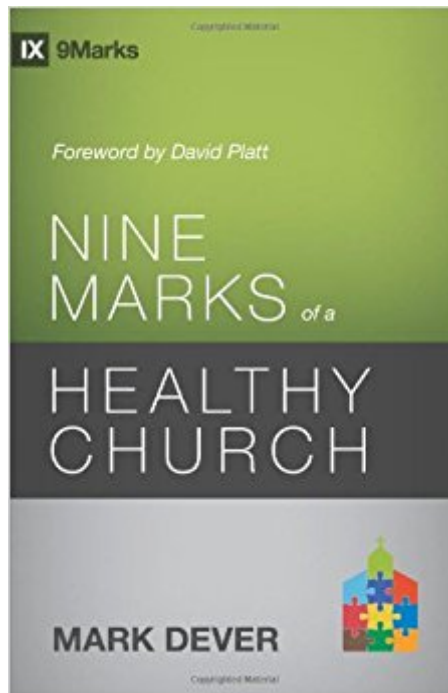


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Nine Marks Of A Healthy Church (3rd Edition) (9Marks)



Synopsis

You may have read books on this topic before—but not like this one. Instead of an instruction manual for church growth, this classic text offers tried and true principles for assessing the health of your church. Whether you're a pastor, a leader, or an involved member of your congregation, studying the nine marks of a healthy church will help you cultivate new life and well-being within your own church for God's glory. This classic guide has been recently revised to include a new foreword as well as updated content, illustrations, and appendices.

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Customer Reviews

"If you are a Christian leader, be careful of the work you are now holding in your hand: it may change your life and ministry."—D. A. Carson, Research Professor of New Testament, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
"This is a foundational work which I highly recommend."—John MacArthur, Pastor, Grace Community Church, Sun Valley, California
"I want God's word about the church. I turn with hope and confidence to Mark Dever's radically biblical commitment. Few people today have thought more or better about what makes a church biblical and healthy."—John Piper, Founder, desiringGod.org; Chancellor, Bethlehem College and Seminary
"This is the best book I have read on this topic of critical importance."—C. J. Mahaney, Senior Pastor, Sovereign Grace Church of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky
"Nine Marks of a Healthy Church is required reading for my students in ecclesiology."—Paige Patterson, President,

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary"[This book] belongs in the hands of every faithful pastor and all those who pray for reformation in this age."—R. Albert Mohler Jr., President and Joseph Emerson Brown Professor of Christian Theology, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary"Nine Marks of a Healthy Church is a biblical prescription for faithfulness."—J. Ligon Duncan III, Chancellor and John E. Richards Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology, Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, Mississippi --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Mark Dever (PhD, Cambridge University) is the senior pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, DC, and president of 9Marks (9Marks.org). Dever has authored over a dozen books and speaks at conferences nationwide.

Because our church is currently looking for a new pastor, I decided to re-read this book, which has become a standard text on the doctrine of ecclesiology since it was originally published in 1997. Dever provides clear teaching on what a church should be, and how congregations and pastors can help to ensure that their local church is a healthy and biblically functioning body. Now is a critical time for our congregation to be reminded of (or perhaps introduced to) what God Himself says about His church and the type of men who should lead it. Dever lists and expounds upon nine "marks of a healthy church

This is an excellent book. I hope that it has wide reading by pastors, elders, deacons, church members and especially pastoral search committee members. The values and direction that leadership takes sets the course for the entire church. God has not made good practices a mystery. Are we willing to know solid theological practices and implement them?

While not the most extensive work on the subjects, it still is helpful for Christians to have a good understanding on all the marks listed in the chapters. This book provides just that. I came away from reading this book with a greater understanding of what the bible says about the church, how it's governed, what is to be the central theme of our lives as a congregational people, the Gospel. I have used this little book for several years as a valid resource, and will continue to do so Lord willing for years to come. Highly recommended for all Christians, and any who are questioning or inquiring about the Christian faith, worldview, or church.

This is a must read for anyone serious about healthy ministry. Dever has painted a clear biblical picture of what the church is intended to look like for a church culture that largely seems hell bent on its distortion. Nine Marks of a Healthy Church is an important book in a critical time for churches around the world.

A must read for Pastors and Lay church leaders. the first chapter will express every ones questions.

