



## Reconciling duplicity

A long-time church member recently made two statements that are difficult to reconcile.

*"We used to have more people at church. We need leaders that bring more people in." -and- "I don't want to be a part of a large church where people don't even know each other."*

This is not a singular point of view! This conflicting sentiment parks on the doorstep of many a 75 member congregation. The result is many new program starts that cannot succeed and hours of committee meetings where no decision can be made. The very people saying something must be done are the chief obstacle against the fix!

Understanding just how deep this duplicity runs is the first step in addressing it.

Addressing it involves:

1.) Stating the dynamic often and in light-hearted ways.

2.) Stating criteria for the decision and noting criteria you choose not to use – again from a non-anxious and light-hearted perspective.

3.) Connecting the decision to measurable objectives.

Example: *While we value our fellowship's intimacy, we commit to erring on the side of being hospitable and accessible to newcomers. When we decide tonight whether or not to add a second worship service, we cannot choose based on whether we personally will attend or not, or from concern that new people will change the church. Rather, we seek to choose based on desire to offer access to others. That is, if we choose not to have a second service it is because there is a better idea or because we are committed to look for something even more effective.*

**"The very people saying something must be done are the chief obstacle against the fix!"**

Here is an idea for your next board meeting: ***see if you can improve on the above statement.***

-mark