



Advancing Together

The Case, Strategy and Guidelines for Men's Ministry

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Introduction

What is Happening to Men?

It has been said, "So goes the family, so goes the nation." Governments have been investing billions of dollars in its future through programs that affect children outside the home; yet, the family unit is under attack and in many cases fragmented and without purpose. Statistics seem to indicate that one of the main reasons for this is a lack of proper leadership in the home. Maybe it should be said, "So goes the husband and father, so goes the family, so goes the church and so goes the nation." If the Church acts as the spiritual thermometer of a nation then it needs to turn its' attention to the condition of the family and its leadership.

The church must turn its attention to developing effective husbands and fathers. Government social programs will never be able to capture men's hearts and mentor them into becoming responsible leaders of their homes. This is the greatest opportunity and challenge facing the Church in the 21st century. Unfortunately, most churches do not know how to disciple men into productive leaders. The normal process in many churches is for a man to get saved, and be given a ministry position before he is ready. He must be trained how to lead himself and his home before he can successfully lead the church. The church has a responsibility to teach men how to be the Spiritual leaders.

The greatest need we have in America today is to reach our men.

Hugh O. Mclellan

There is an obvious need for developing men in their personal commitments to God, their family, and their church. However, studies show that only a small percentage of men will change through sharing and receiving information in a normal church service. Another group of men will never change regardless of what you try to do for them. The majority of men will make needed changes in their lives only after they have experienced intimate relationships with God and other Christian men. These same studies also have shown that the average man in the church has no or few close Christian friends with whom he can relate, share and learn. The church must provide the means by which men can learn to be men of God, turn their hearts toward God, their wives and children, their churches, and to the lost (Luke 14:25-35). We have the potential to see the greatest revival the world has ever known. God's Spirit is sweeping across this world, searching for men who are trustworthy to stand in the gap (Ez. 22:30).

Throughout history, revivals have stirred God's people. These revivals were sparked by prayer, repentance, humility, preaching of the Word, holiness, Christian service and saving the lost. These revivals, called awakenings, have brought about great spiritual and sociological change. They were pivotal in setting a direction for culture, law, education, business, ethics, and – above all – personal morality and integrity. The

church and devotion to God became paramount in the family, church and community.

The world is experiencing a revival, and a significant branch of this revival is among men. This dynamic move of God is not limited to one country; it is engulfing many nations. A fresh breath of the Holy Spirit is fueling this move, and His Spirit is being poured out on all flesh. God desires to turn the hearts of men back to Him. The result is being felt in the home, between husbands and wives and fathers and children. The Lord is giving men another chance to be men committed to Him, their families and their church.

Three Critical Questions

This resource is designed to answer three basic questions:

- "Why do I need a men's ministry?"
- "What is a men's ministry?"
- "How do I lead a men's ministry?"

The following chapters will answer and explore these three questions that are fundamental in designing an effective and vital ministry to men in the church.



The Case for Men's Ministry

As a pastor or church leader, you must be convinced that men's ministry is essential to the vitality of the church, or it will become a program destined to fall with time. So, why target men? Why is men's ministry significant to a church – to the Church?

Current Issues

Men in our society – including Christian men – are caught in a web of deception about their masculinity. Alexander Mitslerisch postulates, "Society has torn the soul of the male, and into this tear the demons have fled – the demons of insecurity, selfishness and despair. Consequently, men do not know who they are as men. Rather, they define themselves by what they do, who they know, or by what they own."

Society has torn the soul of the male, and into this tear the demons have fled.

Many men feel isolated today. Studies show that most men past the age of 30 do not have friends. They have colleagues and work buddies, golf partners, and maybe a "couple" friend or two, where the bond is really between the wives. If they say they do have a best friend, often it turns out to be an old friend whom they see or speak to once every few years.

Ninety-five percent of men are so disconnected that they have no best friend.

1996 Promise Keepers Survey

Sadly, for most men in our culture male friendship is a part of their distant past. One man spoke for many when he said



Injured Climber

"I haven't made a new friend in 25 years." Many believe this to be the result of our culture's discouraging true friendships between men in our modern society. Close friendships between two males who are not relatives are seen as suspicious and unhealthy. Society has convinced us that a relationship like Jonathan and David had in the Old Testament is impossible.

The younger generations of men present a picture even more sobering. One pastor wrote, "There are not enough fathers and role models for our boys and girls. Some single-parent females lack confidence in reaching and understanding their sons. In the streets our boys are being influenced by evil men and being raised by television to believe in a fantasy world."¹

¹ Willie Richardson, *A Plan for Getting More Men into the Church and Keeping Most of them*, Upper Darby, PA, Churches Research Development, (1997)

Current Trends

The following are current trends among men:²

- Men commit suicide at four times the rate of women.
- Men between the ages of 18 and 29 suffer alcohol dependency at three times the rate as women in the same age group.
- More than two-thirds of all alcoholics are men; 50 percent more men than women are regular users of illicit drugs.
- Men account for more than 90 percent of arrests for alcohol and drug abuse violations.
- Life expectancy for men is 10 percent shorter than for women, and the incidence of stress related illness, such as heart disease and certain cancers, remains inordinately high among men.
- More than 80 percent of the homeless are men.

Influences on men in our society

Dr. Gary Rossberg in a 1993 survey suggested the following four major pressures on a man:³

Pressure on a man

1. Career and success pressures
2. Distractions from pressure of finances
3. Relationship pressure
4. Sexual temptation pressure

Challenges facing men

1. Search for significance
2. Tendency to withdraw or to be passive
3. Desire to be in charge or to take control
4. Sexual temptation pressure

Current Needs

The Needs of Men

Identity

Men need a sense of purpose and significance. Men have been taught that success is his goal and his identity comes from what he owns (houses, cars, etc.), what he does (job, position, titles, etc.), and/or what he controls (power, money, etc.). Most men find their self-worth in their jobs, so when a man loses his job, he also loses his self-worth. God has

² Men's Ministry Leadership Seminar, (Denver: Promise Keepers, 1995_), Page 5.

³ *Vibrant Men's Ministry Resource Kit*, (Denver: Promise Keepers, 1996), page 9.

put into each man a longing to be significant, to feel that his life counts. Yet countless men feel inadequate and insecure, no matter how much talent they may possess. Men need to learn how to find their identity in Christ.

