

Is your church healthy?

By Bob Young

Is your church stagnant? Is your church drifting and the members and leaders do not even recognize it? Is it time for a change, or some changes?

How does a church get back on track? How does a church manage the kind of change that may be required? How does a church get ready for big transitions? How does a church measure health, prepare for change, and ensure effective communication?

If one were to check the spiritual vital signs in the same way a medical doctor checks our physical health, what should we expect? What are the characteristics of a healthy church?

The church must have a self-understanding and self-identity based in the Bible.

What are the prevailing attitudes and understandings of the members of your church?

Without a biblical model of church, a local congregation will find it difficult to move forward.

Self-awareness is for a struggling church the first step. Who are we? What is God's view of the church?

What is God's plan and purpose for this church?

Where are we? Where does God want us to go?

The church should be self-edifying. A healthy church can sustain itself and build itself up.

A healthy church is self-governing and self-edifying.

Biblically, church leaders shepherd the church and facilitate the ministry of the members.

Healthy churches depend on and make ministry possible primarily through that which is done by the members.

The church should be self-nurturing.

One way to measure this factor is to examine internal communication and internal connections.

The healthy church nurtures internal connections.

Internal connections are the key to effective external connections and evangelism.

Leaders are a key to connections and communication

The church should be self-motivated, able to accomplish normal activities.

This suggests that the church should be able to do its work with minimal outside support, encouragement, or interference.

The healthy church has members that are ready, willing, and able to do what needs to be done without constant cajoling and moralizing.

The healthy church is able to do accomplish normal activities without maximizing effort. Normal activities are simply a part of the life of the church, in the same way that eating, drinking, and sleeping are a part of the normal life of human beings.

Consider two important examples. In a healthy church, evangelism is not a program but a natural part of what the church does. In a healthy church, sharing the message and spreading the gospel through establishing new churches is normal.

The healthy church understands that duplicating itself and nurturing new Christians and new churches as normal has the process of birth and raising children for human beings.

The healthy church is constantly looking forward.

This implies dissatisfaction with the status quo

Church members must desire increased spirituality, greater service, more integrated lives in order to prepare for changes; transformed lives