IS YOUR CHURCH PREPARED?

Seven Questions to Help You Evaluate Your Church's Readiness for Costly Faithfulness

B. DAVID MOBILE

FAITHFUL WITNESS PRESS

Is Your Church Prepared? Seven Questions to Help You Evaluate Your Church's Readiness for Costly Faithfulness

Copyright © 2026 B. David Mobile. All rights reserved.

This assessment is provided free of charge for personal and local church use. It may be printed and shared within your congregation. It may not be sold, altered, or republished without written permission from the author.

Unless otherwise indicated, biblical passages are summarized or paraphrased rather than quoted from a specific translation. Readers are encouraged to consult the cited passages directly in their preferred translation.

A companion to *Standing Firm in the Coming Storm: How Future Hope Shapes Faithfulness.*

INTRODUCTION

Preparing Before Faithfulness Becomes Costly

Every pastor eventually faces a serious question: What will happen to the people in your care when following Christ begins to cost them something?

A congregation may know Scripture and affirm sound doctrine while still being unprepared for pressure. Believers may understand what they believe yet struggle when obedience threatens comfort, relationships, reputation, or security.

Preparation must involve more than anticipating difficult circumstances. Christians need to know whom they belong to. They need habits of obedience before pressure comes. They need the church, sound doctrine, courage to bear witness, resurrection hope, and grace to keep going when faithfulness becomes difficult.

Christ's return gives this preparation its direction. The New Testament repeatedly connects His appearing with holiness, endurance, watchfulness, courage, and hope. Christians prepare for the future by learning to live faithfully under the lordship of Christ now.

This assessment is designed to help pastors and other mature believers consider whether that kind of formation is taking place in the life of the church.

INTRODUCTION

Eschatology and the Christian Life

Eschatology is the biblical doctrine of God's completion of His redemptive purposes. It includes Christ's return, the resurrection of the dead, final judgment, and the renewal of creation.

Scripture teaches these truths because the future God has promised should shape the way His people live now.

This relationship may be described as *eschatological sanctification*: the Holy Spirit's work of shaping present holiness as believers live in expectation of Christ's return.

This is not a separate kind of sanctification. It describes one way future hope strengthens present faithfulness.

Faithful Christians may disagree about the timing of some future events. Those disagreements should be handled carefully and biblically. The church's confidence rests in Christ Himself. He will return and complete the work He has promised.

WHY THIS ASSESSMENT MATTERS

A Pastoral Diagnostic

Many churches teach believers how to live faithfully during ordinary seasons. Fewer intentionally prepare them for a time when obedience may bring real loss.

A congregation may affirm biblical authority while remaining unprepared for the consequences of obeying it. Believers may know doctrine while lacking the formation and relationships needed when pressure rises.

This assessment is meant to encourage prayerful examination rather than criticism.

The seven questions consider whether the church is helping believers grow in:

1. Allegiance to the returning Christ
2. Formation for obedience
3. Belonging to Christ and His people
4. Guarding the truth
5. Obedience and gospel witness
6. Resurrection and new-creation hope
7. Faithful perseverance by God's grace

The assessment will not answer every question or provide a complete ministry program. It is designed to identify strengths worth preserving and areas that deserve greater attention.

HOW TO USE THIS ASSESSMENT

Simple, Prayerful, Honest

Each question includes eight statements about the teaching and life of the local church.

Rate each statement from 1 to 4:

1. Rarely true
2. Sometimes true
3. Usually true
4. Clearly and consistently true

Add the eight ratings at the end of each question and record the section total. Each section has a possible score of 8–32.

The purpose is not to produce a final verdict on a church. The scores are intended to identify strengths and areas that deserve prayerful attention.

If you do not know whether a statement is true, do not guess. Discuss it with another mature believer or church leader before assigning a rating.

When several people complete the assessment, compare section scores and discuss why perceptions differ. Those differences may reveal gaps in communication or areas that need closer attention.

COMPLETED BY _____ ROLE _____

CHURCH _____ DATE _____

QUESTION 1 · ALLEGIANCE TO THE RETURNING CHRIST

Is Your Church Preparing Believers to Live in Allegiance to the Returning Christ?

Christians do not simply wait for Christ to return. They belong to Him now.

Scripture presents Jesus as the risen and reigning Lord whose Kingdom will be fully revealed when He comes. That future hope is meant to shape present obedience. A church can teach about Christ's return accurately and still leave believers unprepared if those truths are not connected to the way they live.

Allegiance becomes especially important when obedience carries a cost. Following Christ may affect reputation, relationships, livelihood, or safety. Believers need more than information about future events. They need a settled confidence that Christ is worthy of obedience whatever faithfulness may require.