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Friendships

Most men have a lot of people they know by name and with whom they are acquainted. The conversations are light, brief, and non-threatening. For the most part men are spiritually fed, but relationally bankrupt. Regretfully, very few men have close friends in the church. Ask a group of men to identify one of the greatest needs of men today, and most of them would respond, "the need for close friends among men." The need for close, trusted relationships with other men proves to be a compelling need among most men, no matter the race or culture. Men are looking for brothers in the spiritual sense that will become real friends. In spite of what is believed about men, they are looking for other men who will encourage, exhort and love them. As these men see the love of another brother-friend, they will see hope for their own lives and someone to turn to when they need help. This is what Jesus meant when he said the world would know we are his if we love one another (John 13:34-35). Encouragement, exhortation and love kindle hope. As a mature brother, a man can become a laborer in God's Kingdom as he takes this hope to his family, his friends and his world.



Advancing Together

However, in spite of the clear biblical mandate to "love one another," men find it hard to have genuine friendships in the church. Many would like to have friends on whom they can count – brothers! In a response to this phenomenon, Pat Morley, in his book, *The Man in the Mirror*, offers a list of questions that are very helpful in defining the quality of our man-to-man relationships.⁴

1. When things go badly, to whom do you talk?
2. With whom can you be totally honest?

⁴ Patrick Morley, *Man in the Mirror* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), pages 151-152..

3. Who will listen to you?
4. From whom would you take advice?
5. When you fail, who will stand by you?
6. With whom do you face life's struggles?
7. Who is your confidant?
8. Who holds you accountable?

If a men's ministry is going to be successful, it must develop a system that will help men make lasting and significant friendships. Without this we will continue to have men who feel lonely, isolated and without hope. When building our ministry to men, we must focus primarily on relationships, not just on programs and ministry involvement (Ec. 4:9-10).

Awareness of God's Call

Men need to see themselves the way God sees them – full of potential and promise. It is the intent that each man will live an obedient and productive life in God's perfect and revealed will. Ephesians 1:3, 11 states that men were chosen for a divine purpose, *"For he chose us in him before the creation of the world... having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will..."* Every man must be taught how to identify God's purpose for his life and then trained how to fulfill that purpose at home, at church and in his world.

Discipline in Priorities and Values

The late A.W. Tozer suggested seven areas that reveal a man's values and commitments:

1. What we want most in life (our goals)
2. What we think about most of the time
3. How we spend our money
4. What we do with our leisure time
5. The people with whom we associate
6. Whom and what we admire and appreciate
7. What we laugh at

Most men have values and priorities listed in their minds, but have a difficult time living out those priorities in their daily schedule. Many would say God and family are numbers one and two, but in reality they are given inadequate time and commitment. Many men feel guilty every time they are faced with the issue of their values and priorities.

Learn How to Seek God

Men want to know God but in many cases don't know how to begin. Those that begin need help to continue. Men need someone to show them how to seek, find and hear from God. A teacher can teach the principles of prayer, Bible study and worship, but the average man learns best

through an example. That is why Jesus, after spending a night in prayer, chose twelve men to be "with him" (Mark 3:13-14). He knew that his greatest impact would come from living side by side with these men day after day. He knew that the more time he could invest in these 12 men the more they would learn from his teaching and modeling. The more they could watch him up close, the more they would be able to do what he did. Discipleship is better caught than taught. The best method of teaching men how to pray and seek God is not from behind a microphone; it is spending time with them in a personal relationship (2 Tim. 2:2).

Discipleship is better caught than taught.

A Discipling Process



Medical Clinic

Men need to know how to excel in the basics of the Christian life. It is important for each man to learn how to incorporate what he learns about the Word of God into his everyday life. Like a new-born baby must be taught by his parents how to walk, eat, read and write so that he can grow to live a productive life, so a man must also be taught the fundamentals of the Christian life. Each man must be given the tools necessary to live a Christian life. The fundamentals of excelling in Bible reading, prayer, scripture memorization, witnessing, and discipling others are the key ingredients to maturity and productive service for the Lord. These don't come by accident; there must be a concerted effort by the leaders of the church to pass them on to their men. God intends that men

develop under the helpful influence of mature behavior. Hebrews 13:7 says, *Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.*

Marriage and Family Skills

Most men have never been taught how to be godly men, husbands or fathers. If men will apply the principles taught by God's word on how to be good husbands and fathers, we will see dramatic changes in our society. Men need models of loving fathers. Many of them had poor relationships with their own fathers, resulting in deep wounds and resentments. Often these past experiences are carried over to their own families, thus continuing the cycle of poor fathering skills and resentment to the next generation.

Mentors and Mentoring

Howard and William Hendricks identify five benefits of having a mentor: ⁵

1. A mentor promotes genuine growth.
2. A mentor is a model to follow.
3. A mentor helps you efficiently reach your goals.
4. A mentor plays a key role in God's pattern for your growth.
5. A mentor benefits other people in your life.

Men need other men to help them in every area of their lives. For example, in their careers they learn the skills of their profession from others with more experience. There is no substitute for knowing and being known by other men. Every man needs another man, one he respects and who is willing to mentor him. For most men, growth and change simply won't happen apart from a relationship with someone who is important to them, who will influence his development and provide motivation and accountability. A man will take on the values, practices and priorities of the ones to whom he gives his time and attention. God always wraps his truth in a person, and this is why every Christian man needs a godly mentor (I Cor. 11:1).

Spiritual Leader at Home

Most men have given up the role of spiritual leader because of pride and embarrassment; they feel that any sudden change in their role would be viewed as hypocritical or super-spiritual. Men need to know that it's okay to repent and be humble in front of their families. Men need to set a standard of righteousness in their homes and live in moral obedience to the Bible, and they need other men to help reinforce their stand. Men need to commit like Joshua did in Joshua 24:15, *"But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."* Men must model spirituality through love and consistency in their personal behavior. Effective Spiritual leaders of the home must do what they say.

Stewardship Skills

Men need to learn how to give God the first fruits of their lives. This not only applies to finances, but to time, talent, and effort in Christian service. Men need to learn that God deserves our best; too often he gets the leftovers of our time and efforts. We give our best at work and recreation, but give little time and effort in preparation for our service to the Lord. The teaching of stewardship skills to our men will enable them sharpen their God-given gifts and talents to be used in excellence for the Lord. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, *"So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ²Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."*

⁵ Hendricks, Howard G. and William D, *As Iron Sharpens Iron,: Building Character as Mentoring Relationship*, Moody Press (Chicago: 1995). P25-31.

