

AVOIDING & REVERSING DECLINE

Five Phases of Decline in the Church

Phase One – Loss of Vision

- ▣ the most subtle of all phases.
- ▣ goes unnoticed by church members and leaders
- ▣ lack of expectations on members

Phase Two – Lack of Purpose

- ▣ begins to affect the ministry of the church.
 - ▣ attendance and/or membership decline
 - ▣ lessening financial support
- ▣ settle for good
- ▣ ministries begin to suffer
- ▣ unchecked Control

Phase Three – Denial of Reality

- ▣ evidence of decline becomes obvious
- ▣ tendency to discount or explain away negative data
- ▣ attempt to explain away the obvious
 - *Pass the Blame*
 - *Counting practices*
- ▣ work harder, do more

Phase Four – Grasping for Survival

- ▣ realize a staggering change is necessary
 - sudden switch to survival mode
- ▣ treating symptoms not causes
 - hiding the pain
- ▣ grasping
- ▣ a series of injurious decisions

Phase Five – Relinquishment of Ministry

- ▣ no longer have people or financial resources to maintain the facilities much less carry out ministry
- ▣ the best we can pray for that the property and assets be used to glorify God

Biblical Principles and Practices for Avoiding & Reversing Declining Trends

Filling Positions with the Right People

- Who Before What
- People of Capacity
- Recruiting

A Vigorous Face to Face Summit with Reality

- Behavior Patterns
- Trends
- Character Traits
- Inclusion

Understanding The Necessity of the Situation

- Identify with the Necessity of the Situation

The One Best Thing

- If there were no obstacles or barriers in front of you, what is the One thing you would be doing for God?

Vision

- Prayer
- Pastor's Retreat
- Leadership (Articulation Retreat)

Moving the Locomotive

- Success comes from making a series of good decisions, one good decision at a time.

Organized Open Small Group Bible Studies

- Passion
- Strategy

Stalwart & Steadfast

- Stalwart in Belief
- Steadfast in Faith