

FOR A NEW GENERATION

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR
REVITALIZING YOUR CHURCH

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FOREWORD BY ANDY STANLEY

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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For a New Generation

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CHAPTER 1

WAITING FOR THINGS TO COME BACK AROUND

APPLICATION

Waiting for Things to Come Back Around

Readings

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:4–7

He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”

Mark 9:36–37

APPLICATION

Waiting for Things to Come Back Around

Discussion Questions

1. Consider the positive impact that your church has had on your life and your community. How important is it to you personally that your church continue to have that kind of positive impact for future generations?
2. Generally, how do you think the average age of the people who attend your church compares with the average age of the people in your surrounding community? (The most recent census numbers can be helpful in answering this question.)
3. How confident do you feel that your church is effectively reaching (or will continue to effectively reach) the next generation—those who are younger than the average age of your community?
4. Which of these statements would people most likely hear you say?
 - “If it was good enough for me, it is good enough for our children.”
 - “Let’s do whatever it takes to reach the next generation.”
5. Describe the differences in thoughts, words, and actions of a change agent compared to a change blocker. Which of these roles are you inclined to take on?

APPLICATION

Waiting for Things to Come Back Around

Action Planning

Strategy #1: Adopt a New Mindset

What practical actions can be taken to shift the mindset of the leaders and members of your church to genuinely embrace the question “What will it take to reach the next generation?”

Prayer

Father God, I come to you in Jesus’ name. Help me (us) to fully and quickly adopt a mindset that, without compromising our core beliefs or values, we will do whatever it takes to reach the next generation with the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

MISSING THE WHALE

APPLICATION

Missing the Whale

Readings

We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord, about his power and his mighty wonders. For he issued his laws to Jacob; he gave his instructions to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children, so the next generation might know them—even the children not yet born—and they in turn will teach their own children. So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands.

Psalm 78:4–7 NLT

“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.”

Matthew 18:12–14

APPLICATION

Missing the Whale

Discussion Questions

1. What is the “whale” for your church—your core mission and the primary reason you exist?
2. What indicators are there, if any, that your church may be more focused on *keeping* the people who already attend more than *reaching* people, including the next generation?
3. How would you respond if your church stopped doing some things that are personally important to you in order to more effectively focus on things that are deemed to be most critical to fulfilling the church vision?
4. What could be done to make the children’s and youth ministry at your church irresistible both now and in the future?

APPLICATION

Missing the Whale

Action Planning

Strategy #2: Identify the Essentials

List the essential things on which your church should focus to make sure that your church's core mission continues into the next generation.

Prayer

Father God, I come to you in Jesus' name. Help me (us) to clearly see the things on which we as a church should focus our time, energy, and resources to best achieve the vision that you have given us.

CHAPTER 3

BARKING DOGS

APPLICATION

Barking Dogs

Readings

Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.

Psalms 127:3

He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

“If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.”

Matthew 18:2–6

APPLICATION

Barking Dogs

Discussion Questions

1. What good things have you eliminated from your personal life or schedule in order to better focus your time and energy on the most important things? In what ways, if any, does this apply to your church?
2. Which first impressions, programs, ministries, or practices of your church are potential “barking dogs” that may be a minor or major distraction to fulfilling your vision and reaching the next generation?
3. Which church programs or ministries are you most highly invested in personally?
4. Which church program, ministry, or practice means so much to you that you would leave the church if it were to be discontinued?

Action Planning

Strategy #3: Reduce the Distractions

List first impressions, programs, ministries, and/or practices in your church that could be a distraction to reaching the next generation.

Prayer

Father God, I come to you in Jesus' name. Help me (us) to have a teachable spirit so that I (we) will not react defensively to the idea that things may need to change in our church.