The Needs of Pastors

Pastors Personally Need Men's Ministry

Many pastors will hesitate to get involved in developing a men's ministry because they already have too much to do. The thought of another program simply does not appeal. However, a men's ministry is not just a program but a transformational environment built on vital relationships which will effect positive changes in the church.

Men's ministry is a transformational environment built on vital relationships that will bring positive changes in the church.

Most men are isolated relationally. They have been taught by their culture to protect themselves by keeping their relationships within certain "safe" parameters. However, the benefits of authentically connecting with other brothers in Christ far outweigh the risks.



Bridging the Gap

Pastors are as isolated as their laymen are. Research reveals that most pastors admit they do not have one good, solid friend. For a pastor, the thought of letting down his guard in favor of genuine transparency threatens his comfort zone. Many think, "If others really knew about my failures, thoughts, and struggles,

I would be disqualified from ministry." Nothing could be farther from the truth. Men need to see their pastors as normal human beings facing the same challenges they are facing every day.

God is calling men to discover their place in his purpose, and it's happening in the context of the local church. He is calling all men to pursue him. He is calling pastors to let the Holy Spirit shape, recover, and rebuild anything of his own manhood that needs to be reconditioned after the Father's design (Ephesians 1:7-14).

This is God's way to mold pastors who genuinely model biblical manhood for their men. It is foundational to the beginning of men's ministry. It is not about understanding program, process or assessing personal talents, but it is about understanding our role as individuals before God. As pastors, we inevitably multiply what is actually true of our own lives; thus, the real benefit and starting place for men's ministry is the personal process of becoming Christ-like ourselves.

Pastors Are Called to Lead Men

And these things that you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. (II Timothy 2:2)

Just as Paul exhorts the youthful Timothy to invest in men who would in turn invest in other men, so also God's eternal Word directs pastors today. Life-to-life transmission of practical truth and wisdom is a specific discipling task that requires focus and priority. At the church's beginning, the foundational pastoral task was essentially wrapped up in two phases: (1) Pour yourself out as a pastor of men, and (2) Teach those men to do the same, man to man.

**Pour yourself out
as a pastor of men.**

**Teach your men to
do the same, man
to man.**

In the midst of the present spiritual revival taking place in men, we don't want to embrace an opportunistic moment for misguided ambitions. Rather, effective leadership on any level is about hearing the call from the Word and Spirit of God and responding to his priorities in his way. Jesus Christ, the builder of men, is at work in the hearts of men, and his pastors are co-laborers with Him. As I Corinthians 3:9 says, "*For we are called God's fellow workers.*" Our labor must be in alignment with His designed plans. To do so will not only assure growth as a model of godliness, but it will also provide men with biblical patterns and priorities that lay the foundation for fruitful church life.

This call to men is a call for each one to embrace his identity and responsibility in Christ. For the local church leader, the call involves the unique privilege as well as the assignment to motivate, model, and mentor – to build other men of God who will invest in yet other men. Church leadership must answer this call, not because it is right or a claim to power or prestige, but because it is the call of God.

Men Need Models of Godly Leadership

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. (Hebrews 13:7)

It is the church leader's priority, then, to ignite a biblical passion that cultivates men who are liberated in humble worship and prayerful faith, and who are growing beyond the masculine tendency toward anger and contention.

The call for men to lead can be easily misunderstood and misapplied to the detriment of other men and women. But whatever has happened in the past, the church was never intended to tolerate or justify an agenda of male chauvinism or dominance, either intentionally or unwittingly. At the same time, its history is clear – the church has risen to serve its fullest potential only when men rise to serve others, and in turn invest in other men.



Holding the Ropes

Thus, the call to church leadership is to target ministry to men, and lead their men to a place of humility, responsibility and servanthood. The task is not easily achieved, given the mentality of the world system and its effect on us as leaders and as men. We are appointed, however, to lead a new generation of men who understand and live out the truth of biblical manhood. We must be gripped by this conviction and sensitive to the balance it demands.

The church has risen to serve its fullest potential only when men rise to serve others, and in turn invest in other men.

Church leadership leads by example, encouragement and exhortation. Leaders pour themselves into men as they open their hearts and share their own struggles. Men's ministry provides the perfect vehicle for this mentoring process.

In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life." (1 Timothy 6:19)

The Needs of the Church

Men have valuable time to invest in their local churches, but most are not churchmen, nor have they integrated the needs of the church into their life goals. They also have talents and spiritual gifts that could meet physical and spiritual needs of others both inside and outside their place of worship (1 Cor. 12). Every church leader must see the potential in men. Youths need mentors and leaders. Widows and single women need help with every day life. The poor need emergency assistance. The fatherless need substitute dads. The list is endless.

Spiritually mature men know how to discern, pray, and walk in the Spirit to minister to the needs of their church and community. When they become actively engaged in the Lord's work, their hearts will be motivated to offer their time, talents and treasures as a tangible expression of their love for God.

Current Beliefs⁶

What Unchurched Men Think About Church

George Barna reports that:

- Most unchurched men believe that involvement with a church does not offer any lasting value to their lives.
- The typical adult male is more likely to spend their Sundays watching sports on the TV than attend a church service.
- A majority of unchurched men arrive at the same answer: participation in church life is not worth the investment of time, attention and energy.

⁶ George Barna, "The Battle for the Hearts of Men," *New Man*, Vol. 4, No. 1. pages 40-44

What Do Men Say Is Wrong With the Church

1. Preaching - not practical
2. Music - boring and irrelevant
3. Management of the church - sloppy
4. Kids programs - inadequate
5. Adult Education - doesn't deal with current issues
6. Not relevant - doesn't understand the needs of today

What Unchurched Men Are Looking For In a Church

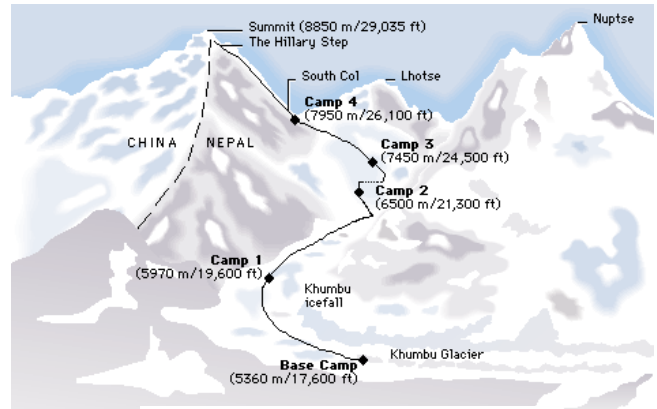
- Meaning and purpose – what is life all about
- Understanding – who they are and what they are thinking
- Solutions to – everyday problems and difficulties
- Knowing God – who God is and what He means to them
- Effective men's ministry – a ministry that touches them where they are
- Friendships – relationships that are lasting and built on trust
- Family training – for their children



The Goal

The Strategy for Men's Ministry

Men's ministry has a foundation of biblical truth and prayer and is inspired by Christ-centered worship. It has a framework of vital relationships within a masculine context and is guided by clear vision and goals. Equipped with resources and training, it facilitates the making of godly men who keep their promises and commitments. These men proactively apply their ministry gifts to influence their world for Christ by intentionally reconciling men to God and each other and by ministering to the needs of their church and community under the authority and direction of their church leadership.



