

COUNTING THE COST



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Before you hire an architect or builder, you must first understand two often overlooked keys: first, what you can afford to build, and secondly, how you will pay for it. If these keys are neglected, the church will likely lose money and time and end up frustrated and defeated. You need to get help in developing a budget within your church's safe affordability level and a financial strategy on how to pay for a building project. Jesus tells us in Scripture to count the cost before we build. Jesus tells us in this parable in Luke 14 that it is not wrong to build but foolish when done haphazardly.

How can we effectively count the cost? Let me suggest three things.

1. First, determine what needs to be built.

Is it a tower that needs to be built? Or is it another type of structure? Is the Family Life Center really the next building that needs to be built? Or is there a looming educational need on the horizon? You must take a good look at where you are today and where you could possibly be in the next 5 to years. This information will be valuable in determining the proper building to be built. Your ministry facilities must maintain balance.

2. Secondly, determine your safe affordability level.

I have visited with many Pastors who have in their office closet architectural plans, costing thousands upon thousands of dollars, for buildings that will never be built. Why will they not be built? Because the buildings planned are out of the financial reach of the church. They wanted more than they could afford to build. The end result; wasted money. Always take a good hard and honest look at your financial house.

3. Thirdly, once you've established the first two, determine the appropriate project scope.

If the vision is bigger than your affordability level, you will need to develop a phased building plan and build what you can afford. As God gives the increase, you can then move into the next phase. Don't feel that you need to build the whole vision at once. God's vision for Israel was for all of the Promised Land, but He let them take control over the land only as they could manage it. (Deut. 7:22)

