

## **A church “re-defined” or a church in decline?**

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The Attorney General in 1994 –

A cultist is one who has a strong belief in the Bible and the Second Coming of Christ; who frequently attends Bible’s studies; who has a high level of financial giving to a Christian cause; who home schools for their children;

who has accumulated survival foods and has a strong belief in the Second Amendment; and who distrust big government. Any of these may qualify but certainly more than one would cause us to look at this person as a threat, and his family as being in a risk situation that qualified for government interference.

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A Safe Church is a place where there no controversy, people are not passionate about anything, there is not much is happening spiritually.

There is- very little excitement, a low expectation level, and a lack of genuine enthusiasm about God.

### **A Safe Church**

**1. Strives to keep the members happy**

**2. Avoids controversial issues**

**3. Remains cautious**

we have always done it this way before, resistance to change and new ideas.

God never called His Church to be safe. Question: Do we want to be part of a Safe Church or a Dangerous Church?

Safe church-made up of people who play it safe.

A dangerous church is made up of people who are willing to take risks with God.

## Qualities- dangerous church- A dangerous church has-

### 1. An uncivilized approach

Consider John the Baptist- Mtt 3:1-6

### 2. A Divine Boldness

It is popular today to be politically correct, and not to offend the opinions of others.

The Dangerous Church is more concerned with God's opinion than man's opinion.

Acts 4:1-3, 18-20, 29-30

When- stop caring what people think God shows up- we cannot always play it safe and please God.

### 3. A risk-taking faith

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

God calls us to do things we cannot do on our own.

When we strive for safety, comfort, and convenience, we will end up following a false God.

Jesus did not die to make life safe for you and I.

Mtt 16:25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. NASU

Jesus died so we could die to sin and self then we can go where dead men go.

Many Christians are afraid of being polluted by-world.

A dead man- not affected by sin- can be salt/light.

Jesus- Jn 17- we are in the world but not of the world.

## 5 Core Values of a Church in Decline

**#1 – Laziness** – Most people/churches are not “stuck” or in decline because they do not know or understand what the Lord wants them to do...God speaks very clearly in His Word and through His Spirit. It’s just that God’s work always requires people to take a step of faith! Remember, God promised the Israelites the “Promised Land,” but they actually had to go in and fight the battles. A church that refuses to do whatever it takes and embraces laziness will eventually settle in the desert until that generation dies off.

**#2 – Fear of Man** – God has called His people to set the world on fire; unfortunately, too many church leaders today waste their time trying to put fires out and make people happy! Scripture pretty much sums it up in [Proverbs 29:25](#)! If your first question is always, “What does our biggest giver want” and not “What does God want,” your church is stepping into the casket!

**#3 – Pride** – When a church and/or its leaders are not willing to admit a mistake OR that a method that used to work just doesn’t work anymore...it’s over.

**#4 – Staff Abuse** – This is something I’ve written about a lot lately...but I will say it over and over again; when a leader cares more about what his staff does than who they are becoming, then he will begin to push them to put in 70-80 hour weeks on a consistent basis...and when they begin to show signs of being pushed too hard, he will accuse them of being “disloyal” or “not bought in enough to make things happen.” When a leader begins to do this (and other “leaders” sit by passively and watch it happen), then the quality of staff members the church is about to attract and keep will decrease significantly.

(One note on this...many times, a pastor/leader who leads like this is lazy! They often wait until the last minute to do things and then expect the entire staff to change and rearrange everything they are doing to accommodate their lack of planning. Changes DO happen in ministry; heck, we had to switch up our entire Easter services at the last minute. BUT...this should be the exception and NOT the norm. AND...when it really is the exception, the staff will always respond with passion and excitement because there is a consistent track record of loyalty TOWARDS them!)

**#5 – Loss of Focus** – When a pastor/leader (or group of leaders) become more obsessed with their “ministry platform” and begin to dive into other “ministry opportunities” and do so with such frequency that they cease to love the people that Jesus has called them to minister to, disaster is right around the corner because the church will become nothing more than a resource for the pastor to promote himself rather than a group of people whom God has brought together and given him responsibility over to love and lead.