

THERE IS TREMENDOUS POWER in thinking about what Christ has done for you, who God's called you to be, and what you hear every Sunday in comparison to what is actually being applied in your life. Sheldon Vanauken said it best: *The strongest argument against Christianity is Christians—when they are somber and joyless, when they are self-righteous and smug in complacent consecration, when they are narrow and repressive, then Christianity dies a thousand deaths. But, the best argument for Christianity is also Christians; their joy, their certainty, their completeness.*

Our hope and prayer is that as a result of taking the **Church Relationships Assessment** you will have a more accurate awareness of the strengths and growth areas of your congregation and that they will be more aware of some of the practical ways Christ can make a meaningful difference in their lives.



“We believe that survey research has never been more needed than it is today to help church leaders ascertain where people are in the religious and spiritual growth process and the steps needed to help them mature in their faith.”

GEORGE GALLUP JR.
GALLUP GUIDE

“The sad truth is that too little difference exists, in terms of emotional and relational maturity, between God's people inside the church and those outside who claim no relationship to Jesus Christ. Even more alarming ... you often find a valley littered by broken and failed relationships.”

PETER SCAZZERO,
*THE EMOTIONALLY
HEALTHY CHURCH*

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
TO ORDER THE CRA PLEASE CONTACT:


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The Center for Relationship Enrichment (CRE) with Dr. Gary Oliver and Dr. Greg Smalley exists to cultivate healthy, Christ-centered relationships by educating, enriching and equipping students, individuals, couples, families, churches and organizations through the transforming power of biblically-based consulting, education and enrichment at a local, regional, national and international level.



CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS ASSESSMENT

Growing a Spiritually, Emotionally
and Relationally Healthy Church



How do you know the
teaching, preaching,
and training offered at
your church is making a
**meaningful
difference**
in people's lives?



**WHAT A DIFFERENCE YOU'VE
MADE IN MY LIFE** was the love song that captured the hearts of millions in 1977. What most people don't know is that it was actually written by Archie Jordan as a love song to Jesus.

“What a difference you've made in my life” is something that we all long to say to our Lord. Romans 8:29 states something very similar: *“For those God foreknew he also predestined to become conformed to the likeness of his Son.”* As Christians, God's goal for us is to become more like Jesus.

“The best preachers...know the people...and understand the human scene in all its pain and pleasure, glory and tragedy. And the quickest way to gain such an understanding is to shut our mouth...and open our eyes and ears... We need, then, to ask people questions and get them talking... [Clergy] should encourage them to tell...about their home and family life, their job, their expertise and their spare-time interests. We also need to penetrate beyond their doing to their thinking.”

JOHN R.W. STOTT,
BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

How Do We Know?

SO THE REAL QUESTION is how do we know if people in our congregations are becoming more like Jesus? Is the answer in church involvement, learning Bible doctrine, or abstaining from sin? These are important, but Christ established a clear criteria. In John 13:34-35 he says, *A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.* One evidence of our becoming more like Christ is our ability to love others as Christ loves us.

But how do we know if we're loving others as Christ loves us? How do we assess *what difference Christ is making in our lives*? One way is through a unique relationships assessment designed to identify where people are in terms of their spiritual, emotional and relational health. To make this possible The Center for Relationship Enrichment has developed the **Church Relationships Assessment (CRA)**.

The CRA is based on the greatest commandment, *Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength, and love others as you love yourself* (Mark 12:29-31). It is designed to help your church answer the question: *How do we know that the teaching, preaching, and training we offer is making a meaningful difference in the lives of our people?* The CRA is designed to give you a unique "thumbprint" of your congregation, where they are spiritually, emotionally and relationally, their strengths and potential areas of growth.

We regularly go to the doctor to assess our physical health, but how often do we stop and take stock of what's going on in our lives spiritually, emotionally and relationally? For most of us it's been a long time since we've taken 30 minutes just to sit and assess the condition of our heart, our walk with the Lord and our relationships- to ask ourselves: What difference is Christ making day-in and day-out? Who can tell? How can they tell? What's different

about my marriage? What's different about my family? Am I a different dad, a different wife, a different employee, or a different friend? Does Christ make a difference in how I handle conflict, how I express my anger, how patient I am, or how I forgive? This is an application of Proverbs 27:23: *Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds.*

The CRA is the result of over 15 years of research and development at John Brown University and Denver Seminary. The CRA is easy to administer and provides a significant amount of helpful information in a short period of time. The CRA is designed to be taken by the entire adult congregation, both married and single, during a worship service. This significantly increases the validity and the effectiveness of the assessment. The forms are typically distributed after a short introductory message at the beginning of the service and takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. Churches have found that a worship service is the most ideal time for administration however each church is different and we can discuss other options for administration.



"The Center for Relationship Enrichment has developed a one-of-a-kind Church Relationships Assessment. The results of the CRA can identify strengths, potential growth areas, and assist you as you equip leaders and parishioners to increase their effectiveness in building a healthy church, both emotionally and relationally. If you're a pastor you need a scorecard to help you maximize your effort. With the help of the CRA you will have in your hands an invaluable ministry tool."

H. B. LONDON JR.
VICE PRESIDENT
CHURCH & CLERGY
FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

Why Would We Give Up a Worship Service to Take a Test?

FIRST, THE CRA IS NOT A TEST. Instead, it's an enrichment and growth experience. By merely taking the CRA, people are enriched as they reflect on and respond to the questions. It's valuable for people to reflect on things that you preach about week in and week out. How do these messages translate into real life: how they handle their emotions, how they forgive, how they deal with conflict and how they do friendships, marriage and family? There is tremendous power in thinking about to what degree the things I hear from the pulpit are actually being applied in my daily life.

Second, you can use this assessment to help your people turn knowledge into action through follow-up messages and programming. God can use the increased awareness to take the next step in making the behavioral and attitudinal changes that reflect the presence of Christ in our lives.

Why Should We Take The CRA?

- The CRA identifies actual spiritual, emotional and relational needs within the church and not just the "felt" or "perceived" needs.
- It assesses strengths and growth areas—what is and isn't working.
- The results can replace hunches, guesswork, and wishful thinking with objective information.
- The CRA assures members that the church's leaders value their opinions.

- It involves the laity in the decision-making process and workings of the church. Once people become involved, they are likelier to participate in other ways.

What Will We Learn from the CRA?

The data from the confidential assessment is compiled into a 20-25 page report with charts and detailed explanations. This report highlights your church's strengths and outlines purposeful and practical strategies to address potential growth areas. The comprehensive report of your assessment results includes:

- Demographic information
- Data on how satisfied people are with specific aspects of your church
- Spiritual health and spiritual practices data
- Emotional health of your congregation
- Relational health of your worshipers
- A report on the health of your marriages and families
- Comparison of your church to a national database

Finally, the report is presented to your church leadership team in a two-hour consultation. You also have access to a CRE consultant for guidance in applying results.

"Everything CRE does reflects a strong commitment to academic excellence, intellectual integrity and meaningful spirituality."

H. NORMAN WRIGHT