The Climbing Route

Its Focus

The challenge to men's ministries is to articulate a biblically grounded and prayerful view of the world and life that can transform churches and society. When a men's ministry program is led by a group of men (under the authority of the church leadership) who seek God's Word, pray diligently, worship in spirit and truth, and respond in obedience, they will model and teach others to do the same.

Men's Small Groups

One of the best ways to infuse the Word of God into the lives of men is through small groups especially designed for men. Men's small groups provide the framework for men to be rooted in scripture, to develop prayer lives, and to worship God in spirit and truth. Not all men are ready for the relational commitment of small groups, however. Therefore, men's ministry must have a variety of entry points for building vital relationships between men.

Effective men's ministry is the process of developing relationships that become the platform for change.

Dan Schaffer

Small groups provide a framework of vital relationships within a masculine context. They promote:

- Fellowship with new people
- Discovery of spiritual gifts and ministry of the Holy Spirit
- Development of leadership
- Opportunities to share needs, frustration, and concerns
- Easy transition into the church for new people

- Development of relationships and lasting friendships
- Study of God's Word with others
- Safety for non-and cultural Christian men
- Prayer, thanksgiving, praise, and worship

A Safe Masculine Context

To create a male-friendly environment leaders must understand how men learn, relate, and communicate. The male context helps draw men out of isolation into affirming, accountable relationships with other men, so that they can genuinely open up, be honest with each other, and be free to be the men God has called them to be.

Clear Vision, Goals and Training

Men's ministry must be guided by a clear vision and goals. Vision and goals establish a clear "road map" that is easy to implement and identifies quantifiable results in quantifiable time frames.

Men's ministry must be equipped with resources and training. These resources will enable men to implement biblical principles into their lives and to keep their promises to God, their families, their friends, their work, and their community. Specific training equips leadership to participate in prayer networks and practice intentional reconciliation.

Men's ministry raises godly men who keep their commitments. It must establish the high standards of intimacy with God, accountability with other brothers in Christ, purity of heart, servant leadership, honoring of women, mentoring the next generation, commitment to church leadership and mission of the church, and unashamed witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. Men's ministry calls men to actively apply their ministry gifts to influence their world for Christ. It identifies, develops, and releases the ministry gifts of men into the ministries of the church. By doing so, it calls men out of spiritual passivity and equips them for godly influence.

And the things you heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:2)

Ministry Through Men.

Rather than adding extra responsibilities to church leadership, men's ministry trains men who in turn are equipped to train others. Men's ministry intentionally reconciles men to God and each other. It reconciles sinful men with God through the life and work of Jesus Christ, and it encourages and equips men to live in peace with each other and to reconcile their differences. It develops a group of bridge builders who are committed to stand in the gap to link the body of Christ together by

actively, lovingly and prayerfully crossing racial, cultural and denominational barriers in the church at large.

Men's ministry serves the needs of its church and community. Consequently, the lay leadership in the church is strengthened and the pastors are freed to pray, teach, and network with other pastors in the community, to identify the needs of the community, and proactively lead their men to minister to those needs.

Ministry through men frees pastors.

Its Foundation

Climbing mountains in the Himalayas involves significant risk. For example, there is the uncertainty of weather, the impact of altitude on climbers' mental and physical health, and climbers' unwavering resolve to reach the summit. While a climbing team cannot prepare for every eventuality, careful planning can smooth out many rough spots. Planning factors include: equipment, clothing, shelter, and food. All of this must be properly organized for use at the various camps on the climbing route. Failure to lay a proper foundation during the planning phase can result in wasted time and energy and result in injury to or the death of members of the team. The implications for men's ministry are obvious: Take great care in preparing to lead the spiritual expedition with your men. Lay a solid, personal foundation of prayer, worship, and time in the Word of God. Personal readiness and the vision cast by the church leadership will affect everything that follows.



Prayer

God said, "if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles. 7:14)

Jesus said in Mark 11:7, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." The Lord knew that prayer is the only answer to our daily confrontations with the enemy. Prayer must be the number one activity of men's ministry in a church. The gospels constantly show Jesus praying. He prayed among the hypocrites in the temple, in the crowds, on hillsides cluttered with disciples, in a crowded upper room, and alone on the mountains outside Jerusalem. Many times He spent whole nights praying. At the lowest point in His life, He

Prayer must be the number one activity of men's ministry in a church.

asked His disciples to spend time with Him in prayer. Prayer was more than a part of Christ's life; it was the foundation of His life.

In men's ministry, prayer must be a man's ultimate indication of trust in his heavenly Father. Prayer is not optional; it must be the first and last order of business in the life of men. The leadership of the church must embrace the daily practice of prayer. Where there is an absence of prayer, there will be an absence of power. Where prayer is practiced, there will be continual display of God's power in the lives of men.

There is no true spiritual growth apart from a devotional habit of daily prayer. Consistency in prayer is the evidence of true spiritual commitment. The first and decisive battle for men in building a foundation of prayer is the conflict, which arises when they choose to restructure their time to be alone with God each day. Once this decision is made in the mind of men, Satan will fill their paths with distracting hindrances. Job responsibilities increase, special projects arise, schedules overflow, and the men sometimes seem more weary than usual. Prayer is much more than mere theoretical power; it is a practical power. Daily systematic prayer adds health and depth to the foundation of prayer in a church. Prayer does not come naturally to men; it must be caught as well as taught. Men with very little prayer experience who pray in the presence of other men will catch the spirit of prayer, and will become great intercessors. The various principles governing prayer must be taught, and the daily practice of prayer must be nourished and cultivated if the foundation is to stand the test of time.

