

The arts

Films, books, exhibitions,
television series

The amazing created world

- The scientific method
- Famous Christian scientists
- Our brain and neurology
- Language

Christian conduct

- Use of time
- Money
- Work
- Forgiveness
- Social media
- The use of psychology
- Use of leisure time
- Addictions
- Marriage
- Bringing up children

The spiritual dimension

Sending out the Christians as the “scattered church”

- “This time tomorrow”
- Events (job interview, surgery, exam)
- Opportunities to witness with words

The spiritual dimension

The possibility of starting up alternative services

The relevance for church revitalisation

1. A less-threatening approach
2. Space for experimentation in contextualisation
3. We can reach different categories of people
“It is my judgment therefore that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God” (Acts 15.19)

The spiritual dimension

How do we keep the church united if the members don't all meet together ?

- Communicating the model of a healthy church
- The visible church (website etc)
- Special occasions and projects
- Midweek activities

The spiritual dimension

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