

## **LEADERS MUST BE “ALL IN”**

**By Bob Young**

If you are a church leader, I want to remind you that you must be “ALL IN!” This simply means that the leader must daily reflect the vision, goal, and ministry of the church. Once the primary mission of the local church is identified, it is essential that every leader buy into the vision, be actively supportive of the goal, and be actively involved in the ministry of the church. The leader must model his or her devotion to seeing people grow into healthy disciples of Jesus. The leaders to whom I refer include the evangelists, ministers, all staff members, elders, deacons, and teachers. The church that employs or uses as leaders those who are not committed to and engaged in the primary mission and ministry of the church sends a mixed message.

In my observation, most churches are aware of the responsibility of the church to share the gospel. Evangelism is the heartbeat of the local church. The church that effectively evangelizes will grow in number, spirit, and service. But in many churches, the task of evangelism is primarily understood as the task of the minister or ministers. In the two full-time ministry settings where Jan and I spent almost all of our years in ministry, a key to the growth God gave was that the leaders were involved in evangelism. When the elders are sharing the Good News, the members follow their example. When elders are evangelistic, they are lifting the health of the church family. When the elders are involved in evangelism, the deacons become more involved in evangelism, and that influence spreads.

Nothing was for me a greater source of satisfaction in my ministries than that the elders and other leaders were involved in and constantly supportive of evangelism. God blessed our combined efforts. In the first case, the church almost tripled in a little over a decade. In the second case, the church doubled in a little less than a decade.

What is the importance of having leaders involved in evangelism? First, they demonstrate their commitment to the primary ministry of the local church. Second, they are constantly developing new shepherding relationships with new Christians. They demonstrate their commitment to developing a church that is built on meaningful, spiritual relationships. Third, they focus on the primary ministry of the church in their conversations, prayers, and Bible lessons taught. Fourth, they are able to mentor Christians in the primary ministry of the local church. Fifth, they are highly engaged with the most active members, so that those members become a primary source of involving even more members. Sixth, they are positioned for maximum discipleship training and accountability.

Above all, the church is healthy because its purpose, its leadership, its teachings, and its actions are consistent.