

LEADERS that LAST

MINISTRIES™

Equipping Leaders to Finish Well

SUSTAINING HEALTH AND PASTORAL EXCELLENCE

- FACT SHEET -



RELIGION IN AMERICA

‘Nones’ on the Rise¹

‘Nones’ = individuals who check the ‘none’ box on religion

NOW IN ‘POST-DENOMINATIONAL PHASE’ IN AMERICA

- 6% are atheists in America and their number is growing
- 20% of USA - 45,000,000 – belong to no church in particular
 - o 10% in 1980
 - o 20% in 2012
- 68% unaffiliated believe in God or a spirit and 1/3 describe self as spiritual not religious
- Religious participation in America is on decline, especially with younger people

WHAT IS TURNING PEOPLE OFF?

- It’s not Godit’s organized religion
- Too focused on power and politics
- Protestants greatest decline, now just 48% of religious adults
- 1st time in history that USA doesn’t have a Protestant majority
- Evangelical churches aren’t immune
- Mega-churches not immune – growing, but attendance more inconsistent

¹ Pew Foundation – CBS special Religion In America, 2012

WHAT ABOUT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE?

- 1 in 3 under 30 years of age don't see themselves as affiliated with any religion
- Was 1 in 20 during WW II
- Most students respect churches for doing good but don't believe in a conservative social agenda – i.e. abortion, gay rights – it's driving them away
- Many believe in God but feel organized religion has failed to adapt to a changing culture
- Many who do attend, drift from church to church
- Many who do attend , do so irregularly

Studies show the youth involvement is correlated with church growth - the greater the involvement, the greater the growth.²

² National Congregational Study, 2005, 2010



CLERGY FACT SHEET

Fuller Institute of Church Growth: (1991 Survey of Pastors)

- 80% believe that pastoral ministry affected their families negatively
- 33% said that being in ministry was an outright hazard to their family
- 75% reported a significant stress-related crisis at least once a month in their ministry
- 50% felt unable to meet the needs of the job
- 90% felt they were inadequately trained to cope with ministry demands
- 70% say they have a lower self esteem now than when they started out
- 40% reported a serious conflict with a parishioner at least once a month
- 37% confessed having been involved in inappropriate sexual behavior with someone in the church
- 70% do not have someone they consider a close friend

Focus on the Family: (1998)

- 80% of pastors and 84% of their spouses are discouraged or are dealing with depression
- 40% of pastors and 47% of their spouses are suffering from burnout, frantic schedules and un-realistic expectations
- 1500 pastors leave their assignments each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout or contention within their local congregations (Schaeffer Institute says now over 1700/month)
- “We have found that most members of the clergy feel isolated, insecure, and only rarely affirmed.” H.B. London

George Barna: (1996 Index of Leading Spiritual Indicators)

- 73% expect clergy to live up to higher standards of moral and ethical conduct than they expect of self or others
- 40% protestant pastors do not believe that their present church experience is significantly enhancing their relationship with Jesus Christ
- 49% contend their family life has suffered significantly as a result of the pressures & demands of their ministry
- Average length of a pastoral career is just fourteen years --- less than half of what it was not long ago.
- Only one out of seven (14%) pastors rate themselves high in providing leadership for their church
- 80% of seminary & bible school graduates who enter the ministry will leave within the first 5 years.

Others:

- Average pastor changes assignment every three years – Pulpit and Pew, 2005
- 23% of current pastors in the USA have been fired or forced to resign in the past – Christianity Today, 1996.
- 40% report serious conflict with parishioner at least once a month – Francis Schaeffer Institute, 2007
- 45% of ousted pastors think they could have done more to avoid being forced out – Christianity Today, 1997
- 80% spouses feel left out and under-appreciated by church members – Schaeffer Institute, 2007
- 100,000 pastors are now in burnout – Alan Klaas, Mission Growth Ministries, 2005
- Bad behavior of church members is leading cause (80%) of burnout – Klaas
- 85% of pastors said greatest struggle is dealing with problem people – Christiantimes Newsletter, 2009
- 51% of pastors admit that looking at internet porn is their biggest temptation - Christianity Today, 2002

National surveys indicate that ministers are probably the most frustrated, isolated and neglected professional group in the country.



CONGREGATIONAL FACT SHEET

Status of American Church:

- 350-400,000 churches in America – Hartford Institute for Religion Research 2011
- 4,000 new churches begin each year and 7,000 churches close – Schaeffer Institute, 2007
- In 1990 - 52,000,000 million Americans attended church, In 2006 – 52,000,000 million Americans attended church and the population grew by 52,000,000.- America Church Research Project 2007
- Need 6,400-6,900 new churches each year to keep up – The American Church in Crisis, Olson 2009
- The average evangelical church reports 3 conversions a year. A new church plant averages 12 – America Church Research Project 2007.
- Median church size is 75 and average size is 186 (because of large churches) – National Congregational Study (NCS) 2011
- 90% of churches in America are under 350 – NCS, 2011
- More than ½ of all attendees go to church of 350 or more- NCS 2011
- 1600 Protestant mega-churches (2,000+) in America. – NCS 2011
- 25 % more Mega-churches in 2011 than 2005. Average attendance 3,597. –NCS 2011
- Larger churches getting bigger, smaller churches smaller – NCS 2011
- Average congregation is less healthy now than 10 years ago: reduced financial health, high levels of conflict, aging membership, fewer people and decreasing spiritual vitality – Roozen, Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership 2010

Large, Growing Church Characteristics:

National Congregational Study, 2005 & 2010

- Adapt well to change
- Spiritually vital
- Clear Mission
- Youthful congregation
- Use guitars and drums – contemporary worship
- Members tell others about church
- They have strong leadership and sizeable volunteer leadership cultures

What Promotes Health & Growth: Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership 2010

- Innovative, contemporary worship – joyful worship services more likely to promote growth
- Use of modern electronic technology
- Multi-racial/ethnic congregations
- More than worship – need mission oriented programs
- Financial health focus
- Overcome conflict – conflict is corrosive (2 out of 3 congregations in 2010 experienced serious conflict). High conflict congregations have less growth and more decline
- Recruit young people - youth involvement correlated with church growth – greater the involvement greater the growth.
- Young adult activities; parenting and marriage enrichment programs; and prayer are correlated with growth

Most religious leaders believe that as a leader goes so does the church (2 Chronicles 7:14). It appears that our leaders and our churches are experiencing great difficulty and our nation is suffering the effect.



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