**Give Men What They Need In The Context Of What They Want**

[May 20, 2019](https://maninthemirror.org/2019/05/20/give-men-what-they-need-in-the-context-of-what-they-want/) in [Equipping Men Blog](https://maninthemirror.org/category/equipping-men/)

How do you reach men on the fringe of your church without being “preachy”?

One Bible teaching model is, “What do men need to do?” Man in the Mirror’s model has been, “What do men need that they are willing to do?” In other words, if a man needs to consider 20 areas, but he is only far enough along his spiritual pilgrimage to engage three of those areas, it doesn’t make sense to talk about the other seventeen. Instead, focus on the three, lead him along, then add other subjects as he grows.

Here’s a key learning principle: Most nominally committed men will be focused, at least initially, on only their felt needs – career, money, family, time management and so on. That’s okay. Talk to them about money, and show them what Jesus has to say about it. That is to say, **give men what they need in the context of what they want**.

Because our message is a message based upon the truth of Scripture we must be relevant while never compromising what is real. Francis Schaeffer said, “Each generation of the church in each setting has the responsibility of communicating the gospel in understandable terms, considering the language and thought-forms of that setting.” We must speak God’s truth to men in a language they can understand. See Paul’s sermon to the men of Athens in [Acts 17:16-34](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%2017.16-34).

For instance, if you are trying to reach men who need Christ, inviting them to a 36-week Bible Study on the spiritual disciplines is probably not the best idea. On the other hand, you can’t expect your men to grow if all you offer is sports events and barbecues.

**Some Guidelines**

When you are working with men—at any level of spiritual maturity—a good rule is: Don’t trick them! Don’t use fun-sounding activities to attract guys, and then go super spiritual with them. This is what cult de-programmers do, not men who want to reach other men for Christ.

Here are some other guidelines for activities that will attract men who need Christ and men on the fringe:

**DO**

* Have events focused on felt needs: finances, marriage, career, recreation.
* Incorporate recreation or hobbies: outdoors, sports, cars, movies, food, activities men typically enjoy doing together.
* Advertise honestly: Yes, it’s at a church. Yes, we will talk about God at some point. Yes, we will make it fun and engaging.
* Have fun.
* Make it easy and natural for men to begin to develop relationships.
* Give them the “next step”: Invite them back for something else.
* Make men want to come back.
* Think long-term, low pressure.

**DON’T**

* Rely on events focused on purely spiritual needs: prayer, fasting, etc.
* Incorporate activities that will make non-believers overly uncomfortable: singing 10 worship songs, “hellfire & brimstone” speakers, holding hands.
* Use bait and switch advertising: “Before we play basketball, we have a short 35-minute evangelistic film we’d like to show you.”
* Make men feel guilty.
* Ignore the new guy or create contrived exercises to make men talk.
* Make them have to figure out what they should do next if they are interested.
* Drive them away.
* Forget it takes a long time to make a disciple.

Most churches do a pretty good job of creating momentum by providing value for their men. In upcoming posts, we will help you make sure these activities move men closer to Christ rather than just becoming another emotionally satisfying experience.

To keep men moving spiritually, one idea makes all the difference: it is absolutely essential that in every instance we ***capture the momentum*** we create.

**The Big Idea:** Give men what they need in the context of what they want.