

THE MACHINE BEHIND RICK WARREN: Dan Southerland

I did not know that **Church Transitions**, the organization behind Rick Warren is a well oiled machine that selected and transformed him into a leading “guru” of the New Age Movement in Evangelical/Fundamental Christian churches in the United States. I was saddened and grieved at the information I found when I searched for Church Transitions. Rather than trying to condense what they are about, I am taking verbatim what they say on their website so that you can see how the founder and his helpers describe themselves. One thing is for sure, someone has invested some big money to get this group going:

“The process of transition that we teach is a simple one:

- Step one - Prepare for change
- Step two - Define your changes
- Step three - Plant your vision with your key leaders
- Step four - Share your vision with the whole church
- Step five - Implement your changes
- Step six - Deal with the opposition
- Step seven - Make adjustments
- Step eight - Evaluate the result

(Source: www.churchtransitions.com/about_cti.htm)



The advertisement for his book states:

“Following 13 successful years as the lead pastor/teacher of Flamingo Road Church, in Fort Lauderdale, FL, **Dan Southerland started Church Transitions Inc.**, an organization that trains pastors and church leaders to effectively manage major transitions. Dan has trained over 100,000 pastors and church leaders in the past seven years. His focus is how to implement the purpose-driven paradigm in existing churches. Dan is now one of the pastors at Next Level Church in Charlotte, North Carolina.

“Dan Southerland is the founder and director of Church Transitions Inc. Dan developed this process for change while serving as the pastor/teacher of the Flamingo Road Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. During the thirteen years of his ministry at Flamingo Road, the church made some major changes:

- Approach - from being program driven to being purpose driven.
- Target - from reaching believers to reaching the unchurched.
- Worship Style - from traditional to contemporary.
- Pastors - from a senior pastor model to a shared pastor model.
- Leadership - from a committee led church to being staff led.
- Ministry - from pastors doing all the ministry to pastors equipping people to do the ministry.

- Small Groups - from a traditional Sunday School model to a relational cell group model.
- Services - from one weekend worship service to five weekend services (two on Saturday night; three on Sunday morning).

“God blessed these changes big time! Flamingo Road grew from 300 in worship to 2300 in average attendance. They also started 23 other churches. And today, 60% of those who join Flamingo Road Church are unchurched when they first attend.

“Dan Southerland has had the privilege of training 100,000 church leaders in these principles of transition over the past 7 years - in 30 different countries! He has been teaching at the Purpose Driven Church conference held by Saddleback Church for the past 7 years. About half of the events we do each year are co-sponsored by Purpose Driven Ministries.”

Dan Southerland left Flamingo Road Baptist Church (which he had renamed Potential Church); went to Next Level Church, Charlotte, North Carolina; to Westview Church, Kansas.

Southerland drove out the original congregation of three hundred, kept their property and facilities, changed their church into his creation, filled it with neophytes, and became their king. This book is a near perfect expose of the methods of the utterly corrupt Church Growth Movement. There are three ways to deal with an errant preacher like Southerland; get them on board, fight them, or run them off (Transitioning - p 71).

How does Dan Southerland work?

Dan Southerland, with Church Transitions Inc. led a workshop for pastors at Saddleback.

The entire message was awash in a false premise (*that all church growth is good*) so all you need to do is implement Church Transitions Inc's multistep "good works" program then God has to reward you with a bigger church, why - because you earned it. This only comes to show that the object of these pastors hearts is not loyalty or fidelity to Christ and The Faith once and for all delivered to the Early Church, but to the idol that they worship "church growth" measured not in members with deepening faith or mature disciples or even measured by the Word of God but measured by those pastors personal success in accumulating numerical growth (butts in seats) and big budgets (tithe checks in the Church's bank acct).

These are the steps to take your church (notice not Jesus' Church) from "boring to blessed:" the message is stop shepherding the Sheep like the Bible says, instead herd goats because goat herding always equals

bigger attendance, more tithes (or dividends for you CEO pastor-types) and more respect in the community

Step 1 – Cell Churches – to grow your church large you have to cater to peoples felt need for a small group community. So *Oxymoronicly* to get a big church you have to get members to “feel” like it’s a small church. My question is, Why not just attend a small church?

