

Men's Ministries through North Carolina Baptist Men

Igniting the Hearts of Men for Christ!

The Nine Essentials for Effective Men's Ministry

What must be included in order to have a successful, life-changing men's ministry? Although, there are many important elements, the following key ingredients are essential:

Christ-Centered

Men come together in churches for many reasons. These are often groups focused primarily on fellowship, civic interest, programs and/or church work projects. While these "men's clubs" in the church have value, they are often program driven and not a true ministry in which men are growing together in Christ and doing His will. To respond to men's true spiritual needs, a successful men's ministry must **put Christ at the center** and focus on spiritual development, giftedness and outreach.

Prayer Driven

Sid Woodruff, in "Success Strategies for Men's Ministry" (Lifeway), highlights the importance of the church's men's ministry being *founded and fueled by prayer*. The need for a men's prayer team remains constant even as other aspects of the ministry may change. From the beginning, there must be a group of men gathering regularly to pray for the needs of the church and their men's ministry. Woodruff reminds us that "Men will grow weary without the supernatural power of the Spirit of God, who grants wisdom, encouragement and power for ministry to those who call upon Him."

Led by Called, Motivated and Trained Leaders

As in any successful organization, capable leadership is essential. In spiritual leadership, men who lead must first serve. (*Mark 10:42-45*). While many godly men should take active leadership roles, the key man should be called by God and gifted by the Holy Spirit to lead the Men's Ministry. Other men gifted for leadership should head segments of the ministry. Some of these men may subsequently become Men's Ministry Director.

Open to and Culturally Relevant to All Men – Multiple Entry Points

The men's group in the church can sometimes be seen by other men of the church as one dimensional in its focus. This is often unintentional and may result from the good efforts of a small group called to a particular work. However, in order to have broad appeal to the men of the church, the ministry should be seen as (and be) broad-based in its outreach and **open to all men**. Men of the church and the surrounding community often have different backgrounds, incomes, interests and needs. The men's ministry should establish ways (e.g. small groups) to connect with and appeal to men of varying interests. Try to form special groups, activities and ministries that will help your men connect with other men like themselves. These "comfortable" **entry points** will bring new men into the ministry.

Sustained by Trusting Relationships

Sid Woodruff says that believers are not to be "lone rangers." He refers to the many "one another" passages in the Bible which tell us men need each other for encouragement, accountability and spiritual growth (*Proverbs 27:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Romans 15:14, and Hebrews 10:24*). A Christian man needs to surround himself with trusted friends, who will be honest, transparent and confidential as weaknesses, struggles and burdens are shared. Having these Christ-centered relationships are crucial to building and maintaining an effective men's ministry.

Balanced – Outreach, Spiritual Growth, Equipping and Missions

A Men's Ministry should be balanced – **Ministry to Men** and **Ministry by Men**. Rather than simply gathering men to eat, fellowship and/or do work, men should first see their role as **brothers in Christ**... repenting, worshipping, praying, learning, sharing together and helping each other grow in Christ-likeness. The men's ministry should incorporate several methods for discipling men to spiritual maturity. This may include making your monthly meetings less business and program oriented, and more focused on testimonies, teaching, praise and small group prayer. Separate men's Bible study groups should be established and encouraged. Men may also be encouraged to come together weekly in small accountability and prayer groups. These and other approaches will help fulfill Proverbs 27:17 ("As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.")

As they grow spiritually together, men will become internally motivated by the Holy Spirit to read and obey God's Word and to discover and activate their spiritual gifts to serve others. This inside-out approach builds biblical men whose changed heart convicts them to become godly husbands and fathers, and to eagerly get involved in personal evangelism and local, national and/or international missions.

In Drawing Men to God, Sid Woodruff identifies the four cornerstones of a balanced men's ministry:

Evangelize Men to Salvation and into the Church
Establish Men to Spiritual Maturity

Equip Men for Ministry
Extend Men on Missions

Active, Supportive Pastor

Often overlooked is the critical role of an active and supportive Pastor. He should feel strongly that having a successful and growing men's ministry is a key component of his ministry and to the church's growth and mission work.

The Pastor should be an active member of the men's group and serve as its Spiritual Advisor. Although he should not be totally relied on as the primary teacher and prayer leader, he should be called on at appropriate intervals to teach and guide the men spiritually. A men's ministry that lacks the full support and/or involvement by the Pastor risks being out of synch with the overall ministry of the church. Undesired misunderstandings and divisions could result.

Well Planned Meetings

As Paul recorded in 1st Corinthians, God wants order in His church. Therefore, men's meetings should not be left to chance. Yes, it is true that through prayer and seeking God's direction, the Holy Spirit will guide the men's gatherings. However, prayerful preplanning, and developing a well thought out agenda helps make meetings run smoothly and orderly, while still allowing the Holy Spirit to flow freely in gatherings.

Good Communications

We all know the value of good communications. We like to know what's going on and we feel more attached to a group if we are "up on things." Also, while we don't always admit it, men appreciate getting a flyer, a note or a phone call reminding us of a meeting or other important event.

Reach out to men who are not active in church and/or men's ministry. Provide information and encouragement to those who regularly attend the men's meetings and are active in personal ministries.

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