



Ministry Successions and Transitions

Marshall Fant

Introduction:

1. "Every pastor is an interim pastor." (*Next, Pastoral Succession that Works*, by William Vanderbloemen and Warren Bird, p 9.)
2. Questions:
 - a. Where is your ministry replacement coming from?
 - b. Where should your ministry replacement come from?

I. Prayer. (Matthew 9:35-38)

- A. The prayer of Moses. (Numbers 27:16-17)
- B. The prayer of Jesus. (Matthew 9:35-38)

What do these prayers have in common?

Key: You should pray for future pastors *for* your congregation and *from* your congregation.

II. Promise. (Matt 16:13-20)

- A. The place. (v 13)
- B. The proclamation. (vv 14-17)
- C. The promise. (vv 18-19)

Key: The church belongs to Jesus, not to you. You are an interim pastor.

III. Process.

- A. The calling. (Matthew 4:19; Mark 1:17)
- B. The equipping. (2 Timothy 2:2; Ephesians 4:11-12)
- C. The approving. (Acts 13:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:18; 4:14; 5:22; 2 Timothy 1:6; Titus 1:5)

Key: You are not God. God is doing His part and you need to do yours.

IV. Planning.

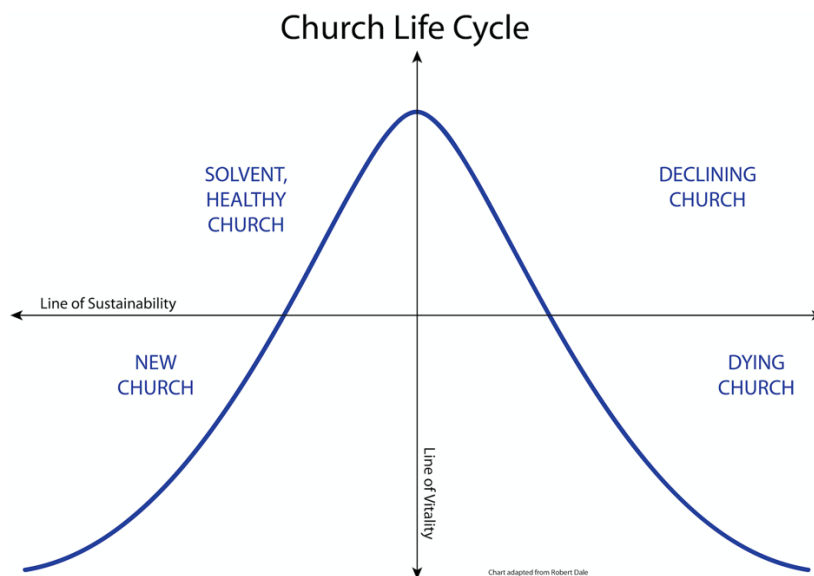
- A. Planning is biblical. (Proverbs 24:3-4)
- B. Planning is personal. (Psalm 32:8; 1 Corinthians 3:6)
- C. Planning is accompanied:
 1. By faith. (Hebrews 11:32-34)
 2. By prayer. (Romans 1:9-10)
- D. Planning is ongoing.
 1. Paul planned to go back to Corinth. (1 Corinthians 16:5)
 2. God redirected Paul. (2 Corinthians 1:15-17)

Key: You must plan for your successor.

V. Practical.

- A. You should:
 1. Prepare yourself and your family:

- a. Transition “to a ministry” and not “from a ministry.” Your transition will be a very emotional time for you and your wife.
 - b. Continually remind yourself that the church you pastor belongs to Jesus and not you (Matthew 16:18).
 - c. Read *Next, Pastoral Succession that Works*, by William Vanderbloemen and Warren Bird (you and your wife).
 - d. Everyone will remember how you left; not how you came.
2. Prepare your church’s leadership and congregation:
- a. Use the annual budget to cast a vision to mentor men for ministry (intern, part-time staff, or full-time staff). Your successor may be a former intern.
 - b. Use your church’s goals as a way to communicate your transition. Goals can be listed as immediate (1-2 years), short term (3-5 years), and long term (6-10 years).
 - c. All leadership should read *Next, Pastoral Succession that Works*, by William Vanderbloemen and Warren Bird.
 - d. Evaluate your church to give an accurate assessment of the state of your church on where your church is in its “life cycle.” This is very important if your replacement is coming from outside your church. Areas you should evaluate:
 - (1). Theology/philosophy: Study Acts 2:41-47 and Revelation 2-3
 - (2). Finances
 - (3). Facilities
 - (4). Leadership/staff
 - (5). Website



B. You could:

1. Give Sunday night's pulpit to your younger staff member.
2. Use summer internships to equip and prepare the next generation.
3. Use one or two-year internships to equip and prepare the next generation.

Other:

RE:CHURCH podcasts that address ministry transitions:

1. When is it Time for a Pastor to Retire?
<https://gfamissions.org/pages/for-pastors/podcastdetail/1/14/>
2. When is it Time to Close Your Church?
<https://gfamissions.org/pages/for-pastors/podcastdetail/1/13/>
3. Pastoral Transitions
<https://gfamissions.org/pages/for-pastors/podcastdetail/1/59/>
4. Transitioning Purposefully: How to Retire
<https://gfamissions.org/pages/for-pastors/podcastdetail/1/119/>

Marshall Fant

C: 803.517.3701 | E: mfant@gfamissions.org

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