Step 2 – Contemporary Music – is a must! Shallow music, with no doctrinal depth, always equals shallow worship and eventually raises up shallow worshippers. Why is contemporary music a must - because goats like cool music.

Step 3 – Seeker Driven (*AKA Being Lost Focused*) – Becoming sinner focused is more important that if you’re teaching false or incorrect doctrine. God, apparently, just wants to see if your trying to reach your community, He doesn’t care with what are you tempting them into your Church (*entertainment, shtick, sex, secular man-focused worship, whatever it takes*). According to Dan, God loves the lost even more than those believers that are already in your church; this false doctrine flows right into step 4.

Step 4 – Church is not about you or me – Dan is here referring to members (*or the Sheep*). Church is about the goats (*non-members, the outsiders*) so the secular music, the shallowness of preaching, the stage shows, the comedy routine (*oops, I meant sermon*) are always only focused not on what your Sheep need (*repentance and the forgiveness of sins*) but on what the goats want. What can your church do to draw and entertain Satan’s children? This “pastor,” and I can barely use that term loosely enough to include, Dan Southerland, actually apologized to a church member when they came to him with a concern that he, as the goat herder, must have somehow given them the impression that the church was for them, its not, its for the goats (the lost). Dan says that a Purpose-driven, Seeker-sensitive church does not “net fish” (*like in the NT*) but “bait fishes” because CEO –type pastors know what sinners want and “lure” them in with it. This is why the American church whores itself with sex sermons, movie sermons, worldly music, give-a-ways, raffles, lotteries, fun, excitement, and entertainment at the cost of actually acting like a church as described in Scripture (*see Acts and the Pastoral epistles*). So what does Dan suggest when the regenerate members dare to suggest that the church that they are a part of act like a church. Tell them, that “We choose Purpose over Preference” and acting like a church is apparently only your preference. Christians however do not fish with lures (*or gimmicks*) but with the net of the Gospel that draws in God’s Elect, Chosen, and Called because the Church or Ekklesia - is a group of “the called out ones” (*those whom God has called out of the World to be His own*).

Step 5 – Following the Movements of God – according to Dan previous movements of God were focused on arguing doctrines of Scripture and following the Bible (*that describes all 2000 yrs of past Christianity, Dan*). Now the movement of God is obviously in the seeker mode of churches because there are so many large Seeker-Driven churches and a big church means a godly church right? That's a false premise, Dan. Unfortunately this faulty premise means that your life's work of teaching other churches to become non-churches means you're in direct opposition to Jesus Christ and the proclamation of Salvation through Grace alone – by Faith alone – on account of Christ's atoning work alone. But according to Dan once you get into line with what God is doing (*or trying to do*) in the World then – Oh Man – then God can really move in your church.

Dan says that even Billy Graham said that the Purpose-driven church movement is the biggest movement of God in this generation.

Step 6 – Defining your Vision – this can be the hardest part of the whole transition of your church into a non-church. Dan recommends not the Bible for this transition but Henry Blackaby's books which he studies every year. You've got to see what God is doing (*or what's hot today*) then get on board. So this isn't optional, God will not submit to your style so you have to submit to what He is doing in the world. **So you have to** get on board with the Purpose-Driven, Seeker-Sensitive Vision-casting CEO-instead of pastor model for your church or you're not getting on board with what God is doing. This is where God is today. This is what He's doing. Not according to Scripture, of course, but according to Dan.

Step 7 – God laid this on Dan's heart – Dan inserts this message here because in Purpose-Driven speak if you don't want anyone to question your raping and pillaging of the Orthodox, historic Christian faith or the Bible's model for the Church then all you have to do is say, "Well you can't question me or my motives. Why, because it was God who laid this passion for church deconstruction (*or destruction*) that I'm doing on my heart." Just read or listen to Brian McLaren, he does the exact same thing. Then Dan quotes 1 Corinthians 2:9 – "But, as it is written, What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him" and misuses it to say, See, God wants you to have a Mega-church **so big** no eye has seen this great gift God wants to give you – church growth.

And here comes the "good works;" (*it reminds me of the old Pelagian heresy- Google it!*) because God wants to do this awesome thing for you but you've got to get ready first (*how - by implementing Church Transitions Inc's methods*). You have got to jump through hoops to show God that you're ready; that you're really serious.

