

Church Comfort Assessment

Is Our Church Moving or Merely Maintaining?

Rate Each Statement:

1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Consistently

RATING	INDICATOR
	Mission
	Our church regularly does things that feel risky in order to reach new people.
	We intentionally invest more energy in people outside our church than in keeping insiders happy.
	Our budget reflects mission more than maintenance.
	Innovation
	We regularly try new ideas, even knowing some will fail.
	Failure is viewed as learning instead of something to avoid.
	We celebrate experimentation.
	Disciple-Making
	People are regularly becoming new followers of Jesus.
	Members are growing into disciple-makers instead of simply attenders.
	We measure transformation more than attendance.
	Leadership
	Our leaders are willing to challenge long-held assumptions.
	Important decisions begin with prayer rather than preference.
	We ask, <i>"What is God calling us to do?"</i> more often than, <i>"What have we always done?"</i>
	Church Culture
	New people influence our church culture as much as long-time members.
	Serving outside the church building is normal.
	People expect God to do something new.
	Holy Discomfort
	Following Jesus regularly costs our congregation something.
	Our church has taken a significant step of faith within the past year.
	Our people are known more for courage than comfort.
	TOTAL RATING

ASSESSMENT INTERPRETATION

TOTAL RATING: _____

60-75: Your church has healthy kingdom momentum. Keep listening for where God is leading next.

45-59: Your church is healthy but may be drifting toward maintenance in a few areas.

30-44: Comfort is beginning to shape the culture more than mission.

Under 30: Your greatest challenge may not be decline; it may be inertia.

Practical Next Steps: Identify the area where your rating was lowest and begin to implement some of the practical solutions listed below to begin to shift the culture from maintaining to movement. But remember, even the smallest changes will feel uncomfortable. Be ready to stick with them until your church is comfortable being uncomfortable!

MISSION: From Maintaining Members to Making Disciples

MY RATING: _____

If your rating is low... Your church may be spending more energy preserving what exists than reaching people who are not yet part of God's family. Ministry decisions may be driven more by maintaining programs, budgets, and traditions than by making new disciples.

Signs You May Be Experiencing Mission Inertia:

- Most conversations revolve around taking care of current members.
- Outreach is viewed as an event rather than a lifestyle.
- New people rarely become active disciples.
- Success is measured primarily by attendance and finances.

Practical Next Steps:

- **Pray for names, not numbers.** Instead of setting attendance goals, ask every leader to pray daily for three people who are far from Christ or disconnected from a church.
- **Audit your calendar.** Review every ministry and ask: *"Does this help us make disciples? Would we start this ministry today if it didn't already exist?"*
- **Serve outside the building.** Choose one Sunday, one month, or one ministry each quarter that intentionally blesses your community rather than asking people to come to you.
- **Celebrate stories.** Replace some reports about attendance or finances with stories of life change, new relationships, acts of service, or first steps of faith.

INNOVATION: From Fear of Failure to Faithful Experimentation

MY RATING: _____

If your rating is low... Your church may have unintentionally begun protecting past successes instead of pursuing future opportunities. Familiar methods feel safer than trying something new, even when the mission field is changing around you.

Signs You May Be Experiencing Innovation Inertia:

- New ideas are often met with, *"We've never done it that way."*
- Leadership spends more time evaluating risks than envisioning possibilities.
- Most ministries look the same today as they did five or ten years ago.
- Fear of failure prevents experimentation.

Practical Next Steps:

- **Give yourself permission to fail.** Adopt the phrase: *"We celebrate faithful experiments, even when they don't work."*
- **Try one new thing every quarter.** Not ten. Just one. Evaluate it honestly. Keep what helps. Release what doesn't.
- **Debrief instead of criticize.** Whenever something doesn't work, ask, *"What did we learn? What surprised us? What should we try next?"*
- **Reward initiative.** Celebrate people who attempt something courageous, regardless of the outcome.

DISCIPLE-MAKING: From Consumers to Multipliers

MY RATING: _____

If your rating is low... Your church may excel at gathering people without consistently helping them grow into mature disciples who make other disciples. Spiritual formation becomes something people receive instead of something they reproduce.