Teaching about prophecy should keep the focus on Christ and Scripture. Speculation, fear, and confident claims about current events can distract believers from the faithfulness Christ requires now.

The question is whether the church is preparing believers whose allegiance to Christ remains firm when obedience becomes costly.

QUESTION 1 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

1	Our church teaches clearly that Jesus Christ will return.	1	2	3	4
2	Teaching about Christ's return is connected to present holiness and faithful obedience.	1	2	3	4
3	Members understand that following Christ may bring rejection, loss, or opposition.	1	2	3	4
4	The promises of God are taught without concealing the cost of following Christ.	1	2	3	4

QUESTION 1 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

5	Believers are encouraged to consider what they may be unwilling to lose for Christ.	1	2	3	4
6	Our church teaches that obedience to Christ comes before reputation, livelihood, or safety.	1	2	3	4
7	Teaching about Christ's return helps believers evaluate present priorities in light of His Kingdom.	1	2	3	4
8	Our church prepares believers to trust and obey Christ whether He delivers them from suffering or sustains them through it.	1	2	3	4

ADD ALL 8 RATINGS

SECTION TOTAL _____ / 32

QUESTION 2 · FORMED BY THE SPIRIT FOR OBEDIENCE

Is Your Church Forming Believers for Obedience Before Pressure Comes?

Faithfulness under pressure is rarely formed when the pressure arrives. The habits and convictions already present in a believer's life matter.

The Spirit forms believers over time through Scripture and prayer. Worship, repentance, and ordinary obedience are also part of that work. These practices do not produce strength on their own. Believers grow as they depend on the Holy Spirit and respond to God's grace with obedience.

A church must do more than warn believers that difficult days may come. It should help them know Scripture and depend on Christ. Believers also need to confront compromise and practice obedience before their convictions are severely tested.

The question is whether the church is helping believers become people who know how to turn to Christ and obey Him when faithfulness becomes difficult.

QUESTION 2 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

1	Our church teaches that preparation for costly faithfulness begins before a crisis.	1	2	3	4
2	Members are regularly encouraged to know and obey Scripture.	1	2	3	4
3	Prayer is taught as dependence on God rather than mainly as a way to seek relief.	1	2	3	4
4	Worship directs believers toward the character, authority, and promises of God.	1	2	3	4

QUESTION 2 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

5	Christians are encouraged to address fear, compromise, and delayed obedience before pressure rises.	1	2	3	4
6	Spiritual disciplines are presented as means God uses, not as sources of strength apart from the Holy Spirit.	1	2	3	4
7	Members are taught that ordinary acts of obedience prepare them for greater tests.	1	2	3	4
8	Believers are encouraged to repent quickly when compromise or disobedience is exposed.	1	2	3	4

ADD ALL 8 RATINGS

SECTION TOTAL _____ / 32

Is Your Church Forming Believers to Belong to Christ and His People?

Christians are not meant to endure pressure alone. God places believers in the life of the church so they can strengthen one another and remain faithful together.

Strong relationships matter before a crisis begins. A congregation may gather regularly and still leave people isolated when suffering comes. Believers need relationships deep enough to recognize when someone is struggling or beginning to withdraw.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper remind the church who it belongs to. Baptism marks belonging to Christ and His people. The Lord's Supper gathers believers around Christ's death and His promised return. These practices reinforce a shared identity that becomes especially important when pressure rises.

The question is whether the church is forming believers who know they belong to Christ and to one another.

QUESTION 3 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

1	Members of our church know one another well enough to recognize when someone is suffering or withdrawing.	1	2	3	4
2	Believers are encouraged to share burdens before isolation takes root.	1	2	3	4
3	Our church provides practical care when faithfulness leads to financial or relational loss.	1	2	3	4
4	Christians can admit fear or weakness without being treated as spiritually immature.	1	2	3	4

QUESTION 3 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

5	Trusted believers are prepared to offer biblical encouragement and wise counsel.	1	2	3	4
6	Church leaders help members build relationships that can continue under pressure or disruption.	1	2	3	4
7	Baptism is taught as a visible expression of belonging to Christ and His people.	1	2	3	4
8	The Lord's Supper reminds the church of its shared life in Christ and its hope in His return.	1	2	3	4

ADD ALL 8 RATINGS

SECTION TOTAL _____ / 32

QUESTION 4 · GUARDING THE TRUTH

Is Your Church Prepared to Guard the Truth?

Churches must guard biblical truth. They must also correct error in a way that reflects the character of Christ.

Doctrinal drift often begins quietly. A difficult teaching is softened. An important term is redefined. A clear passage is treated as though its meaning cannot be known. Small compromises can eventually reshape what a church believes.

