



## Autopsy of a Deceased Church \* Thom S. Rainer

*The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful people who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2*

### 10 Key Symptoms of a Dying Church

<u>SYMPTOMS</u>	<u>HOW MUCH THIS DESCRIBES OUR CHURCH</u>				
1 Ignoring their slow erosion	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly
2 Banking on past successes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly
3 Refusing to adapt to change	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly
4 Budgeting mostly for in-reach	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly
5 Drifting away from evangelism	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly
6 Seeing church as "my church"	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly
7 Changing pastors frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly
8 Settling for passionless prayer	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly
9 Losing sight of a clear purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly
10 Obsessing over facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Not us	<input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/> Half & Half	<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently	<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly

### 12 Key Responses for Dying Churches

IF in early stages/degrees of symptoms above

- 1 Pray for a re-focus on church outreach
- 2 Audit outreach vs. in-reach hours of ministry
- 3 Audit outreach vs. in-reach use of budget funds
- 4 Create fresh ways to evangelize the community

IF in middle stages/degrees of symptoms above

- 5 Admit and confess the church's dire need
- 6 Pray for wisdom and courage to take action
- 7 Rally the church to be willing to change radically
- 8 Embed all changes with an outward focus

IF in late stages/degrees of symptoms above

- 9 Sell all assets; Give the money to start churches
- 10 Give/sign over the facilities to another church
- 11 Transfer authority to new transitional leadership
- 12 Merge with a church with mutual humility/trust

While this summary is no substitute for reading the book, it can serve as a helpful evaluation now, to avoid being blind-sided later. Please feel free to call me if I may assist you!

Dr. Mark Gonzales | Executive Director | 239.433.2292  
royalpalmsbc.com | 5481 Briarcliff Road | Ft. Myers, FL 33912

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