Prepare for the Vision – so, what is the vision, well it's a picture of what God wants to do (*in or through you*). And how do you invent this Vision that you will later pretend that God has given you? First, you have to find out what the goats (*the un-churched*) in your community want: if they want better sex-lives (and really who doesn't) then you need to craft some sex sermons (*or just buy them from Ed Young, Jr*), if they want a night out on the town then offer a church-ran parents night out daycare service, if they want to continue in their sins then eventually burn in Hell for all of eternity then just don't preach the Law or the Gospel or repentance or the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name to them. See it's easy.

According to Dan - Now if you only want 100 people in your church from here to Eternity then keep holding hands with the 100 "whiners" in your church right now – and that'll do it. And that's fine, but don't do it then claim you're building a church for God. You have to use growing churches as models for your church and you have to get your theology (*whatever you want that to be*) from the Bible, but you have to get your methodology from bigger churches.

Dan here quotes Matthew 7:20 (*which ironically is about false teachers, Dan*) "Thus you will recognize them by their fruits." And again he rapes Scripture to assert that you'll know if God is with you, in the context of his message, if you have a big church. And you'll recognize other God-is-with-them churches to emulate if they too are big. He says remember Jesus didn't say, You'll know them by their theology. Why, does he stress this? All false teachers reject Biblical doctrine, because its Biblical doctrine that God uses to point out heretics and false teachers. And it's the dawning realization that someone is a false teacher that God uses to remove His Elect from their blasphemous control.

What else do you need to do to get God to grow you're church? Well you've got to fast – and fasting doesn't just mean don't eat, it means extra prayer on top of your regular amount of prayer. You have to get yourself ready for God's vision- then just wait for God to show up and grant you the Vision.

Rate yourself he says, from 1 to 100 for the level of prayer your doing for your church's future (*go ahead and write it down*) and then put a percentage at the end of it. And that's it, that's the max percentage of increase to your church that God will ever give you. If you pray at a 25% level **then God can only** give you the 25% increase not the full 100% he wants to give you. Pray at a 50% level and then only 50% of what God wants to do in your church can be done.

Then he tells a story of a tour in heaven with St Peter with rooms stuffed full of gifts and presents. Is this my heavenly reward – the man asks? No – says Peter – its all the gifts God wanted to give you but you never asked for them. (*This reminds me of the old Semi-Pelagian Heresy-Bing it, if you don't know!*)

Remember the Vision principles. The Vision only comes to those who first gather goat-information, prepares for the Vision (*by implementing Church Transition Inc's methods*), fasts, prays, then waits on God for the Vision, but if you fast or pray too little then God **can** only give you little growth. Actual Christians instead of buying Church strategies from Dan Southerland & Church Transition Inc. open their Bibles (for free!) read the Acts of the Early Church and the Pastoral Epistles then try their best to be faithful (remember fidelity?) to what God has already told Christians to do not buying into what Dan says he's in-Visioned (probably imagined following substandard Mexican food).

I found it interesting to note that he teaches you how to get rid of dissenters before he teaches you how to listen to legitimate complaints. After seeing their fellow church members kicked out, how will people with 'legitimate concerns' be willing to come forward?

The church growth apostasy (yes, APOSTASY) is taking over all denominations. I have seen it in Evangelical Covenant (rampant there) and being pushed on the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (you can see it all over their website in their 'igniting congregations campaign') Mennonites, Baptists, and the list is endless.

The older saints who just want the pure word of God, realizing that adding all the trappings to it is just distracting from the truth, are called 'sanballats' (leaders from hell). What a respectful way to treat fellow believers who may very well have legitimate concerns.

Take a stand against this apostasy. It will come to your church.

HOW A CHURCH IS DESTROYED

In his book "The Dark Side of the Purpose Driven Church," Noah Hutchings describes how the Southern Baptist Church he belonged to in Oklahoma City was made into a Purpose Driven church.

It began in the fall of 2003, when the current pastor, Dr. Mark Hartman, resigned and went to another church. Some people in leadership of the church, including the minister of music, had been sold on the Purpose Driven Life and were able to put together a list of seven people who were going to be on the search committee for the new pastor. At a business meeting, the membership accepted the slate as presented, and in a short time a pastor was lined up and voted in by the majority of the church members. It is important to remember that the rank and file members of the church had no understanding of the coup in progress.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Shortly after the new pastor had been voted in, he and others in leadership traveled to Willow Creek Church in Chicago to attend a training session for the Purpose Driven Life. Bill Hybels and Rick Warren are buddies, each building their own little empire. In order to understand what happened to the pastor from Oklahoma City when he arrived at Hybels' church, it is necessary to take a look at Bill Hybels.

