

Intentional Sunsets Bring Beautiful Sunrises: How to Lead Healthy Change in Your Church

Remember when the University of Alabama Birmingham football program was dissolved? A video of player's reactions was definitely NSFW! Although the original announcement was not in the clip, based on the player response filmed... their own important, personal and emotional decisions to play ball at UAB felt overlooked and thrown to the side because "the numbers do not work."

Immediately I recognized the passion and fervor (and honestly, some of the language) often seen and heard from church members after being told they were losing a very important, always personal and often emotional part of their church identity through changes like:

- *A staff member transition.*
- *A worship style change.*
- *A Sunday school model abandoned.*
- *A children's program discontinued.*
- *A building left empty in relocation.*

Every instance held arguably "right" reasons...

Yet right reasons rarely make emotional changes feel right.

Our church culture, with a social-media connected visibility of great ideas, fuels the desire in leaders to love sunrises. We are guilty of emphasizing the starting of new initiatives, while forgetting the importance of celebrating the impact of aging strategies through healthy sunsets.

After all, transition is inevitable in the church...

- *Ministry programs fail to meet once-felt needs and lose effectiveness.*
- *Worship styles change and respond to artistic gifts of emerging worship leaders.*
- *Staff will retire, move to another church or worse yet, lose their authority to lead.*
- *Altars and "sacred spaces" will eventually repainted, re-carpeted or replaced.*

HOW we communicate change is as important as why we are making the change to begin with. Most often, our rationale is rarely relatable in the context of high personal investment. Effective church leaders tell stories of Gospel impact and Christ-centered transformation, while pointing ahead to the next sunrise God is preparing.

Celebrating change with an intentional sunset builds anticipation toward the beautiful sunrise to come.

How can you lead the next change at your church with an intentional sunset?

> [Read more from Bryan.](#)