

# REVITALIZE

Options for Revitalizing Your Church to Make Disciples





The North American Mission Board reports that 70-75 percent of Southern Baptist churches in North America have plateaued or are declining in number with another 10-15 percent at or near risk. This means that 80-90 percent of Southern Baptist Churches are not healthy, disciple-making congregations.

Some common characteristics of healthy disciple-making churches:

- \* People are consistently coming to Christ
- \* Healthy disciples are being reproduced
- \* Members are living out the Word in their daily lives
- \* Members are serving and meeting significant needs in the community
- \* Leaders are looking for ways to send missionaries and start churches





## Life Cycle of Churches



### Incline

Future-oriented  
Vision-driven  
Community Focus  
Innovative  
High-risk Faith  
Faith Decision  
\$ = Investor  
Serve by Gifts  
New Leadership  
Conversion Growth



### Recline

Present-oriented  
Program-driven  
Congregation Focus  
Routine  
Low-risk Faith  
Resource Decision  
\$ = Provider  
Serve by Slot  
Stagnant Leadership  
Transfer Growth



### Decline

Past-oriented  
Structure-driven  
Core Focus  
Complacent  
No-risk Faith  
Indecision  
\$ = Preserver  
Serve by Default  
Incumbent Leadership  
No Growth



# How Would You Describe Your Church?

(Choose one answer per set)

1

- A. Future-Oriented
- B. Present-Oriented
- C. Past-Oriented

2

- A. Vision-driven
- B. Program-driven
- C. Structure-driven

3

- A. Focused on Your Community
- B. Focused on Your Congregation
- C. Focused On Core Group

4

- A. Innovative
- B. Routine
- C. Complacent

5

- A. Demonstrates High-risk Faith
- B. Demonstrates Low-risk Faith
- C. Demonstrates No-risk Faith

6

- A. Decisions based on Faith
- B. Decisions based on Available Resources
- C. Indecision

7

- A. Invests Finances For Mission
- B. Provides Finances For Ministry
- C. Preserves Finances For Maintenance

8

- A. Members Serve Based on Spiritual Gifts
- B. Members Serve Based on Programs of Church
- C. Members Serve Because No One Else Will Do It

9

- A. New Leadership
- B. Stagnant Leadership
- C. Entrenched Leadership

10

- A. Conversion Growth
- B. Transfer Growth
- C. No Growth



**Now, compare your answers with the chart on page 5.**

- Your “A” answers correspond with “Incline”
- Your “B” answers correspond with “Recline”
- Your “C” answers correspond with “Decline”

Higher numbers of “B” and “C” answers indicate a need for some type of Revitalization.





# Models for Revitalization

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## **Internal Revitalization**

The church has the ability and the people to do the hard work. This may range from minor adjustments to a major overhaul of systems and structures.

## **Partnership**

The church establishes a covenant with a strong, healthy sister church to provide help for a specified amount of time. The stronger church may provide staff as well as material and/or financial resources. The church needing revitalization must be willing to follow the leadership of the stronger church.

## **Merger**

Sometimes two churches find themselves in a situation where a merger provides the necessary resources of finances and people to revitalize into one new church. Usually another name is chosen and considerations given to provide for a smooth transition between or merger of church staff.

## **Acquisitional Revitalization**

The church yields property and leadership to a stronger church for a satellite campus or new church start.

## **Restart**

The church, working with local leaders in the association and the state convention, disbands so that a new ministry, based on local context, can be launched at the current location.

## Next Steps

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1

### Step One: Pray

Start immediately with intentional, fervent prayer. Ask God to reveal His plan to you. Gather key leaders in the church to pray with you for God's direction.

2

### Step Two: Count the Cost and Commit

There is hope for every church, BUT it requires hard work. Revitalization is not for the faint-hearted! There are many aspects of revitalization. There is no “silver bullet.” Revitalization usually will not happen quickly. You will have to make hard decisions and wrestle with tough ideas. However, those who are desperate enough to depend fully on God and work diligently and strategically for the Kingdom can see revitalization begin.

3

### Step Three: Contact

The Church Strengthening Team of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSCNC) can help you evaluate your current situation and make recommendations. As you choose the path that is right for you, we want to assist you as the Lord leads you through the revitalization process.



# REVITALIZE

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