

The Spiritual Journey of Your Ministry Retreat

What This Retreat is About:

- This retreat builds on the foundation of the principles described in the *Healing the Heart of Your Church* seminar. The overarching goal of the retreat is to hear what the Lord of your ministry has been and is saying to you corporately. If the participants are honest with themselves and with each other, and use their spiritual gifts under the Holy Spirit's leadership, you will achieve that goal. You will "have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying" to your ministry. This means coming prayerfully and without agendas. Jesus will use your spiritual gifts to assess your history and hear His voice, even as He spoke to Israel (and still does to us) through their history in Scripture.
- During this retreat we review the blessings, challenges and crises your ministry has faced in the various eras of its history. This will be the most difficult (but also the most exciting) work ministry leaders have ever done. There will be times of celebration, of laughter and great insight, and of mourning as Jesus' message becomes clear. It will be an unparalleled spiritual experience for all involved as long as the goal stays clear: *to hear what the Lord has been saying to your ministry and take whatever corrective action He requires.*
- We do not enter this process to highlight the ministry's problems or dig up dirt *but to hear from the Lord* and take whatever corrective action He requires. You seek His face for His word to your congregation or constituency. Jesus is more than willing to speak to you; the Holy Spirit facilitates this outcome; and God the Father waits to bless you, your leaders and your people if they courageously deal with the matters He addresses.
- *Hearing* from the Lord is a prerequisite to *healing* from the Lord. Corporate healing results from leaders responding to what He tells you. The extent and speed of your healing directly relates to the degree and the depth of the participants' obedience to the counsel He gives.
- Who should come to the retreat? The more people involved in the process, the more that get to hear Jesus' voice and see God's remarkable work. Minimally, your leadership (elders, deacons, trustees, staff, etc.) *and their spouses* need to be there to have the spiritual authority to remedy anything that Christ reveals. We particularly think it is crucial that spouses of leaders participate. They often carry terrible pain/wounds and have little or no voice. They also have a unique witness to the pain in the ministry.
- Encourage others not in leadership (but who are influencers) and old-timers to attend. Past lay leaders are also important because of their perspective on the history. Ask potential/upcoming young leaders; they will learn about the ministry and its history, as well as watch the wondrous way God made ministry to work. They will hear what He wants the church to be—powerful lessons in spiritual leadership. (Refer to page 58 in *Healing the Heart of Your Church* for additional insight as to who should attend.)

What about logistics?

- The retreat typically takes a Friday night and all day Saturday. When the history of the church is especially long, more time may be required. You will need to do significant historical research prior to

the retreat. Be prepared to research attendance records, interview those who know the church's history and review old board minutes.

- You can meet onsite in your facility; however, we encourage meeting *away* from your facility because it minimizes distractions. Ask a nearby ministry to loan you their fellowship hall for the Friday night and Saturday.
- You will need:
 - large, newsprint-size sheets of paper (they sell this with adhesive backing at most office supply stores.)
 - an easel on which to put and hold the paper while it is being written on.
 - a podium for the facilitator
 - a padded stool for the facilitator
 - four new broad-tip markers in basic colors that will be visible from the back of a room.
 - wall space on which to mount the paper with the information you have shared (and masking tape if the paper does not have adhesive).
 - a bucket of a rocks/stones (golf ball-sized or larger), one for each participant.
 - a nice over-stuffed chair for in front (this will be Jesus' chair).
- Comfortable surroundings (no metal chairs—they *must* be padded), refreshments for breaks, lunch provided (often pizza) on Saturday, and perhaps an optional dinner if things run long. Tables are optional, but round ones are preferred. Most can hold things in their laps.