

# Don't Let 'em Get You Down!

This winter, at some pastor's conference or the evangelism conference, you are going to hear from — or about — pastor so-and-so at such-and-such mega-church. You are going to hear how they have averaged baptizing 250 people per year over the past decade or how they give 50 percent of their budget receipts to missions. And you will be tempted to go home wondering why your church can't do that and what you are doing wrong. Well, don't let them get you down!

There you are, in the church you serve, doing it all. Unlike the mega-church pastor, you have no research assistant. No one to visit the hospitals or the homebound for you. No one but you to oversee the small group ministry of the church. If it happens, you thought of it, planned it, prepared for it, promoted it, carried it out, and then helped with the cleanup. It's not like there's an ocean full of people to delegate to in your congregation. And Pastor Mega-church is telling you that you should spend more time with your family and have longer quiet times.

There you are in a small town. In a zip code with an average income less than one-half of the average income where that mega-church is located... with an average home value one-third of the average home value of the value in the neighborhood of the mega-church... with a population one-tenth the size. Don't walk away feeling like a failure because your attendance is smaller or the percentage of your church's missions giving is lower. Hey, half of a \$200,000 budget is like totally different from one-half of a \$20 million budget! It may be that you baptized a higher percentage of your town's population last year than the mega-church did. Your church's missions giving, in your town with the income level you are at, may be a greater achievement than that of the upper middle class church. It's not a contest, but if it were a contest, we would need to know how to compare apples with apples.

And just maybe the mega-church pastor went to a large city and started that church from scratch. He doesn't have any traditions to deal with, except the ones he created. He doesn't have a single old-goat for a deacon, and if he did, he could just fire him. There are no worship wars in his church—they don't have many old folks. There is no need to navigate through mine fields. There's no great diplomacy or working a process over time for him. You are not unspiritual because you face those things. He isn't more spiritual because he doesn't. There is no better here... just different.

So when the mega pastor brings his home-run sermon at the conference and says we should spend more time with God and with our families, take it to heart. Consider how the Lord would have you manage your time. When he shares how his church decided to give that big percentage to missions, prayerfully think about what the Lord would have your church do. But don't take his plan and run to the photocopier!

Don't resent that pastor of the mega-church. Maybe you couldn't do what he does where he serves. But, perhaps also, he couldn't do what you are doing where you serve! Accept his place in the body of Christ... and while you are it, accept your own. 🌲

