

Wolverine State Missionary Baptist Convention



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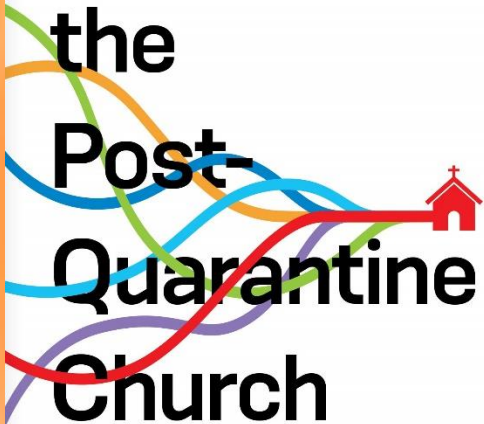
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VIRTUALLY

Extended Session
November 4-5, 2020

the
Post-
Quarantine
Church



Thom S. Rainer

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Jeremiah 29:4-6 NKJV

SIX URGENT CHALLENGES + OPPORTUNITIES

That Will Determine the Future of Your Congregation

At some point in time COVID-19 will be over, then what? What will the church look like? What we already know is that the church will be different, but we do not yet know what that difference will ultimately look like. One thing for sure is that God is not only with us but He has gone before us and the mission will remain the same, make disciples of all nations.

The Post-Quarantine Church by Thom S. Rainer shares vision and hope for the future of the church. He summarizes the book with the following statement: "In the midst of heartbreak and struggle, there is hope." Rainer reveals insights he has gathered from thousands of surveys of church leaders and in-person consultations. This book is a great tool to help navigate the pandemic and to prepare for the post-quarantine world and identify key opportunities for every congregation.



There are at least three excerpts from the book I would like to deal with today for our consideration as we prepare for The Post-Quarantine Church:

1. **Re-evaluate What the Gathered Church Will Look Like.** Two words



immediately come to mind, "focus" and "eliminate." The pandemic has taught the church what is really important and showed us things we can do without. As we focus on the mission of the church, evaluate what

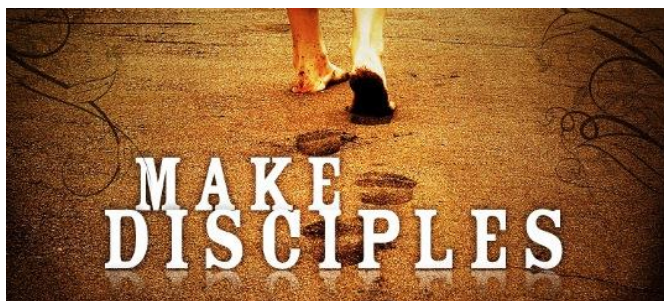
are the essential things that lead to making disciples? These things should be enhanced. Identify the non-essential busywork that took time away from



the mission and begin to eliminate. On a personal note, I have done and continue to do this. I have noticed that we had a lot of fat and a lot of busywork.

The pandemic caused us to refocus and to consider some things we had never considered before. I believe that whatever God told us to do we can continue to do regardless of our circumstances. The pandemic does not keep the church from obeying God—[Proverbs 3:5-6](#), [John 16:33](#), [Isaiah 54:17](#).

I had to focus on the purpose of the gathered church—[Hebrews 10:24-25](#) AMPC. We are to encourage and motivate each other to acts of love and good works. The gathered church is important but many of us have failed to do whatever we are gathered to do. The Post-Quarantine Church will intentionally focus on making disciples and leave some non-essentials undone.



2. **Re-think Our Facilities.** Many church facilities had become the focus of the busy church. We often gauged the health of a congregation by the number of times people came to the facility for worship services, groups, ministries, programs, and events. A busy building, we surmised, was a sign of a vibrant, healthy church.



The unintended consequences of a full church calendar were many. Some members were so busy going to church that they failed to be on mission in their community. As a matter of fact, many thought that just coming to the church building was the mission. Most active members were often the least evangelistic members because they spent so much time inside the building instead of out in the community. Families often suffered as well. Parents had few hours for family time because of the steady stream of activities at the church. Now, we have a new opportunity before us. We have seen that the church can survive, even thrive, without the everyday



use of the building. Although we still advocate the importance of gathering in person, we also see opportunities in The Post-Quarantine Church to use our facilities for greater and more efficient purposes. The Post-Quarantine Church will use the church to minister to the community more than for the convenience of the members.

3. **A Wide-Open Door to Reach People Digitally.** Church leaders have



adopted very well during the pandemic. Most churches now have some form of digital presence.

Many larger churches have streamed their services for years. From Rainer's research, it was estimated that more than 100,000 churches that never had an internet presence beyond their website began streaming their services during the pandemic. And, more than 250,000 congregations had never had a digital presence of any kind before the quarantine began to stream. On any given day, more churches can instantly reach the world with the Gospel of Christ. God's Word has always been virtual—[Matthew 8:9](#).

The internet has increasingly become a conduit for the Gospel, for biblical teaching, and for ministry across North America. Churches of all sizes have discovered a new mission field in the digital world.

In the post-quarantine era, churches have expanded their thinking and moved into new territories. There will be a balance between in person and digital ministry. The church can readily reach people who have never been reached before because of the digital presence. We can say like the Apostle Paul in [1 Corinthians 16:9](#) NLT. There is a wide-open door for a greater work here, although we are in the midst of a pandemic.