The Word of God

The primacy of God's Word is given for church leadership. We are students as long as we live. Our goal is to build the same hunger in men. They must grow to be comfortable in their reading, meditation, study and obedience to God's absolute truth. His Word is to be understood by all. Men must appreciate the need to include God's word in every aspect of their life.

Men should grow in their ability to relate scriptural principles to their lives.

Men must experience the fact that the Word has the answers to the deepest queries of our souls. It can be understood by all who truly seek His ways. The ideals that we embrace in a time of commitment become marks of character that impact all of our relationships only as we build each promise on the foundation of scripture. Men should grow in their ability to relate scriptural principles to their children, spouses and colleagues.

Worship

Who, how, and when a man worships determines everything about his life. That's the reason the first promise a man needs to keep is that he'll be honest with God. Honesty with the Almighty God demands attention to His ways of worship.

The first promise a man needs to keep is that he'll be honest with God.

How can a man find the path to worship that pours substance into him, strength into his life's foundations, unshakable stability into his marriage, steadfastness into his relationships, and trustworthiness into his work and business practices? Jack Hayford outlines the following timeless pattern of worship:⁷

Redeeming Worship

- Redeeming worship centers on the Lord's Table.
- Jesus, the builder of the church, commands that this be a regular practice of the church as His true worshippers (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
- The power of the redeeming blood of Christ not only saves our soul, but it is also the foundation of all redemptive, recovering, renewing works of God.

Faith-filled Worship

- We are called to gather with the people of God.
- It takes place at a certain time, in a certain place, with a certain group, for any reason.

Delivering Worship

- Delivering worship is that which frees a man from bondage, liberates his family to its greatest possibilities, and opens the way to the future without the entanglements of the past.
 - God calls a man into His divine presence (Exodus 3:1-4).
 - God calls a man to remove his shoes (Exodus 3:5).
 - God calls a man to know the Lord's heart (Exodus 3:7-8).
 - God calls a man to leadership (Exodus 3:9-10).

Purifying Worship

- Purifying worship comes from a man's waiting in the presence of God.
- It is private worship – meeting God alone.

Empowering Worship

- Empowering worship emerges from that quest for God that receptively opens to His Holy Spirit.
- Men who worship become men of spiritual power, because they are filled with Jesus.
- A life of power is maintained when a man spends time in God's presence – praising Him.



⁷ Jack Hayford, et al., *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper*. (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 1999).

It's Framework

The Biblical Model for Making Disciples

The following men's ministry strategy will help you define a men's ministry. It is not a new strategy. Jesus used this approach during His ministry on this earth. He ministered to the masses, the 500, the 120, and the 70. He also ministered in more intimate settings: twelve, three, and one-on-one. He found ways to minister to the needs of people no matter the event or the size of the group. Jesus knew how to touch people's lives in every situation and used everyday events to help them grow and mature.

Jesus modeled ministry to men.

Application of the Biblical Model for Men's Ministry

Every effective men's ministry must provide a variety of **entry points** that facilitate a man's involvement in the church. An exciting element of this strategy is that it provides **every** man an opportunity to be involved at various levels, depending on his spiritual maturity and the time he has available.

Entry points can be illustrated by a funnel. As a man progresses down the funnel he will grow in biblical knowledge and understanding and develop a greater commitment to building relationships, applying his spiritual gifts and serving others. The goal of the funnel strategy is to provide a developmental environment where a man can transfer biblical truth into action, so that he can learn to keep his commitments to Jesus Christ, his family, friends, church, community and the ends of the earth.

Ministry to Men⁸

The top portion of the funnel represents the events and experiences that make up ministry to your men. The objective of ministry to men is spiritual growth. Spiritual growth is not a linear process. Growth can be stimulated by any number of events or activities with varying degrees of spiritual emphasis. The fundamental question is: Do we have an intentional discipling strategy? In an intentional discipling strategy there should be events that *create momentum* for men's ministry. Other events

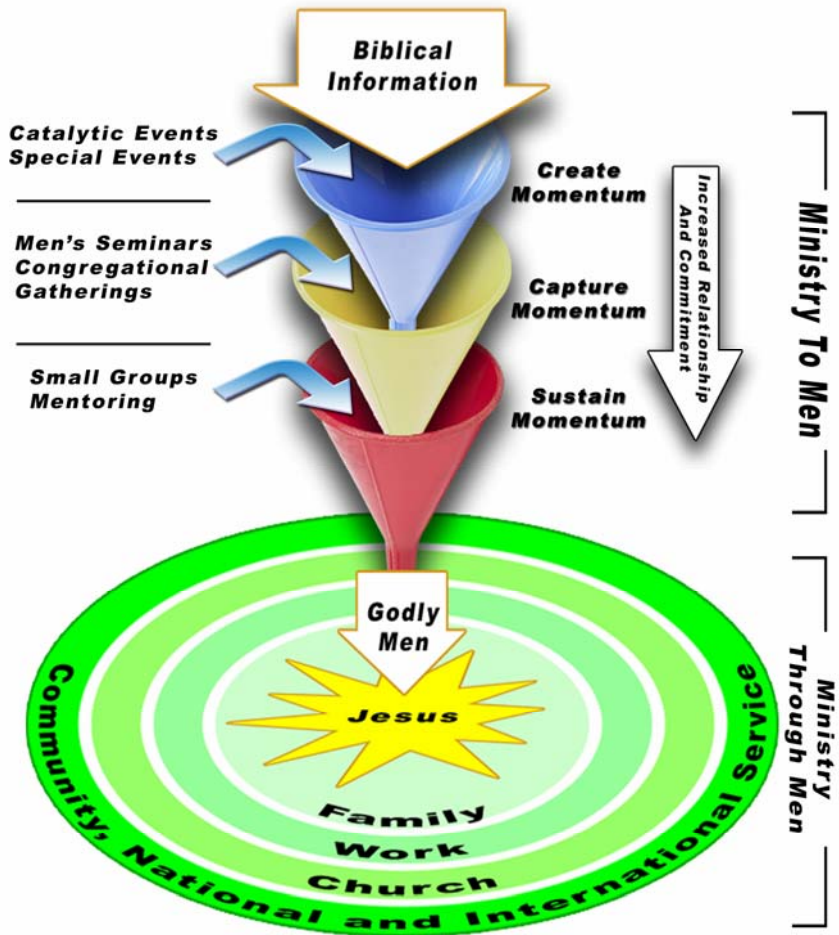
Do we have an intentional discipling strategy?