THE NEW PASTOR COMES BACK TO OKLAHOMA CITY

The first Sunday the new pastor was back from Chicago, he appeared on stage with slacks, a sport shirt and coat. After a while he took off his coat and displayed he was dressed in a jogging suit, just like Rick Warren. When the choir came in they were dressed like the choir at Rick Warren's church, looking like old hippies. The 35 deacons and the 30 staff members of the church were dressed just like Rick Warren too. When the pastor preached, he was sitting on a stool, I'm sure you're getting the point, just like Rick Warren.

PURPOSE DRIVEN MUSIC

Here is how Rick Warren describes his music:

"At Saddleback Church we are unapologetically contemporary....And right after we made that decision and stopped trying to please everybody, Saddleback exploded with growth We are loud. We are really, really loud.... We're not gonna turn it down....Baby boomers want to feel the music, not just hear it."

Warren has also said this:

"To insist that all good music came from Europe 200 years ago, there's a name for that - racism... Encourage members to re-arrange and re-write."

Rick has also stated:

"There is no such a thing as 'Christian music,' only Christian lyrics."

The baby boomers are now in the age bracket of 41 to 63, and financially they are the ones holding the money in the United States. As a result, they can break or make a church, a new consumer product, including the housing market. Their taste and desire drives the consumer market when it comes to clothing, automobiles, furniture, etc. When this new type of music was introduced to the Oklahoma Church there was much complaining from the congregation. This was solved temporarily by designating a traditional service at 9AM and a modern (rock-n-roll) service at 10:30AM.

PURPOSE DRIVEN BIBLES

Rick Warren's favorite version of the Bible is "The Message." It is based upon the corrupt Greek text fabricated by the two British clergymen at the end of the 1800s, who were heavily involved in the occult. All current American Bible versions, except the King James Bible, are based on a text concocted by two renegade priests, who denied Jesus' divinity and virgin birth. All modern translations of the Bible can be termed as "concept translations," since they are not translated verbatim, but give the reader a basic idea of the message the writer was trying to convey. By using these sloppy translations, the ministers and leaders in the Purpose Driven movement can make the Bible say things that are not true but fit the doctrine these men are devising. These different Bible versions were now introduced to the Southern Baptist Church in Oklahoma City.

BUILDING ON THE YOUTH

Rick Warren is following the same path as other leaders in the past, bypassing the old-timers and focusing on the youth. This is precisely how Rick Warren is training pastors and church leaders in his seminars: Get rid of the opposition! This is step six in his development plan on how to "deal with the opposition." Here is how he explains it in his seminars:

"Be willing to let people leave the church. And I told you earlier the fact that people are gonna leave the church no matter what you do. But when you define the vision, you're choosing who leaves. You say, 'But Rick, yes, they're the pillars of the church.' Now, you know what pillars are. Pillars are people who hold things up...And in your church, you may have to have some blessed subtractions before you have real additions."

Warren and his handlers know that solid Bible believers who have walked with God for many years are not going to accept the new music, the bastard Bibles and a new doctrine. They also know that it doesn't matter how many seminars they give for the old timers, they're just not going to buy into it. Thus, there is only one plan, force the old timers to leave through dirty church politics.

One important thing that Warren neglects to mention to his wannabe clones is that the rigid old timers they are trying to force out are the tithers and financial supporters in the church. For the most part, young people are selfish and do not tithe. As a result, many small churches which are infected with the Purpose Drive virus do not survive. When these unyielding pillars are gone, there is no income and the church eventually folds. This is precisely why Rupert Murdoch and his Jewish

friends are investing their money into the Rick Warren Corporation, destruction of the churches.

The Southern Baptist Church in Oklahoma did not fare well once the Purpose Driven virus was forced upon the church. At the time the virus hit the church, it had a membership between three to four thousand people. It is now a shadow of its past, and in order to save the church and save his salary, the pastor has gone back to a more traditional type of service. But the damage is done, people were offended and hurt and many of them will not darken a church door again, which is another victory for the Devil.