Signs You May Be Experiencing Disciple-Making Inertia:

- Bible studies outnumber disciple-making relationships.
- People attend faithfully but rarely invite others into a life with Christ.
- Few members feel equipped to share their faith.
- Growth is measured by participation more than transformation.

Practical Next Steps:

- **Shift the success question.** Instead of asking, *“How many came?”* Ask, *“Who is becoming more like Jesus?”*
- **Encourage every believer to invest in one person.** Challenge every leader to intentionally disciple (mentor) one individual this year.
- **Normalize spiritual conversations.** Share testimonies about everyday disciple-making during worship or meetings.
- **Equip; don’t just inspire.** Give people practical tools they can use immediately; for example, conversation guides, prayer tools, Bible reading plans, simple disciple-making practices.

LEADERSHIP: From Preserving the Past to Seeking God’s Future

MY RATING: _____

If your rating is low... Leaders may be functioning more as caretakers of existing ministries than as spiritual discerners helping the church follow where God is leading next. Decisions become reactive instead of prayerfully visionary.

Signs You May Be Experiencing Leadership Inertia:

- Meetings focus almost entirely on reports and maintenance.
- Most decisions are driven by precedent rather than prayer.
- Difficult conversations are avoided.
- Younger or newer voices have little influence.

Practical Next Steps:

- **Begin every meeting with discernment.** Instead of immediately discussing business, ask, *“Where have we seen God moving recently?”*
- **Invite younger voices.** Create intentional opportunities for younger leaders and newer believers to influence decisions.
- **Ask mission-first questions.** Before approving any decision, ask: *“Does this help us make disciples? Does this help us reach new people?”*
- **Practice courageous conversations.** Leaders should gently challenge assumptions by asking, *“Are we doing this because it’s effective or because it’s familiar?”*



REMEMBER:

Healthy churches are not churches that never struggle. Healthy churches are churches that never stop following the Holy Spirit into new places. Churches don’t decline because they become smaller. They decline because they become satisfied.

CHURCH CULTURE: From Familiarity to Expectancy

MY RATING: _____

If your rating is low... Your congregation may have unintentionally become inward-focused. Long-standing relationships and routines create comfort for members but can unintentionally make newcomers feel like visitors instead of family.

Signs You May Be Experiencing Cultural Inertia:

- New visitors rarely become deeply connected.
- Most friendships remain within long-established groups.
- Hospitality is viewed as a ministry team's responsibility rather than everyone's calling.
- Members expect things to stay the way they are.

Practical Next Steps:

- **Make welcoming everyone's responsibility.** Hospitality isn't the greeter team's job. It's the church's culture.
- **Tell stories of change often.** People embrace change more readily when they hear how God is using it.
- **Create opportunities for intergenerational relationships.** Growth often happens when different generations learn from one another.
- **Regularly ask, "Who isn't here?"** Keep empty chairs in mind, not just occupied ones.

HOLY DISCOMFORT: From Safety to Spirit-Led Courage

MY RATING: _____

If your rating is low... Your church may have slowly replaced courageous faith with predictable routines. Rather than asking what God is calling you to risk, leadership and members may primarily seek stability and certainty.

Signs You May Be Experiencing Spiritual Inertia:

- Few ministry decisions require significant faith.
- Prayer focuses mostly on comfort, protection, and meeting internal needs.
- Obedience rarely costs the congregation anything.
- Members have become more concerned with preserving peace than pursuing mission.

Practical Next Steps:

- **Pray dangerous prayers.** Examples:
 - "Lord, interrupt our plans."
 - "Send us where we're needed."
 - "Show us what we're avoiding."
- **Do one thing that stretches your faith every season.** It doesn't have to be enormous. Maybe it's starting a Bible study, planting a new ministry, partnering with another church, or serving an overlooked neighborhood.
- **Teach people to expect discomfort.** Normalize the truth that obedience often feels risky before it feels rewarding.
- **Celebrate courage more than success.** When someone steps out in faith, even if it doesn't produce immediate results, celebrate and normalize the obedience.



THE 90-DAY HOLY DISCOMFORT CHALLENGE

Choose the lowest scoring category from your assessment and over the next 90 days:

- Pray intentionally about it.
- Discuss it as a leadership team.
- Take one courageous step each month.
- Celebrate what God teaches you.