Scripture calls the church to contend for the faith and to hold fast to sound teaching. It also calls leaders to correct with patience and gentleness. Faithfulness requires both conviction and humility.

A church can avoid necessary correction because leaders fear conflict. It can also become suspicious and treat every disagreement as a threat. Not every disagreement carries the same weight. Some doctrines must be defended clearly, while other questions allow room for faithful Christians to disagree.

The question is whether Scripture truly governs what the church believes and how it responds when truth is challenged.

QUESTION 4 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

1	Our church teaches that biblical truth must be guarded.	1	2	3	4
2	Leaders explain why important doctrines matter rather than assuming members already understand.	1	2	3	4
3	Serious error is addressed instead of ignored to preserve outward peace.	1	2	3	4
4	Secondary disagreements are not treated as tests of salvation.	1	2	3	4

QUESTION 4 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

5	Correction is offered with patience and humility.	1	2	3	4
6	Members are encouraged to test all teaching by Scripture, even when it comes from trusted leaders or long-held traditions.	1	2	3	4
7	Church leaders are willing to acknowledge mistakes and correct them publicly when necessary.	1	2	3	4
8	Our church works to preserve doctrinal faithfulness and Christian unity.	1	2	3	4

ADD ALL 8 RATINGS

SECTION TOTAL _____ / 32

Is Your Church Preparing Believers to Obey Christ and Proclaim His Gospel Under Pressure?

Pressure can make obedience more difficult. It can also make silence feel safer.

Christ calls His people to remain faithful in both conduct and witness. Believers need to know how to obey Him when cultural expectations conflict with Scripture. They also need courage to speak about Christ when doing so may bring criticism or loss.

Faithful witness does not require harshness. Christians should speak with courage and gentleness. Fear should not determine whether the gospel is spoken.

A church may protect its reputation or stability by avoiding difficult truths. It may also measure success by visible results rather than obedience. Both can weaken witness when pressure increases.

The question is whether the church is preparing believers to obey Christ and continue speaking about Him when faithfulness becomes costly.

QUESTION 5 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

1	Our church teaches believers to obey Christ when cultural pressure makes compromise easier.	1	2	3	4
2	Members are prepared to speak about Christ even when doing so may bring criticism or loss.	1	2	3	4
3	Believers are taught to respond to opposition with courage and gentleness.	1	2	3	4
4	Members are taught that faithful witness includes both Christian conduct and speaking the gospel clearly.	1	2	3	4

QUESTION 5 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

5	Members are helped to recognize when fear is keeping them silent about their faith.	1	2	3	4
6	Our church teaches that faithfulness is measured by obedience to Christ rather than immediate visible results.	1	2	3	4
7	Gospel witness continues even during difficult or unpopular seasons.	1	2	3	4
8	Believers are taught to see opposition as a possible setting for faithful witness rather than only as something to escape.	1	2	3	4

ADD ALL 8 RATINGS

SECTION TOTAL _____ / 32

QUESTION 6 · HOPE OF RESURRECTION AND NEW CREATION

Is Your Church Preparing Believers to Face Suffering and Death with Resurrection Hope?

Christian hope reaches beyond relief from present trouble. Scripture points believers toward resurrection and the new creation God has promised.

Suffering can be severe. Grief can be deep. Death remains an enemy. Yet none of these has the final word because Christ has risen and His people will be raised with Him.

Resurrection hope does not require believers to deny sorrow. It gives sorrow a future. The church should help Christians grieve honestly while holding fast to what God has promised.

The hope of the believer is not only life after death. Scripture points forward to bodily resurrection and everlasting life with God in the renewed creation.

The question is whether the church is teaching believers to face suffering and death with confidence in what Christ has promised.

QUESTION 6 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

1	Our church teaches clearly that believers will be raised bodily when Christ returns.	1	2	3	4
2	Members are taught that present suffering must be understood in light of the glory God has promised.	1	2	3	4
3	Our church teaches that believers can grieve deeply while still holding to resurrection hope.	1	2	3	4
4	Our church teaches that death is an enemy Christ will finally defeat.	1	2	3	4

QUESTION 6 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

5	Believers are taught that Christ will complete His transforming work in His people when He appears.	1	2	3	4
6	Our church teaches the hope of the new creation and everlasting life with God.	1	2	3	4
7	Pastoral care for suffering or grieving believers includes the promises of resurrection and future glory.	1	2	3	4
8	Members are taught that suffering and death cannot undo what Christ has promised to His people.	1	2	3	4

ADD ALL 8 RATINGS

SECTION TOTAL _____ / 32

Is Your Church Preparing Believers to Continue Faithfully by His Grace?