⁸ Several leaders in the men's ministry movement make a distinction between men's ministry and ministry to men. They view ministry to men as the intentional consideration of the male context in planning and conducting the ministries of the church (with the exception of women's ministries, of course). Men's ministry is, therefore, a component of ministry to men involving male-only activities and events. Ministry to men is a mind-set that leads to a male-friendly church environment. and makes it easier for men to move into discipleship. See David Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church*. (Nashville: Nelson, 2005) and Patrick Morley, David Delk and Brett Clemmer, *No Man Left Behind*, (Chicago: Moody, 2006), pages 95-108.

capture momentum – that is, engage the men and establish involvement in the fellowship. The third type of event *sustains momentum* over time. These events build on the *capturing* foundation and help men establish a commitment to the fellowship and to spiritual growth.

Within the top segment of the strategy there are a variety of events, shown in the model below, that serve as entry points where a man can enter into a meeting of men. Some of these events are designed to be larger than others. For example, a men's catalytic event will normally be much larger than men's seminars or men's small groups.

However, each event meets a particular need and can be used by men when they are ready to get involved. A successful men's ministry is based on a variety of entry points.



It's Function

Creating Momentum

There are two types of events that can be used to create momentum in men's ministry. A key principle in creating momentum is that a man will attend because other men ask him. These events begin the process for men to identify with a group of men, i.e., men doing things together.

Catalytic Events

Catalytic events are the first entry point. See Matt 5-7 and John 6:1-14 for biblical examples of catalytic events. It has been said that the wisest of men are those that recognize their need to change. In many cases men need to hear and see that they can experience a life of freedom and joy. Catalytic events are designed to capture men for growth. They require the

Catalytic events motivate men and ignite the desire to change.

least commitment of ministry resources, and do not require relational commitments from those attending.

When he came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him (Matt 8:1).

- **Focus:** These inter- and intra-church events act as catalysts to **motivate** men and **ignite** the desire to change. Examples include: Promise Keeper conferences, evangelistic crusades, denominational men's conferences, para-church men's conferences, men's retreats, etc.
- **Implications for Your Church:** As your men return from a men's catalytic event, they will often be inspired and motivated to do something for God. Some of them will have made commitments to Jesus Christ and to people in their lives. Many will want to be involved in men's ministry in your church.
- **Key Questions:** When revival happens, what will you do with all the new men? How do you plan to "channel" an influx of inspired men into your church? What men's ministry activities will your church provide to strengthen their relationships with one another and with God?



Advancing to the Base Camp

Special Events

Special Events are the second method for creating momentum. These events expose men to Christ in others. See Luke 8:22-25 for a description of a special event conducted by Jesus that impacted the life of His disciples.

Special events expose men to Christ in others.

One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out (Luke 8:22).

- **Focus:** Special events focus on non-threatening activities, allowing men to begin to become acquainted with each other. They are not necessarily Bible – toting events. Special events are organized by a local church to provide an entry point or "first step" for men on the periphery of the church or in the community. Examples could include outdoor events such as barbecues, softball games, fishing trips, basketball tournament, Super Bowl parties, men's ministry "kick off" breakfasts, etc.
- **Implications for Your Church:** Special events are a way to publicize your church's men's ministry. Guys will enjoy these activities, and they are a good place for your men to bring unchurched friends.

- *Key Questions:* Do the men know why you are doing a special event? Follow-up for special events is crucial. What further opportunities to become involved will your church offer a new man? Are your men prepared to help a new man through that process? How will you encourage your men to invite their friends and acquaintances to your men's special events? Is there a "neutral" location to hold your men's special event?

Capturing Momentum

Once momentum has been created it needs to be captured. That is, men need to be offered the opportunities for spiritual development through activities that involve fellowship and teaching. This can be achieved through men's equipping seminars and congregational gatherings. Capturing-momentum events continue the process for men to develop a closer bond with the group and to move forward with a greater degree of intentionality, and a deeper sense of purpose.

Men's Equipping Seminars

Men's seminars and training opportunities offer men time to come together for **fellowship**, biblical teaching and leadership development. See Matt 10: and 12 for an example of an equipping event.

*These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: ...
...(Matt 10:5)*

- *Focus:* Seminars and training sessions offer men an opportunity to grow personally and to develop leadership skills. They are another good entry point for men on the periphery of the church. Examples include fathering seminars, marriage workshops, financial seminars, etc.
- *Implications for Your Church:* Most of the men in your church know what they "should" do. Men's seminars encourage them and help show them how to do it. Men, their families, and your church will all benefit.
- *Key Questions:* Have you surveyed the men in your church to discover what seminars will address their needs? When the seminar is over, what are some ongoing men's activities in your church that would strengthen a man in his relationship with God and others?

Equipping seminars help men grow and develop leadership skills.

Men's Congregational Gatherings

Men's congregational gatherings also offer men time to come together for **fellowship**, biblical teaching and leadership development. See Luke 10:1-24 for an example of a congregational meeting.

Congregational gatherings provide biblical teaching, fellowship and prayer.

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: ... (Act 2:14)

- *Focus:* These gatherings invite all the men in the church together for biblical teaching, fellowship and prayer. They challenge Christian men to interact and build up one another, as the men pursue godliness. Examples include: monthly men's breakfasts⁹, men's retreats, work days, etc.
- *Implications for Your church:* Your men need a place where they are encouraged in their walk with God and can develop friendships with other Christian brothers. A gathering at your church or a retreat site will begin to do that, as well as giving your men a "taste" of what can happen in a men's small group.
- *Key questions:* How will you plan your men's congregational gatherings in order to have a healthy balance of time for fellowship, prayer and scriptural teaching/application? What are some ways that you can strategically use the congregational gatherings to encourage your men to become involved in men's small groups? When and where is the best time and place for the men in your church to gather together?

Sustaining Momentum

A critical challenge in men's ministry is keeping the momentum going. This is achieved by intentional discipling ministries: men's small groups and personal mentoring.

Men's Small Groups

Effective small groups will help men overcome isolation in their lives. They will give men mutual encouragement in resolving daily problems, and provide men a "team environment" to grow and minister. Men's small groups take men from isolation to **relationships** which provide the greatest potential for long-term **spiritual development**. See Matthew 17:1-8 and John 13-16 for examples of men's small groups.

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. (Matt 17:1)

⁹ Men's breakfasts in and of themselves do not make a men's ministry. As an entry point they should be conducted as one piece in an overall men's ministry strategy. Consider having the pastor speak or invite an outside speaker. Speakers raise the bar in terms of event quality. Breakfasts can be a part of the creating or capturing momentum strategy. See "Why Do Men's Breakfasts?" at www.cmamen.org, under Local Church Tool Kit.



