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# Whose Kingdom Are You Building?

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- *Building a platform*
- *Communicating the vision*
- *Establishing the culture*
- *Growing the church*
- *Going “big” with events and new ministry launches*

Now, there’s nothing inherently wrong with any of the items I’ve listed above.

Believers can use a platform of influence to honor God and spread the Gospel...or promote ourselves.

We can host big ministry events that are high-quality productions and attract people who wouldn’t normally attend church...or we can use that moment to make a name for ourselves.

The events, books, and number of Twitter followers aren’t the issue. The issue is the motivations of our heart. That’s not always, as Andy Stanley often says, “easy to see in the mirror.” So, how do you know if you’re seeking to build God’s Kingdom or if you’re working to promote your own?

***Here are a few key indicators:***

***#1: Talking about “my people” instead of “our team”***

I’ve led teams of various sizes and often referred to them as “my team.” It’s an easy habit to fall into. However, I tend to use that phrase when protecting “my team” against unrealistic expectations of others. I don’t think I’ve ever referred

to those working for me as “my people.” After all, there’s a reason we make fun of celebrities or executives who say, “Have your people call my people”. It sounds arrogant to refer to others in that manner.

Those who report to you will make assumptions about how you perceive them based on how you talk about (and refer to) them. If you go around talking about “my people,” it comes across as if you think you’re a big deal. Choose to be humble and model servant leadership instead. After all, it requires a team to make Sunday morning services successful.

## ***#2: All your ideas are awesome***

“I’ve seen way too many leaders fall because the pastor was unwilling to listen to people around them. They assumed they had all the answers. They were the sole person permitted to define the vision and strategy, and they carried the unnecessary burden of that responsibility. They lacked accountability. Everything was built on their personality and their power.” – Tony Morgan post [“Arrogant Leaders”](#)

Leaders tend to be visionaries with no shortage of new ideas. You may hear about a new ministry outreach another church is doing and want to try a variation of it at your church. You may think of adding a third service while driving to work one morning. Having many ideas is helpful since, let’s face it, not all of them are worth pursuing. It might not be the right time, the schedule may already be full, or the idea itself isn’t all that great. What’s scary is when a leader mentions an idea and the team knows it’s awful but affirms it anyway out of fear or some misguided sense of following no matter what.

Consider this: When you mention your ideas at a staff meeting, has anyone ever pushed back? “Pastor, I like the heart behind that but have you considered...?” If even the most senior leaders on the team are afraid to tell you when your idea needs improvement (or just flat out stinks), you have a culture of “yes men” building your kingdom instead of God’s. Invite feedback (including constructive criticism) from team members. God entrusted different

talents and skillsets to them then He did to you, so they can provide you with a perspective you wouldn't see on your own.

### ***#3: No one can fire you***

If you're the founding pastor, you may be the one listed as the owner on all legal paperwork for the church. You probably played a key role in writing the by-laws when you established the church as a 501(c)3 organization. If so, did you write them in such a way to prevent you from ever being voted out as the senior pastor? If so, why?

Accountability is beneficial for the one being held to account and for those under his leadership. There's a good reason we have three branches of government, board governance over CEOs, and elders/deacons at church. Surround yourself with people who will tell you the unvarnished truth and who can back it up with action if needed. It protects you, protects those you lead, and builds trust with your congregation.

### ***#4: You're focused on building your platform***

The web and social media enable anyone with an internet connection to establish an online platform. That's an incredible opportunity to share the Gospel and connect with people. It's also much easier now to self-publish a book. Even if you can't get the attention of a major publisher, you can still get your work and ideas out to the masses.

These are tools we can use to serve others. However, it's easy to let our egos get in the way as we look at the number of Twitter followers, website hits, and book sales. Checking metrics is fine...just make sure the motivation is to point people to Christ instead of focusing on you.

### ***#5: Not being willing to release leaders to another campus or ministry***

When you've invested time, energy, and heart into developing leaders it's hard to let them go. An associate pastor or other key leader comes to you and says he feels God is leading him to take a role at another church. Or perhaps

you've launched a new campus and that location needs strong leaders to help it get off the ground. In either case, you're losing someone you've mentored and coached. It's easy to get frustrated or feel like you've earned the right to benefit from the fruit of that effort.

However, who does this individual really serve...you or God? God has invested way more in this leader than you ever could. Trust Him to guide this leader to the right role and to provide you with someone to take his place. Develop a leadership pipeline so you can release leaders to other opportunities without leaving a huge hole in his/her absence. After all, regardless of which congregation this person serves, we're all on the same team.

In Matthew 18:1, the disciples asked Jesus who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. His response was to call a child to Him and state, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me." – Matthew 18:2-5

Building a strong team, growing a church, hosting large outreach events with guest speakers and bands, having a significant social media following, publishing books and more are all perfectly acceptable ways to advance the Gospel. As we pursue growth, let's keep a close watch on the motivations of our hearts to ensure we're focused on Christ at all times.

### *Grow the Church*

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](#)