



devotion to god's word

church leadership resources

sbtexas.com/healthsurvey

Based on the Church Health Assessment you completed, devotion to God's Word may be one area of needed growth for your church and/or church leadership. Sometimes a church gets so busy doing good things for God that she forgets the surpassing value of just being with God and hearing from God. God speaks to us in every generation through His Word. In the **Explanation** section below, you will find several important biblical foundations for devotion to God's Word as it relates to church health. Subsequent sections of this report will include **SBTC Resources/Tools, Other Recommended Resources** and **Contacts**. All of these are designed to help strengthen your church in the area of devotion to God's Word. Please take time to read through this report and to share it with some key influential leaders in your church.



explanation

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” – 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Just think for a moment about the gravity of the 2 Timothy 3:16-17 truth. God breathed out—inspired—the words of Scripture. As only God could do, he preserved the individual characteristics and idiosyncrasies of each human author, over the course of thousands of years, and worked through them to gradually unfold his written revelation. God breathed out the words of the Bible, and he has protected and preserved those words for another couple of thousand years so that you and I today might know him more intimately and walk with him more closely.

These written words of God are for teaching us. They are for rebuking us, correcting us and training us. And all of this carries the end goal of our completion as redeemed children of the living God, equipped for the good works he has preordained that we walk in day after day.

The healthy church places high priority on the written Word of God.

Churches without an unwavering commitment to the Bible's inspiration, inerrancy, authority, and sufficiency are sacrificing the health of the body of Christ on the altar of human reason. In such a church, you may often hear phrases such as “I know what the Bible says, but . . .” or, “We need to focus more on current events than biblical history,” or, “This particular biblical restriction/teaching is outdated and does not apply to us.” These churches are starving themselves of the nourishment God has given them for completion and health. They may appear to thrive for a season, but biblical bulimia will eventually emaciate spiritual vitality.

Like prayerful desperation on God, churches that have a healthy devotion to God's Word are those who express devotion to the Bible on three levels: individual devotional practices, small group meetings and corporate worship settings.

Individual Devotional Practices.

Churches with a healthy commitment to the Bible are made up of church members with a healthy commitment to the Bible. Healthy church members do not only have a high view of the Bible but a high value of it as well. The former is a matter of orthodoxy, the latter of orthopraxy. The first can be evidenced in what we say, the second only in how we live.

Those church members who truly value the Word of God immerse themselves in it daily. They pray with the Psalmist, “Give me life through your word” (Psalm 119:25) as they seek its meaning and study its precepts. But they do not stop there. They live their lives according to the Word. They keep it (v.33), obey it (v.34), practice it (v.56) and do not forget it (v.61).

Healthy churches help their members engage in daily reading of and obedience to the Word of God.

Small Group Meetings.

Perhaps you have been in small group “Bible studies” where more weekly gathering time was spent making announcements and reminiscing fellowship events than actually studying the Bible. Surely fellowship and communication are important. But small groups that make up the missional backbone of a healthy local church are those who maximize their time together to engage, discuss and live out the written Word of God.

Healthy churches assist their small groups in selecting study aids and/or lesson guides that unveil the magnificent truths of God’s Word. Small group times have elements of connection and collaboration, but their bread and butter is in the systematic study and application of biblical truth. In healthy churches, small groups do not simply have a high view of Scripture. They have a high value of it as well. And there, in the healthy church, church leadership is careful and strategic about the steady diet of God’s Word that is being consumed in small groups.

Corporate Worship Settings.

While engaging music, meaningful fellowship and worshipful giving are all important elements of the weekly worship gathering, both focused prayer and the expositional preaching of the Bible are absolutely essential. The Holy Spirit works in the hearts and minds of those gathered to explain and apply biblical truth that is faithfully exposed from the pulpit. Churches who gather with prayerful expectation to hear from God in his Word are those whose weekly services are marked by the manifest presence of God.

Unhealthy churches often devalue God’s Word in their weekly gatherings by leaving too little time for the sermon, idolizing the man behind the pulpit or censoring the clear message of the Word so as not to upset those who attend. A church that in any way devalues the Word of God in their gatherings is a church that is out of touch with the God who has gathered them.

The pulpit, in the regular weekly gathering, is the primary platform for biblical teaching. The pastor primarily leads the church from the pulpit. He primarily shepherds them from the pulpit. He primarily oversees them from the pulpit. Healthy churches have both a high view and a high value of Scripture as it is faithfully and consistently proclaimed in their weekly gatherings.

For a church to be healthy, it must embrace the inspiration, authority, inerrancy and sufficiency of God’s written Word. Without this unwavering devotion to the Bible, a church will not produce disciples who are “complete, equipped for every good work.” Healthy churches are devoted to the Word of God.

sbtc tools & resources

BFM2000

Doctrinal statement adopted by the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention. (The churches of the SBTC express doctrinal agreement and cooperation with the BFM2000 in their affiliation.) This document clearly affirms inerrancy of Scripture.

Rethink Preaching

This page gives some practical insight to rethinking your sermon delivery in a technology rich, post-COVID19 world.

Women's Bible Studies

A quick read on keeping the Bible at the center of your women's ministry gatherings.

Rhythms

Browse the SBTC Webstore for tracts and tools to help church members share Christ with their families and friends.

@Home APP

A free download with dozens of relevant lesson series to be used in the home or in small groups.

SBTC Bible Drill

Bible Drill is an exciting way to get children and students immersed in God's Word. The SBTC promotes Bible Drill materials, trains Bible Drill leaders and hosts Bible Drill competitions across the state every year.

Small Group and Family Devotionals

On this page, you will find several devotionals for families and small groups that highlight the value of treasuring God's Word in our hearts.

other recommended resources

Recommended Books and APPS:

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life

by Donald S. Whitney

How to Study the Bible

by John MacArthur

Living by the Book: The Art & Science of

Reading the Bible

by Howard & William Hendricks

YouVersion Bible APP

StudyLight

Online Bible Study Resource

Preaching & Teaching Training:

SWBTS Preaching Source

A site devoted to sharpening sermon preparation and delivery skills within an expositional, text-driven framework

Preaching and Preachers

by Martin Lloyd-Jones

Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of

Expository Sermons

by Haddon Robinson

VIDEO: What is the Role of the Holy Spirit in Preaching?

by Hershael York

pastoral leadership contacts

Please do not hesitate to reach out to one of the following contacts for encouragement, consultation or direction. It will be our joy to come alongside you as you lead your church to reach your community for Christ.

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