



Raising the Morale of a Plateaued Congregation

Participant's Guide

Lecture

Fill in the blanks below as you follow along with the lecture.

I. Building Trust

- A. Make it a _____ practice to be faithful and reliable.
- B. Work together on the _____ of the church board and the Sunday School Discipleship Ministries Board.
- C. Priest—Pastor—Prophet: Note a continuum of _____ power coming from increasing trust.
- Priest—when a minister _____ to a congregation the responsibilities are public including ceremonies such as worship, weddings, funerals.
 - Pastor—when a minister _____ for people, the pastor garners the love and trust of the congregation.
 - Prophet—when a minister has _____ the trust of the people, the minister may become a change-agent, serving a prophetic role.
- D. Do not _____ love for trust.
- E. The pastor of integrity will _____ increased amounts of good will and loyalty.

II. Contagious Expectation

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What builds morale in your congregation?

- How do leaders infuse enthusiasm into a deflated atmosphere?
- What pumps new life into old structures?
- What increases excitement and expectancy?
- What brings people together in unity?

The purpose of this module is to guide leadership in raising congregational morale.

The outcomes of this module are to:

- Re-energize the local community of Christ.
- Lift an emotionally sagging congregation.
- Revitalize the leadership team.

- A. Develop a deep _____ in the life-changing power of the Gospel.
- B. Anticipate God _____ through your leadership team (pastor and key personnel).
- C. Implement ministries that _____ the hearts and lives of the unchurched.

III. Keep the Unity

- A. Christians _____ around the Spirit.
- B. Unity _____ diversity.
- C. Problem-producing people are to be _____.
- D. Agree upon methods for _____ conflict.

IV. Multiply good experiences.

- A. Serve unselfishly—become other-concerned.
- B. Strive toward excellence in ministry—efficiency _____ inward is not excellence.
- C. Plan and _____ successful events.

v. God-given achievement . . .

- A. Usually _____ from a high level of spiritual health.
- B. Overcomes the _____ of a stagnant atmosphere (institutionalism).
- C. Is a sign of His presence, power and blessing.

Case Study: First Church in Crisis

“There are so many Nazarenes over in Faith Church,” said Bob a forty-six year old construction worker. “In fact, there are more Nazarenes in that 1,000 member church than in the five Nazarene churches on this end of the district. I think they don’t want the commitment required in our church. They can go to that church and not put out any effort.”

“I’m not so sure,” said Barbara. “When we came to town we went over there. That church was alive! We seriously considered attending there. If we hadn’t had strong ties with our denomination, we’d be going there today.”

“We have been attending there,” chimed in Roger. “While we consider First Nazarene our church, we just can’t handle all the negativity here. Some have mastered the art of complaining. I don’t know how the pastor tolerates it. We just got tired of hearing it.”

“I remember when Pastor Davis was here,” noted Barbara. “We really had hopes of some excellent things happening. We were laying plans for growth. Our church building would have been built if the recession had not hit us. When the building plans were not completed, something went out of our congregation.”

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“I think the problem is that we don’t have very many committed people. Just a few are doing all the work. When it comes to finances, some are sacrificing; others aren’t giving much at all.”

“I think we should go back to what we used to do ten years ago. At that time we were really growing. I don’t think our worship services are as reverent as they used to be. Our prayers meetings used to be three times the size they are now. And we were a smaller church.”

“I wonder sometimes if we don’t need a new pastor.”

Discussion of the Case Study

Discuss the following observations in your small group:

- Perhaps a new pastor is needed.
- A critical spirit has arisen in the congregation.
- People have checked out and are less involved.
- The negative people are now in power because, they are right, namely “something must be wrong.”

If you were consulting with leadership from First Nazarene, what steps would you suggest they take moving forward? Discuss your advice for them in your small group. Use this space to make some notes about your recommendations for this church in crisis.

Morale Inventory

Score each of the following “morale indicators” for your local congregation on a scale of one to five.

1=Not at all 2=Rarely 3=Some of the time 4=Most of the time 5=All of the time

Morale Indicators	1	2	3	4	5
Our church has a high level of “self-esteem.”					
Churchgoers are proud of the impact we make in our community.					
People are enthusiastic about worship services and events.					
Newcomers are invited into fellowship circles.					
Lay leaders support the church’s ministry and speak positively about it.					
People talk about the church’s future plans and growth as opposed to dwelling on the past.					
The congregation is increasing in size.					
The church has strong outreach programs that extend into the community.					
Internal communication is accurate and complete.					
There is a feeling of economic well-being regarding church finances.					
The physical care of the building meets the needs of the church.					
Church leadership has a vision for the future that goes beyond “either/or” thinking.					

Now, pick two or three of the morale indicators above where your congregation’s score shows room for improvement. Complete the table below to begin planning a response—both personally and as a leadership team—to raise morale in your church.

Area for improvement	Actions I can take personally	Actions we can take as a leadership team
1.		
2.		
3.		

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