

What a purpose driven church is not

by Rick Warren

We devote a great deal of time and effort to helping people understand the biblical vision of the purpose driven church, but some myths seem determined to persist. As you lead your church into greater health and effectiveness, you're going to encounter these myths.

Let me spell out seven things a purpose driven church is not ...

It's not about being contemporary

Being Purpose Driven is not about trying to be contemporary. It is about being biblical. The five purposes of the church commanded by Jesus in the Great Commandment and Great Commission never go out of style. They are not a fad. They are eternally relevant. Any church that fails to fulfill the five purposes Jesus established for his people is not really a church!

It's not about your evangelistic target

There are now hundreds of thousands of Purpose Driven churches around the world focusing on reaching thousands of different people groups. There are PDCs for every age group: Builders, Boomers, GenXers, and Millennials. There are thousands of PDCs reaching every possible lifestyle group: cowboys, bikers, professionals, singles, artists, surfers, academics, Amazon boat people, pre-moderns, moderns, post-moderns, and someday intergalactic aliens! There are PDCs in over a hundred languages and dialects.

It's not about being 'seeker sensitive'

Purpose Driven churches are committed to the purpose of evangelism (one of the five New Testament purposes), not any particular method of evangelism. Thousands of Purpose Driven churches do not have an evangelistic seeker service. They do evangelism in many different formats.

It's not about your worship style

Purpose Driven churches affirm variety in worship -- as long as it is offered to God "in spirit and truth" (authentically and accurately). Purpose Driven churches worship God in thousands of styles -- liturgical, charismatic, traditional, contemporary, country, multi-sensory, casual, and many others.



Learning about Purpose Driven

More than 3,600 pastors and church leaders crowd into Saddleback's worship center and three other satellite venues on campus to learn from Pastor Rick Warren just what it means to be a Purpose Driven church at this year's Purpose Driven Church Conference. *Photo by Craig Pulsifer*



'Leaders are learners.' - Rick Warren

A group of pastors listen intently to Rick Warren as he shares Purpose Driven principles during this year's PDC Conference at Saddleback Church. *Photo by Craig Pulsifer*

What matters is that your worship style matches the people you are seeking to reach and mature in your ministry area.

It's not about the size of your church

Purpose Driven churches come in all sizes and shapes. The Purpose Driven strategy focuses on balance, health and strength, not size or shape. There is no correlation between the size and strength of a church. Purpose Driven is a church health strategy, not a mega-church strategy.

It's not about your location

Purpose Driven churches are now found all around the world -- in huge cities, towns, villages, and open space. In fact, there are now probably more Purpose Driven churches outside of the United States than within. Purpose Driven is not an American strategy -- it is a biblical strategy, and anything that is biblical will work anywhere!

It's not a denomination

There are Purpose Driven churches in over 200 different denominations and associations. We work with denominations to strengthen their churches. We encourage every church to maintain its own heritage and doctrinal convictions while we cooperate together on what every church is called to do -- the five biblical purposes of worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, and evangelism. Everybody agrees on that!