CHAPTER 4

SILVER VEGA

APPLICATION

Silver Vega

Readings

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

Proverbs 22:6

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Mark 10:13–16

APPLICATION

Silver Vega

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think that modest changes in your church's approach will be sufficient to reach the next generation or will it take significant change? Why?
2. Do you think that your church's weekend services (including the musical style and excellence) have a positive, neutral, or negative effect on your church's ability to reach the next generation?
3. What is the current "level of courage" in your church for the kind of changes that you think it will take to reach the next generation? What is your personal level of courage?
4. If your church commits to becoming a new generation church, would you be willing (and able) to increase the amount of time and energy you invest as a volunteer? Share the reasons for your answers if you are comfortable doing so.
5. If your church commits to becoming a new generation church, would your personal financial giving to your church most likely increase, decrease, or stay the same? Share the reasons for your answers if you are comfortable doing so.

APPLICATION

Silver Vega

Action Planning

Strategy #4: Elevate Your Standards

List significant ways that you could elevate your standards as a church that would better fulfill your church's vision and reach the next generation. Make sure to include ways to elevate the weekend worship experience for adults and children.

Prayer

Father God, I come to you in Jesus' name. Help me (us) to be open to the significant changes that we should make in our church and the right timing and pace of those changes.

CHAPTER 5

DON'T BE LIKE JOSHUA

AMPLIFY CHURCH LEADERSHIP ROLE	LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES		
Campus Lead Pastor	Visionary	Courageous	Culture Builder
Ministry Director	Big-Picture Focus	Decisive	Team Builder
Assistant Ministry Director	Goal Driven	Loyal	Empowering
Volunteer Team/ Small Group Leader	Proactive	Trustworthy	Influential
Volunteer Team/ Small Group Assistant Leader	Dependable	Teachable	Caring

APPLICATION

Don't Be Like Joshua

Readings

Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

Deuteronomy 4:9

But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you.

2 Timothy 3:14 NLT

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think our responsibility is when it comes to paving the way for the next generation?
2. How would you describe the mentoring of young people that is happening intentionally in your church?
3. How supportive would you be if your church opened the door proactively for young people to have visible positions of leadership during weekend services?
4. What can you do personally to make sure that your church becomes and remains a new generation church?

APPLICATION

Don't Be Like Joshua

Action Planning

Strategy #5: Build a Mentoring Culture

List practices or systems that should be put in place to ensure that your church becomes and remains a new generation church.

Prayer

Father God, I come to you in Jesus' name. Help me (us) to have the courage not just to discuss what we should do to reach the next generation but to find a way to do it.

TWO-YEAR STRATEGY WORKSHEET FOR AMPLIFY CHURCH

STRATEGY #1: ADOPT A NEW MINDSET	TIMING/DATES
Guiding coalition of leaders goes on field trips to see and experience new generation churches.	Months 1–3
Guiding coalition of leaders reads books and articles about church revitalization and reaching the next generation.	Months 1–3
Focus multiple weekend messages on the need and reasons to shift the church’s approach from keeping people to reaching people.	Months 1–6
Focus multiple weekend messages on the need and reasons to shift the mindset of people in the church from the statement “If it is good enough for me it is good enough for my children” to the question “What will it take to reach our children?”	Months 1–6
Initiate small group Bible studies about the importance of people and churches fulfilling their God-given purpose and vision. All members are encouraged to attend a small group, led primarily by members of the guiding coalition.	Months 3–12
Engage as many individuals as possible in face-to-face conversations with a goal of sparking passion for building a new generation church.	Year 1

STRATEGY #2: IDENTIFY THE ESSENTIALS	TIMING/DATES
Present a clear, concise, inspiring, and useful vision statement to the board of directors and congregation.	Months 1–3
Focus multiple weekend messages on the meaning of the newly adopted church vision—state the vision in every weekend service.	Month 1 and ongoing
Identify the “vision essentials” that are most critical in achieving our vision—the weekend service, small groups, and children’s and youth ministry.	Months 1–3
Focus multiple weekend messages on the importance of directing our time, energy, and attention to the “vision essentials.”	Month 1 and ongoing
End midweek services to increase time, energy, and attention on weekend services.	Month 1
End Sunday school and regular men’s and women’s ministry meetings to increase time, energy, and attention on small groups.	Months 3–6
Hire part-time youth director (also serves as music director).	Month 1
Invest in excellent children’s and youth curriculum and train leaders and volunteers in how best to use the curriculum.	Month 3 and ongoing
Create new “irresistible” environments in which children and youth meet.	Month 3 and ongoing
Increase overall missions giving, but focus on a small number of organizations.	Month 3 and ongoing

