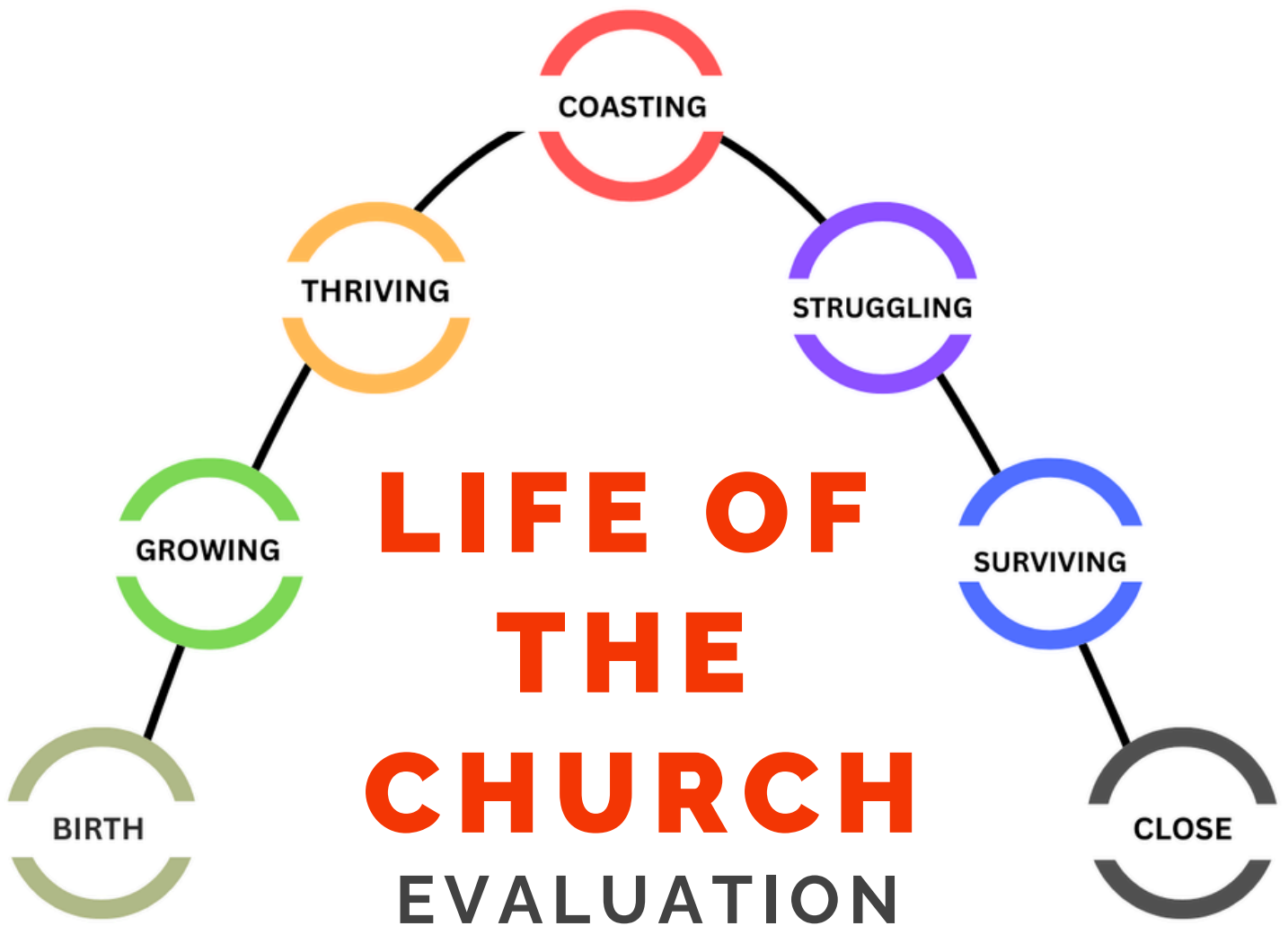

FRESH START EMPOWER TOOLS



FRESHSTARTNETWORK.COM

WHAT DOES THE EVALUATION INDICATE HOW DID IT EMERGE?

The evaluation offered by Fresh Start, while using different terms for the stages on the church lifecycle, follows the principles of the Lifecycle White Paper by Dr. Ken Priddy. Both evaluations follow a bell curve of growth, plateau, and decline.

The White Paper uses the term Incline, Decline and Recline and includes descriptive ranges for each. The paper serves as the foundation for The Life of The Church Evaluation and provides clear insights for understanding and overcoming declining lifecycle trends.

The Life of The Church Evaluation is not intended to be comprehensive health review. But it does provide a good snapshot that opens the conversation among church leaders and district and regional authorities.

