

COMMITTEE REFLECTION

Holy God, bless us this evening so that we will be doing your will in everything we do. Help us to put aside our pride and ego that seeks only what we want, so that we can be filled with your Spirit that leads us to want what you want. Hear us in silence as we center ourselves in you and ask you to guide us this evening...



N. GRAHAM STANDISH, *BECOMING A BLESSED CHURCH*

When we breathe the breath of the Holy Spirit in our churches, we become spiritually vibrant. Unfortunately, because far too few mainline churches breathe the breath of the Spirit, there has been a loss of vitality in far too many of them. Perhaps it is simply a sign of our age. Perhaps this loss of vibrancy is evidence that the mainline Christian movement has grown old and tired, but that doesn't mean that we have to remain old and tired. If we really believe in resurrection and renewal, then new life is possible. All it takes is recapturing the vitality that exists in every lasting church at its birth. Every lasting church (and denomination, for that matter) is initially formed with a spiritually vigorous center. At its inception the original members of a church are so captured by a clear and compelling sense of spiritual life that they commit their lives to its formation and growth...

But all churches, no matter how vibrant, eventually lapse into a kind of *functionalism*. It happens to every church, and it will happen to these new churches, too. It doesn't happen because of anything bad or corrupt. It happens simply because humans tend towards functionality. In other words, the more we do something, the more it becomes routine and functional as we try to create systems and programs to make our churches more efficient and stable. Think about the kinds of things in your life that have become routine but at one point were energizing and exciting.



QUESTIONS:

1. What thoughts or points stand out to you and why?
2. What does this say about the struggles of being leaders in a church?