

## Should Mega Churches Run Their Business Like A Corporation?

Recently my son, who is a minister with a master in divinity from the South Western Baptist Theological Seminary, in Dallas, Texas was fired from his job. He had put years of service into the biggest First Southern Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas as their Video Production Engineer. He was highly praised and he was known by the nickname of 'Wonder Boy', all because he could run the television ministry with ease. He also directed, produced, managed a large staff, and even installed and wired expensive television equipment. Just months before he was fired, a new senior pastor was hired and part of his job is to trim the fat from the budget. My son was only paid \$35,000.00 a year as the Video Production Engineer. Yet his salary which could never take care of a family of four was considered worth sacrificing for the all mighty dollar. My son explained to me that a senior pastor was actually a CEO and that mega churches are run like a corporation. I of course am a proud mother of my very accomplished son. But my question is the same question that anyone would ask who has ever worked for a Mega church, 'Should Churches Run Their Business Like a Corporation?' We are all aware of how a big business is run. We know from the media how a newly hired CEO over a multi-million dollar corporation always begins by letting go of the highest paid employees. We may have even had a family member or friend who experienced such a horrendous blow. Just the same when we hear these stories almost everyone acknowledges that this is just plain wrong! People should not be treated like they are just money. They should be respected for the years of service and any change up in a company should be about production quality or lack of services. Of course if an employee was known to be lazy, well, he or she should be fired, but never because of money. Unfortunately today people are treated like a commodity instead of being respected for their achievement. Men and women who have worked for years in a company are fired just before retirement to save the company money. Experienced men and women of all ages are pushed aside for cheaper labor. They are a force of people who have been disrespected and humiliated and forced to look for a new job even though they had done their old job with excellence. The truth is we live in a corrupt world. Greed abounds everywhere and people are being sacrificed for money. However, my question is, should multi-million dollar churches behave the same as the world? Should they run their churches like big businesses? I was always taught that God was over the church and the pastor was a shepherd to the people teaching them God's word through love. The pastor is to imitate Jesus Christ and be an example of 'What would Jesus Do' in all life situations, even in how he manages the affairs of a church. Because we live in a corrupt and evil world we need good examples. We need the kind of role models that reflect the very characteristics of the Almighty God. This is the way we learn the principles that are taught in the Bible. This is how we show the world that we are different from them. This is how we justify our biggest call as Christians. We are supposed to go throughout the world and teach the message of the gospel of Christ. John 15: 12-14, "My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you. The greatest love a person can have for his friends is to give his life for them. And you are my friends if you do what I command you." This verse is the essence of what is required to show others you are a Christian. To imitate God we must be willing to love to the point of sacrificing our very lives. This is a message of hope that will bring people who don't know God into the church. A message that they are so important, the church would die for them. Unfortunately in today's church too many pastors have become managers of money. They have responsibilities to keep the budgets down low so that money is allocated to the proper places such as giving to the poor and other charities. But is this what God wants a pastor to do? When the first churches were established, the Holy Spirit inspired people to give up everything they had in order to further the ministry of Jesus Christ. People needed to make sacrifices so the entire world would have the ability to hear the good news about Jesus' saving power. Acts 4: 32-35, "The group of believers was one in mind and heart. No one said that any of his belongings was his own, but they shared with one another everything they had. With great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God poured rich blessings on them all. There was no one in the group who was in need. Those who owned fields or houses would sell them, bring the money received from the sale, and turn it over to the apostles; and the money was distributed to each one according to his need." This is how the first churches began their ministry. They needed money in order to build churches. They needed money to take care of the people who were giving to the church. Everyone was making sacrifices, but soon the apostles became frustrated and they realized that to allocate money was not what they were called to do. Acts 6: 1-4, "Some time later, as the number of disciples kept growing, there was a quarrel between the Greek-speaking Jews and the native Jews. The Greek-speaking Jews claimed that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of funds. So the twelve apostles called the whole group of believers together and said, 'It is not right for us to neglect the preaching of God's word in order to handle finances. So then, brothers, choose seven men among you who are known to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, and we will put them in charge of this matter. We ourselves, then, will give our full time to prayer and the work of preaching.'" This is a powerful story because it explains the truth about what is the most important call for a pastor in a church. A pastor is to give his full time to prayer and the work of preaching. There is more to this story than a pastor's call to ministry. It also talks about how churches need the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. A Spirit that inspires people to give. A Spirit that reflects God's approval for how they are running their church according to His principles. If God is left out of the church then churches will not be able to meet their budgets. In the time of the disciples when money was needed people went and sold their property. Today there are millionaires in mega churches. There are people who own several vacation homes. People who have so much money, they can never spend it all before they die. What would happen in today's churches if when a budget couldn't be met a millionaire goes out and sells one of his many homes? Maybe the real problem isn't about running a mega church like a corporation, but that the people aren't being led by the Holy Spirit to give the money that the church needs in order to fill its budget. Maybe money problems show that the church has left God out? Maybe churches have turned out to be clubs instead of houses for teaching the word of God. Churches have a responsibility to be an example of love. They are never to allow money to be the reason why a person is let go when they are doing a good job. They are to show a distinct difference between how they are run compared to how the world does things. No church should ever be run like an evil corporation whose only concern is about how to make more money. Jesus proclaims in the parable of the 'Good shepherd' what a

shepherd must do in order to show people who God really is. A Shepherd loves his sheep and wants to keep them safe from the influence of the world. He does this by being willing to die for his sheep. John 10: 11, "I am the good shepherd, who is willing to die for the sheep." John 10: 14&15, "I am the good shepherd. As the Father knows me and I know the Father, in the same way I know my sheep and they know me. And I am willing to die for them." What would happen if today's church actually did what God commands? The story of the good shepherd shows the world that to be like God we must be willing to die for the sheep. What would happen if the Mega Churches started caring about the people who work for them like the good shepherd? I am very proud of my son! He is a good man and a good father. He has given his life to the ministry of God. The people of the church know him and his family. They know that in a month, he and his wife will be welcoming a new baby boy into their family. His insurance will run out two weeks before the baby is suppose to be born. What does this say about churches? Should Mega Churches Run Their Business like A CORPORATION?

### About the Author

Linda C Dipman author of The Game of Life It's Almost Over <http://outskirtspress.com/gameoflife> presents: And His Love Shone Down, my true life story! It describes all the persecutions I endured. <http://lovinghandsministry.com/Store.html>

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