Dr Ken Priddy, my co-worker and founder of The Go Center, and Dr. Gary Reinecke, another long-time friend and president of In Focus, worked closely with Mike Rosado from our Fresh Start team and me to build this new evaluation. As a side note Ken Priddy was a very successful church replanter who went on to earn his PHD featuring the church lifecycle.

THE LOGIC BEHIND THE TERMS FOR THE STAGES OF THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH EVALUATION

The terms that we will use to describe the stages on the Fresh Start Eval create relatable word pictures for the local church leaders.



These identifiers are not static. There are ranges within each. The Lifecycle White Paper develops this concept and will help bring understanding. For example, the identifier Coasting begins on the incline portion of the curve but levels out and moves into decline.

Picture it like this. You are driving on the freeway and moving well. You take your foot off the pedal. The car begins to slow down. With no more pressure on the gas pedal, the car will cease to make progress and eventual you will need to pull to the side of the road. The reality is, some church leaders are at peace just being together, parked in the rest area.

Knowing the church's location on the lifecycle can become the key to reacting to a negative trajectory. It can become the catalyst for generating a desire and willingness to create a new lifecycle through alignment with God's purpose that is fueled by the power and direction of the Holy Spirit. Remember,

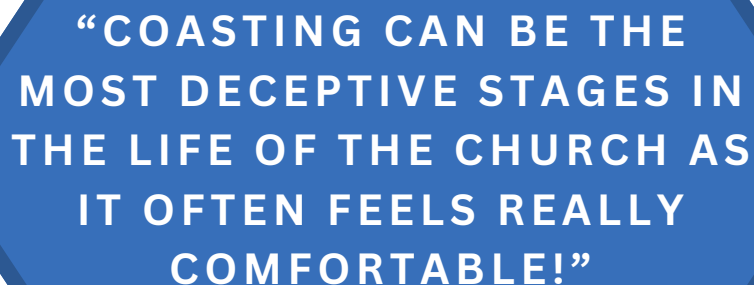
Christ included warnings as He described the seven churches according to their vitality or lack thereof. Paul wrote numerous letters of warning to one church after another. It is not the default of the church to naturally create new lifecycles. You can break the old pattern and lead forward. A clear understanding of the condition of the church can birth the burden for a fresh start.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE TERMS

Growing – This includes statistical growth in conversions and baptisms along with attention to discipleship. The church is centering on the creation of a pathway to leadership development. The climate is encouraging, and people are drawn to worship and the teaching of The Word.

Thriving – In addition to the statistical growth the leadership development has graduated to the point of sending people out to carry the gospel beyond the church doors. An increasing portion of the giving is externally focused. The percentage of the people engaged in serving is high and there is cause for regular celebration.

Coasting – In early coasting things are going well. Finances and giving are good. The church has a positive reputation in the community and there is harmony. Coasting eventually leads to a slowdown that can be measured in declines. The church begins to lose effectiveness. As this condition matures struggling sets in.



“COASTING CAN BE THE MOST DECEPTIVE STAGES IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH AS IT OFTEN FEELS REALLY COMFORTABLE!”

Struggling – Here the downward pull becomes noticeable. Ministry needs are not driving the decisions. The checkbook is! Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for many to ignore the symptoms like fewer conversions and baptism and stagnant leadership development. When struggling, everything tends to be program driven and internally focused.

Surviving – Just holding on. You can't recall the last person to come to Christ. The building is in increasing disrepair. The effort is to preserve what money is left. It is becoming increasingly difficult to pay a full-time pastor. The leadership is incumbent. There are fewer people, and the congregation is aging.

WHO SHOULD TAKE THE EVALUATION?

As many in your leadership as possible should take the evaluation from board members, elders, children's directors, youth directors, worship leaders, etc. The picture becomes increasingly accurate as more people weigh in. It will also surface those who have an unrealistic view.

WHAT DOES THE EVALUATION MEASURE?

The Eval measures five general health categories:

- **Spiritual**
- **Emotional**
- **Organizational**
- **DNA**
- **Financial**

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR PLACE ON THE LIFECYCLE?

When the survey is completed, you will receive a response. To receive a more detailed scoring of the five measured health categories contact us at Fresh Start. This will serve as an indicator of the most critical needs for the church to address that can lead to a new lifecycle.

The Evaluation can be accessed at freshstartnetwork.com on the opening page.

REMEMBER... “A CHURCH, AS MUCH AS IT WANTS TO, CANNOT BACK UP THE LIFECYCLE. BUT IT CAN CREATE A NEW ONE” – KEN PRIDDY