

## What is Natural Church Development?

**Natural Church Development** is a way of understanding church health and growth that views the church as a living organism. The focus is not on numerical growth, but on improving the health of the church, with the understanding—impressively documented by research—that when a church is sufficiently healthy, numerical growth will follow. These concepts are explained in the book [Natural Church Development](#) by Christian A. Schwarz.

The Natural Church Development survey measures the health of a local church in eight areas that have been found to be essential to healthy church growth. Developed by the Institute of Natural Church Development in Germany, this survey grows out of what was probably the most extensive study of church growth ever conducted, involving over 1000 churches in 32 countries on every continent except Antarctica. This study revealed a clear positive correlation between these eight Quality Characteristics and church growth.

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