



Calvary Alliance of Churches and Ministries

What is Stopping YOU from Growing?

Friends,

This month's training is once again meant to cause you to think through critical issues to your ministry's success. One of the things I've noticed is that many times, the leader's mindset is incongruent with the actual orientation of the church. In other words, the leader is operating like the church is larger or smaller than it is, and that paradigm creates a disconnect between pastor and people.

In a book I highly recommend, ***One Size Doesn't Fit All***, by Gary McIntosh, this issue of orientation is discussed. McIntosh defines church size in three ways:

15 - 200 worshippers – Small church
201- 400 worshippers – Medium church
401+ worshippers – Large church

Within these groups, he posits that the small church has a ***relational*** orientation, the medium church has a ***programmatical*** orientation, and the large church has an ***organizational*** orientation. McIntosh says that these orientations develop around personal relationships and how the church sees itself. In a small church, everybody knows each other, and there are certain relational expectations of the pastor at that level. So according to McIntosh, the small church's "central organizing principle" is relationships. This makes it vulnerable to the trap of unconsciously "fighting" to keep itself small for the sake of those relationships. The medium church tends to organize around programs, and the large church tends to exhibit an organizational approach, looking like several congregations within a congregation.

My point is that if you and your leaders are trying to lead in a manner that does not match your current orientation, you could actually hinder growth. For example, when the pastor is trying to lead ***organizationally***, but has 50 or 75 people in average attendance, his communication to the people breaks down, and they are less able to follow. Unless your church is a recent plant, to many in such a setting identity is determined in the past (what we used to do). Therefore, words like "change and creativity" are enemies. Remember, your vision is normally received and achieved in stages. People can't follow you if you are too far in front.

As another example, I see many churches suffering from "ministry burnout" because the leader has allowed too many programs (meant for a medium sized church) to consume the vitality of the people. I also see many leaders in these churches attempting to function like organizational leaders in that they actually delegate too much when it

comes to touching people and administrating key areas. Of course as you grow adjustments will be made, but don't underestimate the power of "pastoral personal touches" within a relational orientation.

Friends, "small" is not a bad word. What counts is your effectiveness in the setting Christ placed you in. Evaluate how you are leading your organization right now. Does your mindset match your ministry?

Next month, we'll take a deeper look at how the leader should lead in his or her ministry context. I love you all!

Bishop B. Courtney McBath
Presiding Prelate