Roping-Up for the Climb

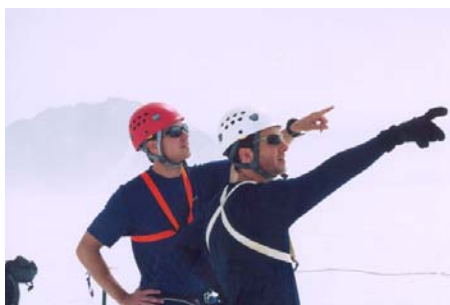
committed to mutual support, self-disclosure, and honoring Jesus Christ in their relationships and church. These groups usually involve four to seven men meeting on a regular basis.

- *Implications for Your Church:* Men's small groups are vital to the spiritual health of the men in your church. If your church is just starting or has few men attending, men's small groups are where you should begin.
- *Key Questions:* How will you encourage and promote men's small groups in your church? Who are some men that are relationally strong and spiritually mature, who could serve as men's small group leaders in your church? What will be the format and time frame for training small group leaders?

- *Focus:* Men's small groups focus on understanding and applying scripture to the issues and challenges that men face. They provide practical Biblical teaching. Small groups offer a man great opportunities for spiritual growth, because he chooses to become a member of a team

Men's small groups give men mutual encouragement in resolving daily problems.

Mentoring



Pointing Out the Route

and involvement in ministry. Personal mentoring can be face-to-face (John 3:1-21), by telephone or, in Paul's case, by correspondence (Timothy, Titus and Philemon). Mentors can be successful using either prepared discipling resources or scripture studies.

One-on-one discipling, or personal mentoring, is the most effective forum for long-term spiritual growth. It allows in-depth focusing on the challenges and issues facing men. Personal mentoring involves deepening interpersonal relationships, providing high potential for encouraging the application of spiritual gifts

Mentoring allows in-depth focusing on the challenges and issues a man faces.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, ..." John 3:1-2

- *Focus:* Mentoring is the most selective and intense momentum-building strategy. It is selective because few men will seek this level of spiritual growth. It is intense in that the one-on-one relationship between the disciple and mentor quickly moves beyond the barriers that hinder spiritual growth. The goal of mentoring is to develop men who are spiritually mature and who seek to be servant leaders.
- *Implications for Your Church:* One-on-one discipling requires mentors who are spiritually mature. Mentors will usually be men who are already deeply involved in church ministries. To be effective mentors, these men will need to carve out time to prepare for discipling sessions and to meet with the mentee. For this reason, mentoring is the most resource intense form of disciple making. On the other hand, mentoring can become self-sustaining when mentees are equipped and choose to become mentors
- *Key Questions:* Are there men in the church who show potential for going deeper in their relationship with Christ? Will these men make discipleship a priority i.e., make time for study and to meet with their mentor on a regular basis? How many mentors are available? Who will benefit the most from a mentoring relationship? How will you enlist men in a mentoring ministry (both mentors and mentees)?

Planning for Momentum

Momentum refers not only to moving men toward spiritual maturity, it also refers to moving a men's ministry toward maturity. The challenge, particularly in small churches, is gaining traction with limited resources. The men's ministry leader or core group may be overwhelmed when attempting to plan and conduct entry point events such as men's equipping seminars or congregational gatherings. Here are four approaches for planning and carrying out entry point strategies for gaining traction.

- **Keep it simple**
- **Spread out events**
- **Partner with other churches**
- **Work regionally**

Keep it Simple

Plan events around what you and your men are able to support. Events do not have to be elaborate to be successful. Schedule breaks for refreshment and building relationships. Pursue half-day, single topic events. Look for alternatives to the typical men's retreat. Hold a one day conference with one or two outside speakers. Include breakout sessions that allow men to wrestle with and personalize the ideas presented in the preceding session.

Spread Events Out

Set up a multiyear calendar and schedule events for future years. *Key questions* in this situation are: Who do we need to bring into our

ministry? Which type of event will work best? Are there regional men's events that meet the entry point needs of our men?

Partner With Other Churches

Join with other churches in the community and work together to put on events. This spreads the planning and organizing burden across several groups.

Work with District and Regional Men's Ministries

The goal of district and regional men's ministries is to help churches develop and implement men's ministries. Work with the organization to identify needs and events that are challenging for your church.

Ministry Through Men

The intent of ministry *to* men is to achieve ministry *through* men. It is disconcerting that some men will never enter the funnel. Still others will enter but fail to take steps to go deeper. While some will fall away, it is encouraging that there will be fruit from this strategy and the output will impact the family, the work place, the church, and the world. Men's ministry leaders need to remember the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:1-15).

The ministry-*through*-men area of the model represents men who have progressed down the funnel to spiritual maturity and are ready to serve in one or more areas of life. In our highly mobile society, men may come into the church who are spiritually disciplined, equipped and ready to minister. This is where men are released to do ministry, to pour their own spiritual maturity into others. It is the output of the funnel. It is the active application of their faith.

Release your men to do ministry when they are ready.

Intimacy with Christ leads to active involvement in many areas. A man has many spheres of influence as depicted by the ripples in the pool. The spiritual man may be equipped to serve in one or more capacities. The ripples in the pool are:

- Jesus: The spiritual man is able to lead himself by being centered in Christ. Spiritually mature men take their direction, set priorities, and make decisions based on their relationship with God. Their lives are characterized by prayer, reading His Word and **worship**.
- Family: The spiritual man places a priority on his relationship to his family. His **legacy** is carried on through his family.
- Work: The spiritual man sees his work as a means toward an end. The marketplace is a place where he **models** Christian values and shares the gospel when opportunities arise.

- Church: The spiritual man has a **responsibility** to serve his church through his time, talents, and treasure. He serves as part of the local team in advancing Christ's kingdom.
- Community, National and International Service: The spiritual man's relationship with Christ will **influence** his world. This can be through secular or ministry services in the community, disaster relief or short-term mission trips.

The spiritual man, at some point, will hear God's call on his life. He will respond with a **passion** to serve God in a specific area. This can be as a layman or in full-time service. His ministry, regardless of its focus, will take on new energy and fruitfulness. The key in responding to God's call is to recognize that God does not call the qualified. He qualifies the called



On the Summit

Guidelines for Men's Ministry

Essentials

- How you serve the men in your church will be unique because no two men's ministries are the same.
- However, certain principles are common to every effective men's ministry.
- Don't overlook the following essential guidelines.

