



Trends & Forces Facing the Church in 2018 & Beyond

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Happy New Year faithful E-News readers. I hope you all had a wonderful holiday and are looking forward to all that 2018 might bring as we work together to obey Jesus and seek His kingdom.

This edition of E-News will be a bit different in that it's going to require you to do some extra homework. This week I came across three different pieces online that I found thought provoking and insightful. I'm sharing the links below and hope that you'll do the same.



I think more and more of us are waking up to the reality that we're living in a time of great upheaval and change within our North American context. For those of us in the United States, we're living through an enormous shift and entering a post-Christian era. We don't need to live in fear! Jesus' Church is going to be just fine, His kingdom is going to continue to advance, and we don't need to play "Chicken Little" as if the sky is falling or the last Christian has exited the building.

But, we do need to come to grips with the fact that our world is rapidly changing and that these changes have enormous implications for the Church in North America. Rather than fear this moment or pine away for the good old days, I'm hopeful that God is at work to redeem this moment and bring His people to repentance and a greater effectiveness in His redemptive plan in our world.

Below I'm sharing three different articles that deal with the Church in 2018 and beyond. I encourage you to take a few moments and read them (and for those of you who pass this E-News along to others in printed form – please print out the 3 articles and pass those along too). My hope would be that these are the kinds of things leadership teams, church councils and elder boards are wrestling with as they look to the future and prepare for how God wants to use them in His redemptive work.

I certainly don't agree with everything here, but much of what is shared resonates with me and what I'm observing across the CGGC and our larger culture. How do we position ourselves for faithful and fruitful ministry for the world we live in now and the future that is unfolding and emerging?

I'm really interested in your take on these three articles:

What resonates with you?

What are you seeing that isn't on the lists?

How is your church leaning into the future and addressing some of the issues each of these authors raise as they look at trends and forces facing the church in 2018 and beyond?

Here are the three articles and links to them. I look forward to hearing your thoughts and reactions.

Recalibrate: 10 Steps Every Church Must Take This Year, Or Be Dead In A Decade

Everything but Jesus and the Bible must be on the table by Karl Vaters

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/karl-vaters/2018/january/recalibrate-10-steps-church-this-year-dead-decade.html?paging=off>.

If you haven't discovered Karl Vaters, I would encourage you to become familiar with him in 2018 (the ARC hosted him for a day of learning this past fall). Karl is pastor of Cornerstone Christian Fellowship in Fountain Valley, California. He writes about the value and needs of small churches at [Pivot](#) and is the founder of [NewSmallChurch.com](#), a blog encourages, connects, and equips innovative small church pastors. He is also the author of *The Grasshopper Myth*.

Ten Trends that Will Shape the Church in 2018 by Thom Rainer

<http://visionroom.com/ten-trends-will-shape-church-2018/>. Thom Rainer is the president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. His latest book, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church*, was released in 2014 by B&H Publishing Group.

7 Disruptive Church Trends That Will Rule 2018 by [Carey Nieuwhof](#)

<https://careynieuwhof.com/7-disruptive-church-trends-that-will-rule-2018/>. Founding pastor of multi-site Connexus Community Church near Toronto, Carey Nieuwhof is a popular speaker on church leadership, change, and parenting, and the co-author of *Parenting Beyond Your Capacity*.

Have a great week and stay warm!

Christ's Peace,

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