

Ten Ways Every Christian Can Strengthen Their Church

by Paul Chappell

In the early days at Lancaster Baptist Church, I gave a “Visit with the Pastor” almost every Sunday night in which I tried to infuse our young church with the DNA of New Testament Christianity.

Usually these were a brief topical lesson on topics ranging from how to lead someone to the Lord to having family devotions to encouraging new Christians.

Now fast forward thirty years. This past fall, one of our early members, Denise Lofgren, went to be with the Lord after a sudden battle with cancer. Denise and her husband, Gary, came to Lancaster Baptist in 1987 and have stayed for these thirty years as they raised their four boys here.

Shortly after Denise went to be with the Lord, her husband Gary found the handwritten outline below on a scrap of paper in her files. It was from a Visit with the Pastor titled, “How to Build a Great Church.”

In the top right corner, she had written, “May 1988.” And in the top left corner, “Read Bk. of Acts.”

Below was a list of ten basic principles I had given that night on how every Christian can help build their church.

I look at this list now, and I smile a little at the alliteration and even the order in which I listed some of these. But I also thank God for people like Gary and Denise Lofgren who took these biblical principles to heart and lived them.

The truth is, these are what builds a godly church. These are the attributes of church members who are growing in the Lord and helping to strengthen their church family.

Stay—Learn to stick.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.—

Hebrews 10:25

(Obviously, there are times God moves people. But don't allow an offense with another Christian or backsliding in your own heart to keep you from your church family.)

Sweet Spirit—Love your church.

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:—Hebrews 10:24

Stewardship—Give liberally to God and man.

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.—2 Corinthians 9:6

Separation—Live in a way that is distinctly for God in this world.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.—2 Corinthians 6:17

Stick with Scriptures—Read, study, and hear the preaching of God’s Word. Make it your ultimate authority.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.—Hebrews 4:12

Sold out—Be fully committed to the things of the Lord, your marriage and family, and your church family.

And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.—Luke 9:62

Soulwinning—Go to others with the message of salvation.

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.—Luke 19:10

Spiritual—Live in a way that is holy, godly, pure, and clean.

If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.—2 Timothy 2:21

Sensitive—Be responsive to the needs of others, especially your church family.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.—Galatians 6:10

Stand—Take a stand for the things of God.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:—2 Timothy 4:7

I was twenty-six years old when I wrote this list, and I had been pastoring for not quite two years.

I’m now fifty-five, and I have been pastoring for over thirty-one years. And I can still say that every one of these points are needed.