STRONGER CHURCHES NETWORK
THE EVERY CHURCH RENEWING FIELD GUIDE

STRONGER CHURCHES NETWORK
A TBMB MINISTRY

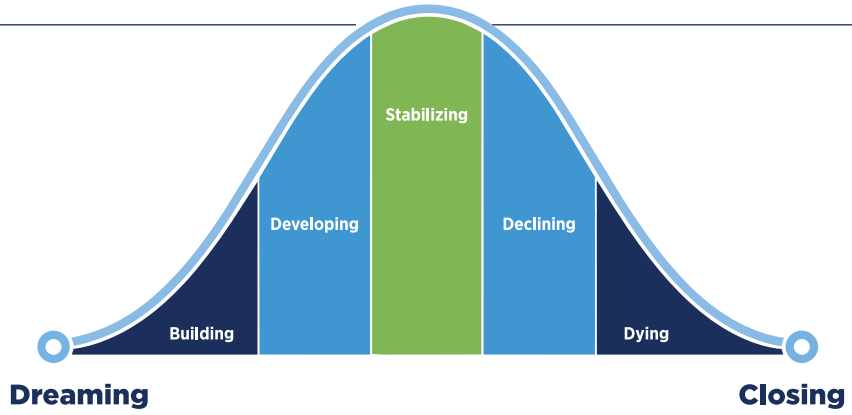
> **"One of the greatest indicators of church health is the spiritual condition of its community."**
> **—Dr. Daryl Crouch**

With 7 out of 10 Tennesseans living and dying without Christ, every church in Tennessee needs a fresh encounter with Jesus that empowers greater gospel work and witness.

EVERY CHURCH HAS A LIFE CYCLE

Like many organizations, and even like humans, churches have a life cycle.

LIFE CYCLE OF A CHURCH



Seven Stages of a Church

1. **Dreaming:** The pastor and leaders are inspired to start a church. Funding is low, building space is borrowed or rented, but vision is clear and enthusiasm is high.
2. **Building:** The pastor and core leaders are functioning at a high level and laying the foundation for sustained ministry. The focus is on reaching people who are not yet apart of the church.
3. **Developing:** The vision remains outward, ministry impact is growing, and structures and systems are being developed in order to serve others well.
4. **Stabilizing:** Ministry is effective. Systems are working. Financial support is strong. A growing amount of focus and energy are on people who currently attend. Preserving current practices begins to overshadow inspiration for the mission.
5. **Declining:** Ministry operates at a satisfactory level. Church members' needs are being met. Growth is declining, but rationalized. Giving is down, but not enough to provoke serious consideration.
6. **Dying:** Ministries begin to stop. The number of church attendees grows smaller and older as younger people are no longer engaged, served, or inspired. Financial support declines. Deferred maintenance on the building becomes unmanageable.
7. **Closing:** The church can no longer pursue the mission. What to do with the building is the major conversation.

Based on what you know about your church, where would you put your church on this life cycle?

EVERY CHURCH NEEDS TO REPENT AND RETURN SOONER THAN LATER

Jesus wrote to the church at Ephesus,

> **"But I have this against you: You have abandoned the love you had a first. Remember then how far you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. Otherwise, I will come to you and remove your lamp stand from its place, unless you repent."**
> **—Revelation 2:4-5**

In the original language, the word for repent is "metanoia." We're inviting every church to a "metanoia moment" that leads to adopting a "metanoia lifestyle." Every church needs a humble posture, a renewed love for Jesus, and brokenness over the lostness of its community that moves it to greater faithfulness.

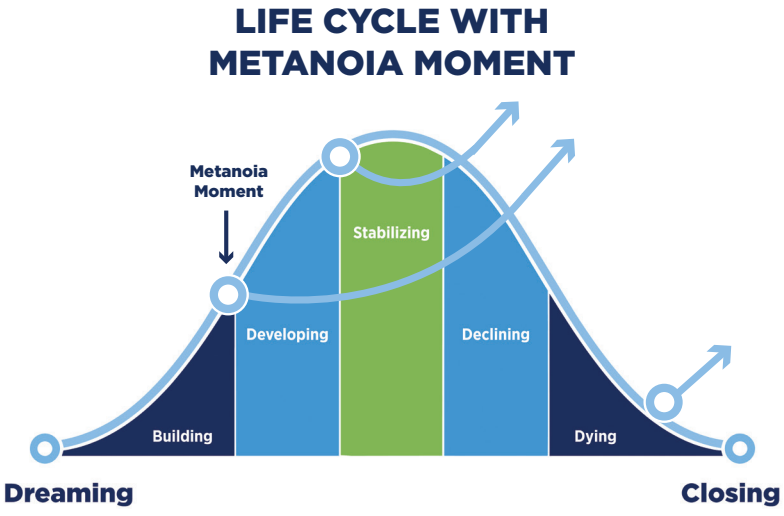
When we refuse to listen to the Lord or delay our obedience, He removes our lamp stand, our influence, in His kingdom work.

