

## **How to help your church grow and stay SUSTAINABLE.**

Much has changed over the past 40 years. Churches are closing all over the USA. In a recent message, a Bishop from the Lutheran faith in West Coast areas, including Arizona, Nevada, and California, openly shared that 54 churches in his region did not have a senior pastor. Some of the reasons compounding this issue are the lack of funds to hire and move a minister to needy churches.

### ***In my experience, eight components currently contribute to a nationwide crisis.***

- 1) Lack of Biblical teaching on giving, tithing, and the responsibilities of believers to each other and the church.
- 2) Mega Churches are taking over, and the sensationalism of being a part of a vast ministry becomes the goal, while smaller ones are.
- 3) Divorce, separation, sexuality, confusion over sexuality, drugs, alcohol addictions, and domestic abuse all contribute to a lack of Faith in God. Rather than turn to God, people run from God out of their fears.
- 4) I spoke with a dear Pastor friend of mine today. After many years in the ministry, he told me that in his experience, relationships were one of the critical factors. Establishing friends and finding acceptance and care are one of the top components when people visit a church.
- 5) Conflict within members. Rather than find ways to work out differences, people leave. Skills in resolving conflicts with members, including board members, would undoubtedly help.
- 6) People are unwilling to change their lives and priorities to follow God—resistance to change.
- 7) Pastors who are not a good fit for ministry should find another profession.
- 8) Pastors with a mental illness (diagnosed or undiagnosed) are not qualified for the profession. Seminaries should require a full mental health profile before pastoral candidates complete the first year of courses.

My friend, Jerry Falwell Senior, used to relentlessly say the following gem in the chapels at Liberty University. “Everything rises and falls on leadership.” I agree wholeheartedly. If a pastor prioritizes loving his congregation, so will his staff and the members!



**All the best, Art Scott, Owner / Operator**

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