Being an active duty military member, my family and I are transferred to a new city every 2-3 years. The task of finding a church has always been first and foremost on our minds, realizing the importance of fellowship in the local church (Heb 10:25). The ministry of 9 Marks has been a super resource over the years. The 9 Marks website has a list of churches that profess to subscribe to the 9 Marks. I've found that it is, at least, a place to start when searching for a church home (I also check Master's seminary and Founders Ministry websites). I also do a thorough review of the doctrinal statement of the particular church and subsequently meet with the leadership. Mark Dever has done a great service to Christians by writing this book. As so many churches are embracing seeker sensitive and fad church growth models, this book is a breath of fresh air. Many churches are obsessed with making the gospel "relevant" and thus assume that relevance and response are the key. "Biblically, we must realize that the size of what our eyes see is rarely a good way to estimate the greatness of something in the eyes of God." (pg 26-27) We must recover a "sense of satisfaction in biblical faithfulness" (pg 29). Mark 1 - Expository Preaching. The Priority of the Word of God. "If you get this one right, all of the others should follow" (pg 39). "...the point of a sermon [is] the point of a particular passage of scripture." (pg 40) "The church reformed, always being reformed according to the Word of God." (pg 51) Mark 2 - Biblical Theology. "Today what people believe to be true simply what they desire to be true." (pg 58). Dever unpacks that God is a Creating God (includes His sovereign choices), a Holy God, a Faithful God, Loving God, and a Sovereign God. Mark 3 - The Gospel. It is NOT a true gospel that emphasizes God is only love, that Jesus is our friend, or that we need to live right (works salvation). Rather, it means that you and I have sinned against a holy God, and we are depraved, deserving death. Yet God redeems and reconciles us through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ on the cross. We must repent and believe this gospel to be saved (pg 91). Mark 4 - A Biblical Understanding of Conversion. We are in desperate need of God's grace. People must "...begin to sense something of the seriousness of sin." (pg 100) Change does not come through marshalling your resources, self-purification, and self realization but rather repenting and turning to the one true God through Jesus Christ (pg 102).

Danger in church today of producing false converts. Instead, we must proclaim God's word so that people are converted by the power of God (1 Peter 1:23, Acts 2:39, Acts 16:14) - pg 112-113.

Mark 5 - A Biblical Understanding of Evangelism. Fruit is not up to us. It's faithfulness, not results, that we should be concerned with (pg 135). The same ministry of evangelism will have different effects (2 Cor 2:15-16).

Mark 6 - A Biblical Understanding of Church Membership. People today have "commitment phobia" - why entangle yourself with others? You may be a burden to them; they certainly may be a burden to you. Rather, we should be ready to commit to a local Church. The Church is for believers "for those to whom God's Holy Spirit has given the new birth and who join together in covenanted community." (pg 150) Spiritual growth of Christians cannot be separated from the role of the local Church (pg 157).

Mark 7 - Biblical Church Discipline. We are to shape each other as we grow. Dever once read a church growth publication suggesting we need to "open the front doors and close the back doors." Instead, Dever suggests, "What we actually need to do is to close the front door and open the back door!" (pg 170) We must see the church as different from the world (1 Cor 5:9-10) (pg 171). We must show the falsity of professions of faith in light of their blatantly sinful lifestyle. Dever does a brief survey of the church discipline passages, such as Matthew 18. He laments that Baptists use to practice church discipline, but now fail to hold one another accountable. We must practice it for the good of the person disciplined, the good of other Christians, the church as a whole, the witness of the church, and to reflect the holiness of God (pg 188-190).

Mark 8 - A Concern for Discipleship and Growth. We should not be measuring success according the growth in numbers. Such statistics fall short of the true growth that Paul describes in verses such as 2 Cor 10:15, Eph 4:15, etc. There is growth when there is a proper estimate of your need and increasing godliness by the grace of God. Elders in his church meet with individuals in the congregation and ask: "In what particular way have you grown in your understanding of the Christian life since we last met? In what particular way, have you grown since we last met? In what particular way do you feel you need instruction? In what particular way are you disappointed in your own pursuit of holiness? How specifically can I pray for you?" Thus they try to ascertain how people are doing spiritually.

Mark 9 - Biblical Church Leadership. Biblically qualified, plurality of Church Leaders. My only minor qualm with this book is Dever's exegesis of passages as he attempts to support his version of congregationalism with elder leadership. I highly suggest Alexander Strauch's Biblical Eldership for further study on this topic. As a complement to this book, I would suggest The Master's Plan for the Church by John MacArthur Jr.

Excellent book. Actually a very excellent book.

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