

## **LEADERSHIP LESSON # 104: SAFETY AND SECURITY**

OUTLINE BY LEE WRIGHT

We think of the church as perhaps the safest place of all (and overall, it still is). However, more recent events reveal injury, vandalism, theft, arson and even child sexual abuse. Sadly, these events have happened in small and large churches, both city and rural. So we must be diligent to protect **people**, the church and property. This lesson will focus on steps the church can take to protect the church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Protect People

The trustees or buildings and grounds committee should do a “**walk through**” of the buildings and property with the insurance agent to look for potential dangers.

1. Common problems are broken sidewalks, stairs, thresholds and loose carpet which could cause falls. Part of this task should be done at night to check for **adequate lighting** in the parking lot
2. The church should consider **limiting access** by locking some of the doors and having a main entrance.
3. Consider placing greeters in the parking lots and at the main entrances to welcome but also to note any suspicious behavior. There should be special effort to protect minors! Minors include **preschoolers, children and youth**.
4. Considering the leaders who work with minors, there should be both **proper screening** and **proper supervision**.
5. Screening would include an application, an interview, checking references and a possible criminal background check.
6. To provide proper supervision, the church should have a “**two adult rule**.” There should be at least two adult workers in each classroom with minors.
7. A **six month rule** would provide that no one would teach minors until a member of the church for six months.
8. In addition, doors should be open or have glass and Sunday School officers should be nearby.
9. Proper supervision also means a **proper ratio** of adults to minors during activities and trips. A proper ratio can be from 1 to 3 up to 1 to 7 depending on the nature of the activity and the age group.
10. In this day of custody situations and other safety concerns, the church should consider a **preschool security** system – a check-in, check-out system for them.

By incorporating a few steps, church leaders can help make the church a safe place for all age groups.

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