Some believers are ready for a crisis but are less prepared for a long season of pressure. Faithfulness can become harder when relief does not come and the cost continues.

Scripture calls Christians to hold fast until Christ comes. That requires more than a strong beginning. Believers may grow weary even when their convictions have not changed. Long periods of disappointment can make compromise seem easier.

The answer is not greater confidence in human resolve. God preserves His people by His grace. The Holy Spirit sustains them as they continue to trust Christ and obey Him.

Churches should prepare believers for faithful waiting. They should also help the next generation understand the convictions they may one day be called to carry forward.

The question is whether the church is preparing believers to hold fast through delay and weariness until Christ comes.

QUESTION 7 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

1	Our church teaches believers to remain faithful when pressure continues longer than expected.	1	2	3	4
2	Members understand that endurance may require patience through delay and disappointment.	1	2	3	4
3	Believers are taught to remain watchful without becoming fearful or preoccupied with speculation.	1	2	3	4
4	Our church prepares believers for the weariness that can come after a long period of faithful obedience.	1	2	3	4

QUESTION 7 · ASSESSMENT

Consider Your Church

Rate each statement from 1 to 4.

1 Rarely true **2** Sometimes true **3** Usually true **4** Clearly and consistently true

5	Members are taught to depend on God's sustaining grace rather than their own determination.	1	2	3	4
6	Believers are helped to recognize when exhaustion is making compromise seem reasonable.	1	2	3	4
7	Our church prepares younger believers to understand and carry forward the convictions of the faith.	1	2	3	4
8	Hope in Christ's return strengthens believers to hold fast until He comes.	1	2	3	4

ADD ALL 8 RATINGS

SECTION TOTAL _____ / 32

ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Church Readiness Summary

Transfer the section total from each question to the chart below.

QUESTION	AREA OF READINESS	SECTION SCORE
1	Allegiance to the Returning Christ	_____ / 32
2	Formed by the Spirit for Obedience	_____ / 32
3	Belonging to Christ and His People	_____ / 32
4	Guarding the Truth	_____ / 32
5	Obeying Christ and Proclaiming His Gospel	_____ / 32
6	Hope of Resurrection and New Creation	_____ / 32
7	Continuing Faithfully by His Grace	_____ / 32
	TOTAL SCORE	_____ / 224

UNDERSTANDING THE SCORES

What the Section Scores May Indicate

27–32	A clear strength to maintain and develop
21–26	A developing strength that needs greater consistency
15–20	An area that needs deliberate attention
8–14	A significant weakness that should not be ignored

The individual section scores are more useful than the total score alone. A church may show strength in several areas while remaining vulnerable in one area that deserves attention.

Do not use the score to label a church as simply prepared or unprepared. These score ranges are pastoral guides for discussion, not scientifically validated measures of congregational health.

Use them to identify where the congregation is strong and where faithful attention is needed.

CONCLUSION

What Should Your Church Do Next?

This assessment is not a verdict on your church. It is an invitation to consider where the congregation is strong and where greater attention may be needed.

Some churches may already show strength in several of these areas. Others may discover that important parts of Christian formation have been assumed rather than intentionally developed.

Recognizing a weakness is an important first step. The next step is prayer, honest discussion, and careful attention to Scripture.

Pastors and leaders should consider where believers need greater help. That may involve allegiance to Christ, spiritual formation, life together as the church, guarding truth, gospel witness, resurrection hope, or perseverance through prolonged pressure.

No church will score perfectly. Readiness does not come from one sermon, class, or program. It develops as believers are formed by the Spirit and learn to remain faithful to Christ over time.

Use the results as a starting point for discussion with pastors, elders, ministry leaders, teachers, and mature believers. Resist the temptation to turn the assessment into criticism. Its purpose is to help the church become more faithful.

The church does not need to fear the future. Christ remains faithful to His people. He is preparing His church to remain faithful until He comes.

Preparation begins now.

GO DEEPER

Standing Firm in the Coming Storm

How Future Hope Shapes Faithfulness

This assessment is designed to help identify areas of strength and vulnerability. It cannot provide the fuller biblical and pastoral work needed to prepare a church for costly faithfulness.

THE BOOK

Standing Firm in the Coming Storm develops the biblical and theological framework behind these seven areas and shows how hope in Christ's return should shape present faithfulness.

THE WORKBOOK

The *Standing Firm Workbook* helps believers work through these truths more personally and intentionally.

THE LEADER GUIDE

The Leader Guide helps pastors and church leaders use the material with groups and within the life of the church.



faithfulwitnesspress.com