

Pastor's Corner – 9-23-2017
Seven Deadly Statements

This past week a friend of mine posted a link to an article by Thomas Rainer titled “Seven Deadly Statements of Church Members.” The statements caught my attention and I thought I would share them with you in the Pastor’s Corner. The statements in bold are his words, the commentary following is my own. Here they are.

1. **I like our church just the way it is.** I’ve heard variations of this one before. What it reveals is a lack of Great Commission awareness. We should remember that church isn’t about us and what we like. It’s a gathering of God’s people who have one goal – to make disciples of all nations. We should be constantly looking for ways to adapt our approach to be more effective at connecting with those who are seeking God.
2. **My pastor doesn’t visit me enough.** I don’t even know where to start with this one. First, it reveals a consumer mentality and a bit of self-centeredness. Second, it implies that the expectation is for the pastor to do the bulk of the ministry (contradicted by a little something called the priesthood of all believers). Third, it reveals a belief that the pastor’s primary job is to care for and nurture members rather than train and equip them for ministry (see Eph 4:11-12).
3. **I always vote ‘no’ just to keep the leadership in check.** So, I’ve never heard this one verbatim, but I’ve seen it in action. I had a mentor once that had an interesting perspective on this kind of attitude. His thought was that when God chooses a leader then it is the responsibility of God’s people to support that leader. If someone in the church just can’t do that, then they should find another church where they *can* support the vision and direction of the leader. In other words, if you can’t row the same direction as everyone else, go ahead and get out of the boat.
4. **I just can’t worship with our style of music.** This is usually said by folks who are in a contemporary church but want to go back to a more traditional style. Remember, church isn’t about what we (as church people) like. It’s about what will connect with the people we are trying to reach. Think of it in terms of mission work. Missionaries try to understand the culture they are entering. They adapt their methods to that culture. The United States is now one of the largest mission fields in the world even though we were once a “Christian” nation. To connect with the people in our mission field we need to learn to speak their language.
5. **People know where our church is if they want to come.** Remember the Great Commission says we should “go”. This mindset views the Great Commission as if it said, “Y’all should come check us out!”
6. **I love you pastor, but . . .** Any time I hear this one I immediately brace myself for the knife that’s about to be inserted in my back. Here’s a suggestion, before you ever say something negative to a pastor (or anyone else for that matter) visit with them half a dozen times where you say only good things. Go out to eat, grab coffee, have them over for dinner, pray with them. Do all that first so that you have already demonstrated that you love them.
7. **I pay my tithes here, so I deserve . . .** Guess what, tithes and offerings are an act of faith and a gift to God. They aren’t club dues. They don’t buy you influence. My response to this kind of attitude is similar to how the disciples responded when Simon the Sorcerer tried to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit, “may your money perish with you.”

So there they are, the Seven Deadly Statements of Church Members. Have you heard any of these before? Have you said a few of these yourself? If you’re interested in reading more about healthy churches check out thomrainer.com. There’s some good stuff there.

Blessings,
Pastor Tyler