85%

Eighty-five percent of our churches are plateaued or declining. The other 15% will be soon unless they also adopt a posture of humility, repentance, and renewal.

Rather than waiting until the church is too far down the right side of the life cycle, it's our goal to help churches repent and return sooner.

Let's move church renewal to the left side of the life cycle!



With spiritual repentance, there is a practical unlearning that is required. We cannot keep doing everything we are doing and move into the next phase of kingdom work. Notice in the graphic above, however, that the longer a church waits to repent and return, the steeper, more difficult the process back to health becomes.

FACTS:

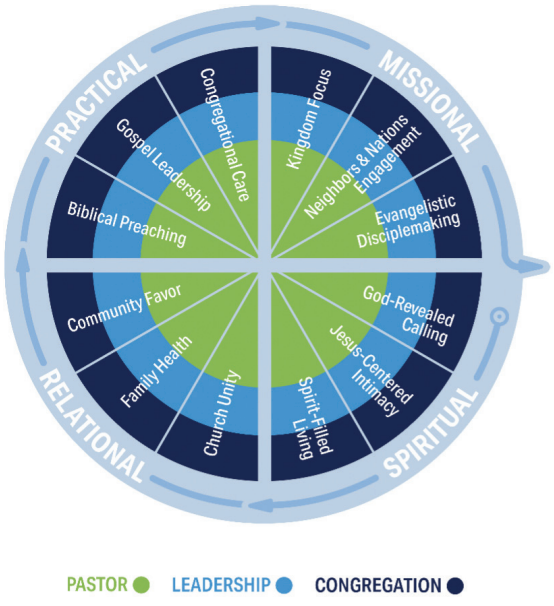
- The sooner the “metanoia moment,” the easier the unlearning and the more explosive the next phase of ministry.
- The later the “metanoia moment,” the harder the unlearning and the longer the road back to health.
- There is a point that renewal is no longer a realistic option. Jesus removes the lamp stand.
- The renewal process requires something of us, but the Lord is faithful. He exalts the humble, and provides everything we need to do His will.

EVERY CHURCH IS INVITED TO BECOME A STRONGER CHURCH

What is a Stronger Church?

A stronger church surrenders to the will of God and walks in the ways of God to reveal the glory of God.

The Stronger Church Wheel illustrates 12 ministry priorities within 4 areas of church health.



Spiritual

1. God-centered calling: Does your church have a clear sense of mission?

2. Jesus-centered intimacy: Do you pray with energy and expectancy?

3. Spirit-filled living: Is it clear that the Spirit is regularly and powerfully changing lives?

Relational

4. Church Unity: Are you known for your love and unified around the mission of God?

5. Family Health: Does your church prioritize the next generation?

6. Community Favor: Is your church known as an indispensable part of the community?

Practical

7. Biblical Preaching: Does your church have an appetite to receive and obey biblical preaching and teaching?

8. Gospel Leadership: Is your church organized around and focused on multiplying leaders?

9. Congregational Care: Does your church care well for one another?

Missional

10. Kingdom Focus: Does your church champion the kingdom work of other churches in your community and beyond?

11. Neighbors and Nations Engagement: Does your church encourage and equip members to pray, give, and go to unreached neighbors and people groups around the world?

12. Evangelistic Disciplemaking: Does your church cultivate an evangelistic, disciplemaking culture in words and actions?

Is your church ready and willing to multiply? Are you multiplying disciples, leaders, small groups, and churches?

If yes, describe how your church is multiplying disciples, leaders, groups, and churches.

If no, what are the major barriers to multiplication?

EVERY CHURCH BEGINS FROM WHERE IT IS RIGHT NOW

Take the Stronger Church Wheel Assessment and find out where you are.

Assessments do not tell the whole story, but they do provide important insights. Take a few minutes to answer 37 questions to complete the Stronger Church Wheel Assessment. You will receive the results immediately in your inbox. A member of our team will follow up with you as you consider your next steps.

Assess your church here: https://strongerchurches.app/a/47acb1f0-d045-4cd9-8a94-48251988f821

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