

Supporting Ministry To Men

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In my years of working with churches and men, there are four areas I regularly see lacking in churches regarding ministering to men. Some churches are doing some of these well, but very few are doing all of these well.

We spend a good deal of time talking about discipling men and moving them into discipling small groups, conducting Bible Study Groups, determining what men's interests are, and creating events around those interests. But we rarely speak to the administrative side of ministering to men other than the leadership team.

Some of the areas I am going to mention here may create some serious debate among members of a church. These will only be resolved when key individuals begin to understand that ministering to men is one of the most important and vital ministries in a local church body.

The following are the four areas most churches lack in their ministry to men.

Lack of Leadership – Leadership for ministering to men is taken for granted in many churches. Nominating committees often look for a single man who will agree to have his name placed on the leadership list as the Men's Ministry Director, generally for three years. When the Nominating Committee should be looking for a man who has a burden for men and a passion to speak into their lives. A man who is not looking to be replaced in three years, but one who has been called to minister to men. One who can build a leadership team around him so when God moves him on there is someone who can move into the position and continue the ministry. If a church wants to have a vibrant and effective ministry to men then they need to seek a man who is called into the position.

Lack of Promotion – Notice the picture. What is wrong? You may not be able to read the title of the three brochures on the table but they are brochures for the Youth Ministry, Women's Ministry, and the Children's Ministry. What is missing? Men's Ministry! To have an effective ministry to men the church must bring the ministry to men to the forefront just like they do with ministries that reach other people groups. By neglecting any kind of promotion of men's ministry you are saying men are not important. The leaders may not feel that way, but this is the message being conveyed. Whatever you do to promote other ministries do the same or similar to promote the Men's Ministry – put them on equal footing, at least.



Lack of Finances – One of the least budgeted ministries in the church is the men's ministry. The women's ministry will generally rival but if one is going to have a larger budget, it will be the women's. Some of the reasoning is that men are better equipped to cover the cost of events and material for various activities. Another argument is the men do not have as many events. But that is a topic for another time. Youth and children ministries generally have the largest budget of the various ministries in the church; often 12-15 times as much and the parents are still expected to pay for certain activities although the church budget may cover some of the cost. Men, however, are expected to pay 100% of the cost. Many of the men are also parents who are not only paying their way but also paying the way for the rest of the family.

We talk about ministering to men and helping them to become husbands, dads, employees, employers, community citizens, and leaders God desires. We talk about how it is for men to step up and be the men God created them to be, yet we make it harder for these men to be trained. Churches need to give strong consideration to increasing their budgets for men to help cover the cost of attending planned activities and to increase the number of events in the year – the number of events should be proportional to the size of the church. Rarely make an event free, but consider covering at least 50% of the cost – similar to the youth and children activities.

Lack of Masculine Presence – I often ask church leaders, “After men have attended your church services how would they complete this sentence? Men are _____ here.” Would they say, ‘Welcomed,’ ‘Wanted,’ ‘Needed,’ ‘Active’, or something like ‘Tolerated,’ ‘Bored’ ‘Disinterested’ ” or some other word? Though men are members of the church and many are invited to attend, often there is very little to help men feel the church is for them. Church campuses are generally decorated with a feminine mindset. Nothing wrong with that, but even in areas generally frequented only by men have a feminine décor. Think about decorating men frequented areas with men in mind. About how a man might feel if he walks into a room decorated in a masculine style to attend Bible Studies, breakfasts, etc. I know of churches who have hung tools on the walls in the men restrooms; another church hanged pictures of old cars and motorcycles, they even had a 1957 Bel-Air Bench Seat sitting in the room. Maybe take a room and turn it into a ‘man-cave’. There was one church that had taken a WWII P-31 training aircraft and hanged it in their Family Life Center. Don’t be scared to decorate areas of the church campus with the men in mind. Encourage your music leader to think of men when they are planning the music for the weekend services. Sing some manly songs, warrior songs, songs that help a man feel like a man of God worshipping the King of kings and Lord of lords. Remember men sing lower so do an occasional song in the lower registers to make it easier for men to sing.

These are areas I believe most every church can improve. We not only want to speak into men’s lives but we also want them to know they are welcomed, important, and vital to the life of the church. So take a long look and evaluate where your church may be able to improve as you develop the ministry to men as a vibrant and effective ministry.

Together in the challenge and adventure to disciple men - Mike