

ASSESSING CHURCH MATURITY

There are five distinct characteristics of a mature church: 1) An Evangelistic Focus; 2) A Deliberate Process of Discipleship; 3) A Continuous Development of Leaders; 4) Self-sustainable Ministry and Structures; and 5) A Missionary Vision. It may be helpful to think of the five areas as the five walls of church maturity. A church's overall maturity is determined by the weakest of those five walls, just as the strength of a wall around a piece of property is determined by the weakest of those walls.

You may recall that when Nehemiah went to Jerusalem to begin the task of rebuilding the first matter of business for him was to thoroughly examine the walls to see where he needed to begin with rebuilding. (Neh. 2:11-16) Similarly, to address the issues related to a lack of church maturity, a careful assessment needs to be made of the five walls of church maturity. Then it is possible to begin addressing the weakest areas and thus enhance the overall maturity of the church.

You may wonder how to conduct such an assessment. Fortunately, There is a tool

you can use that makes the assessment process much easier. Last year the leaders of the Wesleyan Church in Africa met for several days in Ghana to talk about how to recognize whether the five walls of church maturity are strong or weak. From that work a questionnaire was developed that can be used by churches at all levels (Local, District, National) to assess their maturity.

The questionnaire is best completed by a group of leaders together. They should discuss each statement in the assessment and then decide whether it is true in their church or not. After completing all ten items in each category (wall) then count the number of "yes" responses and record the finding in the table at the end of the assessment tool. After all five categories (walls) have been examined and the results recorded, then a simple comparison can be made to determine which wall(s) are weaker and which are stronger.



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