

Phase I

Assess and Diagnose

The principles found in *From Embers to a Flame: How God Can Revitalize Your Church* can be used to revitalize a “stagnant,” “sick” or “dying” church, but they can also serve as preventive measures for currently healthy churches.

As mentioned earlier, this Phase is used to document your church’s current status. It would be ideal if each person in leadership (both formal and informal) would take the time to read the book and make notes in answer to the questions in Phase I of the workbook as he or she reads. The true seeds of revitalization, however, will be planted as these people interact together to amalgamate and summarize their thoughts and perspectives, so follow the suggestions in the Introduction and set a course of action for how and when your leadership will meet to discuss what has been read and reflected upon. Use the space below to note this meeting plan.

Chapter 1 – The Need for Church Revitalization

1. The first chapter mentions seven symptoms of a sick church.
 - A. To what extent are these symptoms present in your church?

A focus on programs—

Nostalgia and tradition—

Personality dependence—

A maintenance mentality—

Excuses and a “victim” mind-set—

A bad reputation in the community—

Distraction from the gospel—

If the list you just made seems discouraging, remember: most churches struggle at some point over the life of the church, and even healthy churches run the risk of becoming diseased and developing these symptoms of decline. While many churches today are dying or dead, dissolving a church when there is still hope for change and growth grieves the Lord. He is the Great Shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine to seek the stray. He wants every church to be the healthiest, living, vital testimony it can be.

Spend some time thanking God for His faithfulness to your church over the years, and for putting the desire in your heart for greater health and vitality in its body. Afterward, put your gratitude down on paper below.

B. Now spend some time listing the reasons to be encouraged about this church and the ministry opportunities presented by your current situation. Write down the past victories of your church. What are the things that people recall as being “the best of times”?