STRATEGY #3: REDUCE THE DISTRACTIONS	TIMING/DATES
Cover dated church sign at main entrance with canvas sign created by local printer.	Month 1

Pave gravel and dirt parking lot.	After Year 2
Arrange for removal of radio tower from top of roof.	Months 1–3
Remove bulletin boards from church foyer and paint church foyer.	Months 1–6
Remove dated, used furniture from foyer area and sanctuary.	Months 1–3
Replace aging green pews and stained rust-colored chairs with modern individual seating.	After Year 2
End evangelism training program as competition to small groups.	Months 1–3
Relocate food bank to a church closer to food bank recipients to free up space for children's and youth programs.	Year 2
Relocate drug rehab program to another church to free up space for children's and youth programs.	Year 2
Close K–12 Christian school, freeing up space for children's and youth programs.	After Year 2
Remove special pastor's chair on platform and special parking places for staff.	Month 1
End formal dress code for weekend services.	Month 1
Move verbal prayer requests from weekend services to small groups.	Months 1–3
Stop political action activities, including distribution of voter guides.	Year 1
Eliminate "open microphone" and prayer lines and establish "Join in without standing out" policy for worshipers at weekend services.	Months 1–3
Change name of church to better reflect vision of church.	Month 1

STRATEGY #4: ELEVATE YOUR STANDARDS	TIMING/DATES
Update church website dramatically.	Year 1
Form creative team of staff and volunteers to plan how to increase the impact of weekend services.	Months 1–3
Add volunteer greeters.	Year 1
Add volunteer parking lot attendants.	Year 2
Create café off of foyer staffed by volunteers.	Year 2
Create “VIP Team” to greet first-time visitors.	After Year 2
Replace silence with upbeat contemporary worship music before and after weekend services.	Month 1
Reduce length of services from over ninety minutes to approximately sixty-five minutes, including a significant reduction in time devoted to announcements.	Month 1
Begin to use modern Bible translations (NIV, NLT, etc.) to make it easier for visitors to engage with the text.	Month 1
Move two crosses to adjacent walls in order to install video screens so words of worship songs and Bible passages can be projected.	Year 1
Change music style to Hillsong/Passion contemporary worship style.	Month 1
Hold auditions for worship team and significantly increase rehearsal time to increase excellence of music.	Month 1
Install audio, video, and lighting components in sanctuary to better match new style of worship music.	Year 2 and ongoing
Change color of sanctuary walls from white to darker colors to increase intimacy of weekend worship experience.	After Year 2
Begin to present one-point weekend messages in four- to six-week series to make them more memorable for listeners.	Month 1

STRATEGY #5: BUILD A MENTORING CULTURE	TIMING/DATES
Focus multiple weekend messages on the need and reasons to mentor the next generation to ensure the future viability of the church.	Year 1
Identify core leadership roles and the desired attributes for each role as part of Amplify Leadership Development System.	After Year 2
Institute a default policy of hiring from within people who have shown faithfulness as volunteers.	Year 1 and ongoing
Institute “three-deep mentoring” policy so that every church leader identifies two people they are mentoring for each of their key roles.	After Year 2
Change bylaws for succession-planning purposes.	Year 2
Appoint successor to senior pastor.	After Year 2
Institute 75 percent rule to increase number of young adults in visible leadership roles during weekend services.	After Year 2
Institute rigorous policies and procedures prioritizing the safety and well-being of children.	After Year 2
Expand target audience for mentoring to include various church leaders visiting Amplify Church for encouragement or inspiration.	After Year 2