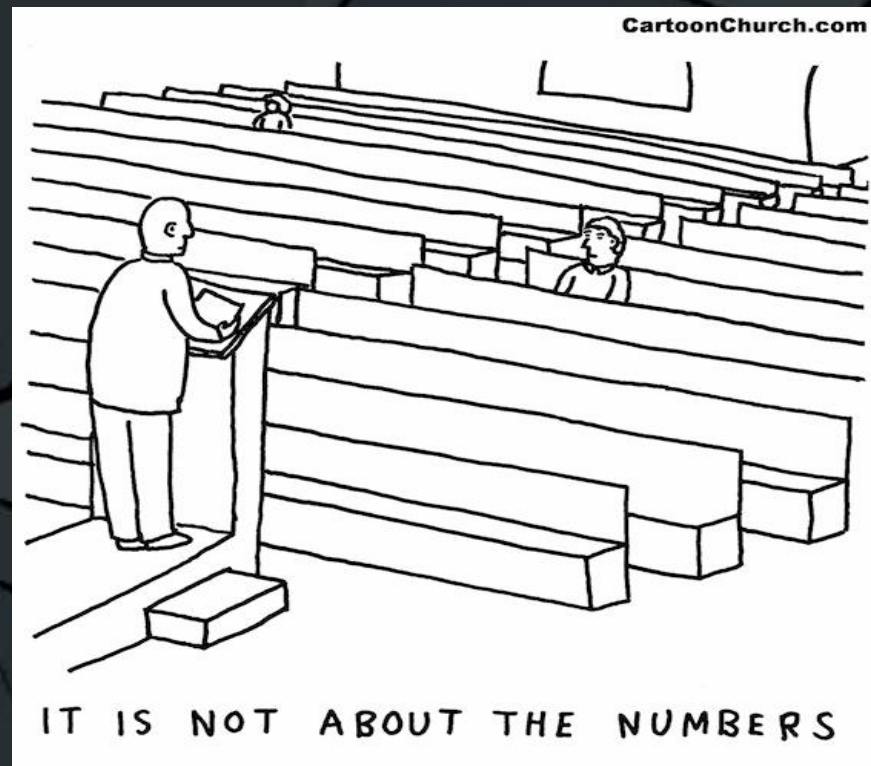


Surviving Children's Ministry in a Shrinking Church

By Tony Kummer



Ministry-To-Children.com

Agree or Disagree

The Kids Ministry can't do much to turnaround a shrinking church.

Agree or Disagree

Church growth is a sign of God's blessing on your ministry.

Agree or Disagree

Investing heavily in children's ministry doesn't make sense when you only have a handful of children attending.

Agree or Disagree

It is harder to be effective in kids ministry when your church & budget are small.

Take a few minutes to write
your own definition of
a 'shrinking church.'

Definition (humanly speaking)
When a congregation has less resources and
people to accomplish the mission of Jesus.

How widespread is this problem?

Choose the following that sounds right.

- About 75% of North American congregations are plateaued/declining
- About 60% of North American congregations are plateaued/declining
- About 40% of North American congregations are plateaued/declining

What causes churches to shrink?

- Presence of negative forces: demographics, leadership changes, conflict, competition, cultural values, economics... (do you recognize these?)
- Lack of positive forces: effective outreach, excellence in ministry, effective discipleship, cultural relevance, reliance upon God... (do you recognize these?)
- When the negative forces overcome the positive, the church will shrink.

Some general tips:



- Don't leave if God has put you there (unless he says go)
- Be teachable, but stick to what really matters – Good News, serving others, looking for lost sheep

General Tips

- Be frugal + consolidate programs
- Fight bitterness.
- Celebrate small wins
- Take responsibility and don't blame others.



General Tips




- Let the experience teach humility.
- Do not be angry with God.
- Do not fall into despair.

General Tips

- Keep an outward focus.
- Keep a Kingdom focus.
- Do not let survival become your only vision.





4 Specific Strategies for Changing Your Church

#1 Prayer

- Become a person so devoted to prayer that it becomes contagious in your church
- Acts 6:4 'will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word'
- Put up a prayer wall at church
- Go there everyday and invest real time
- Invite others to join as they discover it

#2 Look Outside

- Become a person of infectious love for outsiders
- Luke 19:10 'For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost'
- Make a list
- Know, Love, Speak

#3 Encouragement

- Become a person of covert encouragement.
- Acts 20:2 'He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people, and finally arrived in Greece'
- You can make everyone's ministry better
- Identify who is on the front lines of reaching the lost and support them

#4 Hospitality

- Become a person of radical hospitality
- 1 Peter 4:8-10 'Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.'
- You can change your church culture one meal at a time
- Make your kitchen table the mission field

Challenge

- Pick the strategy that is most appealing to you. Start doing it and email us your story