
Don't Call it a Small Church

We have a course called Breaking 200 to help pastors of small churches lead their church to grow beyond 200 regular attendees. And every time I write about it, I feel bad saying “small churches.”

It sounds patronizing.

Or even insulting.

As if you're not as significant or important as the big church. As if what you're doing is in some way smaller or less important than what others do.

“Small Church”

Here are five thoughts about small churches, and why we should maybe stop saying the word.

#1 – Most churches are small.

According to The Barna Group, the average Protestant church in the United States is 89 adults. So while most people call them small churches, in reality, they are “normal sized” churches.

If you're pastoring a church under 200 attendees, you don't need to apologize for being normal.

#2 – Small does not mean unimportant.

The Hartford Institute reports that just 10% of American church-goers attend a mega-church. Yes, there are a lot of large churches. Yes, those large churches reach a lot of people. But when most of the nation attends church,

they attend smaller churches. Most local church ministry is happening at “normal sized” churches.

Just like small businesses employ more workers than major corporations, small churches reach more people than mega-churches.

Mega churches get most of the press, but small churches are making the biggest difference.

#3 – A small church can have a big vision.

No matter the size of your church, God wants to use to help people in your community follow Jesus and grow the Kingdom.

God uses churches of all shapes and sizes – from the mega-church to the house church – for His purpose. Loving people doesn’t have to be limited by the size of the building or the size of the budget.

#4 – The tension shouldn’t be resolved.

There’s a tension between growth and health that should never be resolved.

If you act like it’s all about growth, you’ll cross likes to build attendance. If you resolve that it’s all about health, you’ll leave God-given ministry opportunities on the table. Hold growth and health in balance and stay in the tension.

#5 – Leadership is a stewardship.

There’s nothing wrong with leading a small church, but there is something wrong with a church that wants to stay small. It’s contrary to the Gospel and the Great Commission. If God has called you to lead a church, be the best leader you can be and lead your church to growth and health. God gives the increase, but that didn’t let Paul or Apollos off the hook for planting and watering.

Your “normal size” church can’t make a big impact. Embrace your role as a leader and lead well.

Breaking 200 Course

Feel like your church should be growing, but it’s not?

Ultimately, church growth is up to God. Are we being good stewards of what He’s given us? Are we doing everything we can to ensure our church is healthy? How do we overcome the barriers we feel are in front of us?

We know you care deeply about leading a healthy growing church because it means leading more people to Jesus. So we created a free guide to breaking barriers that will bring clarity and help begin to alleviate your frustrations.

Get your FREE copy of the Senior Pastor’s Guide to Breaking Barriers today.

[Download the guide](#)