

Movement or Institution

In our day, people are drawn to a movement, not an institution. People join a congregation, not a denomination. People join a family, not an organization. People join a movement, not an institution. Movements focus on people. Institutions focus on policies. Congregations develop people. Institutions develop programs.

In this time, people look for three things in a congregation: help, hope and love. They want to share and give, as well as receive and benefit. They want to help, not simply to be helped. They want to be sources of hope, not simply receivers of hope. . . .

Movements think, plan, behave, act and live in certain ways. . . . As you look through these clues, think of you and of your congregation. Which of these describes the way you think, plan, feel, dream, act, behave and live?

Movement	Institution
Relational	Functional
Informal	Formal
Relaxed	Systematic
Being	Doing
Spontaneous	Organized
Flexible	Bylaws
Loosely developed	Planned
Casual gatherings	Regular Meetings
Love	Obligation
Encouraging	Correcting
Forgiving	Duty
Sharing	Loyalty
Hope	Memory
New life	Old ways
Present	Past
Forward	Back
Grace	Law
Possibilities	Policies
Discoveries	Procedures
Yea-saying	Naysaying
At edge of resources	Conserving, holding
External, in world	Internal, in church
Mission	Maintenance
Resourcing	Retrenching
Service, serving	Survival, self-serving
Short-term mission teams	Long-term committees
Helping people discover power	Accumulating power
God's missionaries together	Caste system of laity and clergy

A movement is a matter of spirit, not size. A movement is a matter of spirit, not organization. What marks a movement is the spirit of its mission, not the details of its organization. We want just enough organization to be helpful, but not so much organization that the organization becomes harmful.

(The Future That Has Come by Dr. Kennon Callahan, pg. 13-20)