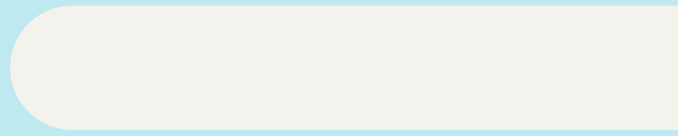


SYSTEMS

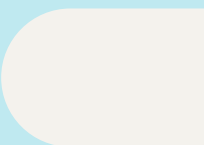


THAT TURN VISION

INTO REALITY



TONY MORGAN



SYSTEMS THAT TURN VISION INTO REALITY

Churches get stuck in areas like worship attendance, giving, discipleship, volunteers, outreach, leadership development, communications, etc.

Where are you stuck?

Churches continue to use their same systems, but they hope and pray for different results. But the only way to get **different results** is to engage **different systems**.

STEP 1: MIND THE GAP

MYTH

If we unify behind a clear vision, we will succeed.

When there's a systems gap, churches end up just "doing church." They simply do what churches have always done.

But if we want to see results in our vision, we need cast that vision effectively, and then put **systems** in place to execute it.

Vision + [Systems] + Execution = Results

"What makes people work is an idea worth working for, along with a clear understanding of what needs to be done."

- Michael Gerber

It's a common misconception that because we are churches, not organizations, we don't need systems. We can just hope and pray and wait for God to do the rest.

But there are countless examples of Biblical precedent for God deploying systems for his purpose:

- God gave Noah a system for building the ark (*Genesis 6*)
- Jethro gave Moses a system for leadership structure (*Exodus 18*)
- Joseph deployed a system to prepare for the famine (*Genesis 41*)
- Nehemiah had a system for rebuilding the wall (*Nehemiah 4*)
- Jesus used a system when he sent out the 12 apostles (*Matthew 10*)
- Jesus sent out the 72 other disciples in teams of two (*Luke 10*)
- Paul's direction to Titus to appoint elders in every town in Crete (*Titus 1:5*)

“For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.”

(1 Corinthians 14:33)

In order to be healthy and effective, churches (like every other organization) need purpose, strategies, structure, systems, and metrics.

KEY THOUGHT

Systems without purpose will keep people busy. Purpose without systems will keep people guessing.

TEAM DISCUSSION:

- Do we have real systems in place for accomplishing our vision and disciplining our people, or do we just hope and pray for the best?
- Do we have metrics in place to measure the effectiveness of our existing systems?
- What systems are we missing?

[illegible]

STEP 2: SHIFT BEHAVIORS

MYTH

We can change behaviors by teaching more.

It might feel uncomfortable or insincere to think about putting systems behind your discipleship process. But in the context of your church, a healthy system is “a simple, replicable process to help people move from where they are to where God wants them to be.”

Instead of thinking in terms of systems, we typically over-rely on teaching as a form of discipleship and vision-casting.

The Typical Church Funnel:

Sermon > Promote > Event > Teach > Act

Teaching is a good thing. Jesus did it, and crowds of thousands followed Him! But he interacted with His disciples differently.

Truly following Jesus is about more than just hearing sermons once a week. Because while teaching has the potential to shift someone's **thinking**, systems and disciplines have the potential to shift someone's **behaviors**.

KEY THOUGHT

Your message has the potential to shift thinking. Your systems have the potential to shift behaviors.

TEAM DISCUSSION:

- Where do we tend to lean on teaching and events in an attempt to produce life change? What systems do we need instead?

STEP 3: PRODUCE RESULTS

MYTH

All systems are created equal.

Can you name some characteristics of a good system versus a bad system?

For example: a good system is simple and clear, while a bad system is confusing and overcomplicated.

One key characteristic of a good system is that it empowers people to take ownership and action.

*Without systems, someone must tell us what to do.
With systems, we are empowered to make it happen.*

"The more people who lie awake in bed thinking about your idea, the better. But people only obsess about ideas when they feel a sense of ownership."

- Scott Branson, Making Ideas Happen

If you want to implement a system that sticks, the senior leadership of the church must empower and champion the system. There must be accountability for the use of the system and the results it produces, but the leadership needs to trust their team enough to carry out the system and make it their own.

An effective system will:

1) Remove barriers. An effective system should make the next step clear, rather than providing competing options.

2) Equip. Rather than focusing on teaching head knowledge, provide practical tools and resources.

3) Improve over time. We can't wait until a system is perfect to launch it, but we should be continually analyzing and testing it.

4) Be measurable. Effective systems are measured by their results and outcomes, not their inputs.

KEY THOUGHT

Good people using bad systems will never produce good results. Average people using good systems can produce great results.

TEAM DISCUSSION:

- What other characteristics of an effective system would we add to the list?
- Do the current systems we have in place contain the four characteristics of an effective system?

[illegible]

CONCLUSION: KEY QUESTIONS

- Where are we stuck?
- Where have we failed to mind the systems gap?
- Where are we leaning on teaching and events to produce life change?
- What simple, replicable systems could we test-drive to shift behaviors and produce results?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Need an outside set of eyes to help your church determine where you have systems and strategies gaps and facilitate next steps?

We help churches get unstuck. Over the last 10 years, we've helped 500+ churches clarify the vision (where they believe God's called them to go) and their strategies (how they are going to get there). We can help you navigate the future of your church leadership.

Our team would love to help you navigate your next steps.

Let's talk.

ABOUT TONY MORGAN



Tony was the Founder and Lead Strategist of The Unstuck Group. Started in 2009, The Unstuck Group has served 700 churches throughout the United States and several countries around the world. Previously, Tony served on the senior leadership teams of three rapidly growing churches including NewSpring Church in South Carolina. He has five published books, including The Unstuck Church, and, with Amy Anderson, he hosted the The Unstuck Church Podcast which has thousands of listeners each month. Tony passed away in 2024, leaving behind a legacy of thought leadership, innovation, and a deep commitment to helping churches thrive.

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