Essentials

- Relationships
- Goals
- Men only
- Pastor supported
- Pastor supporting
- Lay led
- Go slowly
- Be flexible
- Include variety

Focus On Relationship, Not Programs

Generally, men do not find it easy to talk about their faith and feelings. It is critical to your men's ministry to provide a "male friendly" environment focused on encouraging relationships, not just another program. Try to develop a place where men can feel relaxed and secure. Remember, men don't like to be forced into relationships. It should be a natural process that they initiate and control.

Communicate Clear Goals

Men need to know who they are and where they're headed. Your men's ministry needs to develop a clear purpose statement, with measurable goals that focus your men on relating to God and one another.

Goals should be:

- a. Easily understood by everyone involved
- b. Measurable – can be tested for outcome.
- c. Attainable - can be reached?
- d. Based on the mission statement
- e. Agreed to by all participants

Ministry for Men Only

Most men simply do not communicate to the same depth when women are present – about either spiritual or emotional issues. Effective men's ministries structure their ministry in a way which allows men some time to talk with other men, without women present.



Using Fixed Ropes

Pastor-Supported and Pastor-Supporting Ministry

Men must honor and respect their pastor by seeking his counsel and release on any men's ministry activities. You should "brainstorm" ways to encourage your pastor and to assist him in his ministry and work. Your pastor's support is essential to men's ministry in your church. Without his active participation in men's ministry, it will not be successful. After all, he is the key leader of the church.

Ministry Led By a Core Group Of Men

The men's ministries must begin with a group of laymen praying for men and having a mutual desire to help serve the needs of men in their church. Their pastor's investment into these "leading laymen" greatly aids them. A men's core group is the "heart" of an effective men's ministry: It does not exist to exclude other men from the group, but rather to pray for, direct and serve the entire men's ministry.

Avoid Implementing Too Much Too Soon

Inspired men's leaders sometimes try to "make a men's program happen," without taking enough time to build relationships and communicate purpose to their men (Principles 1 & 2). Most effective men's ministries take three to five years to develop. Give your men plenty of time and don't give up. Jesus took three years with just 12 men.

Ministry with Flexibility and Variety

Successful men's ministries offer a variety of entry points for men to grow spiritually and relationally. Men in your church are at different stages of spiritual maturity, so try to offer a variety creating and capturing activities from the men's ministry funnel strategy and move to sustaining activities when your men are ready. You should consider a variety of activities at a variety of levels.

Preparation

Gathering a core group of committed men to pray for the men of the church and God's leading is foundational to men's ministry. The pastor's leadership and participation are of utmost importance. As well as meeting regularly to pray and seek unity in planning the men's ministry, the core group should develop personal relationships with one another that will serve as a model for other men in the church. These men must be willing to forego personal ministry goals until the men's ministry can bring forth spiritually maturing men. Then one day, with God's help, there will be enough men of faith available to supply all areas of ministry. It is therefore necessary that the core group agree to focus on building up the men's ministry first, seeing it as vital and fundamental to expanding other areas of ministry

Purpose

Where there is no vision the people perish...(Proverbs 29:18)

Your men's ministry must have a clear focus, which encourages relationships between men in your church. A purpose statement defines your ministry and becomes the guiding point that helps direct it. This statement should be qualitative and quantitative.

The core group, with the assistance of the pastor, needs to develop a clear and concise purpose statement. All activities will flow out of this purpose statement. The following guidelines are important in preparing a purpose statement:

- Pray, pray, pray!
- Answer three questions: What? How? Why?
- Take your time.
- Be clear and concise.
- Plan from your purpose statement.

Before making a purpose statement, answer the following questions:

- Why do we want it to happen?
- How will this be accomplished?
- How will we know when it is completed?

Then, using the answers to the above questions, create a one or two sentence purpose statement for your men's ministry. Don't be discouraged if it takes you several meetings to develop this statement. This is the normal process. It is best to take the time to carefully think through each word of your statement since it will guide your ministry for years to come.

Calendar

In light of the purpose statement, the core group needs to develop a yearly calendar of events.

- What men's special events would you like to do? Space them throughout the year.
- What training would the men of your church benefit from? Take into account their spiritual needs, ages, employment, family, gifts, etc. Space throughout the year those training events that you feel are essential.

- What men's congregation-wide meetings are essential during the year?
 - Quarterly breakfast
 - Seasonal dinner setting the tone for the year
- What small group options do the men in your congregation need?
- What time should you target for men to meet?
 - What type of focus should be included?
 - How can the opportunities to be involved be communicated?

Beginning

Do not start without:

- Pastoral support and knowledge
- Prayer - seek God and His specific direction
- Personnel - form a ministry leadership team
- Plan – based on the purpose statement and goals
- Preparation - plan each event carefully

Warning!

- Do not try to do too much too fast.
- Do not make it for everyone; design it only for men.
- Do not limit it to any age.
- Do not be boring and disorganized; make it exciting!
- Do not start without input from a variety of other men.
- Do not try to develop a plan without pastor support.
- Do not make decisions without a proper plan.
- Do not do the same things at every event. Use variety!
- Do not neglect small groups; focus on relationships.
- Do not neglect the discipleship process; build godly men.
- Do not reinvent the wheel; use developed resources.
- Do not be a one-man show; release others to ministry.
- Do not think too small; think big!
- Do not wait for the next year; begin now!



Following Those Who Have Gone Before

Men's Ministry Functional Strategy Worksheet (Sample)

Environment	Entry Point	Event	Date
Create Momentum	Catalytic Events	Promise Keeper conferences	
		Resurrection Breakfasts	
		Evangelistic crusades	
		Men's retreats	
		Other para church men's conferences	
	Special Events	Fishing trips	
		Bowling	
		Baseball games	
		Barbeques	
		Softball games	
		Super Bowl parties	
	"Kick-off" men's breakfasts		

Capture Momentum	Men's Equipping Seminars	Marriage and Parenting	
		Finance	
		Time management	
	Men's Congregational Gatherings	Men's retreats	
		Monthly men's breakfasts	
		Work days	

Sustain Momentum	Men's Small Groups	Study Sharing Prayer	
	Mentoring	Study Sharing Prayer	

Men's Ministry Functional Strategy Worksheet

Environment	Entry Point	Event	Date
Create Momentum	Catalytic Events		
	Special Events		

Capture Momentum	Men's Equipping Seminars		
	Men's Congregational Gatherings		

Sustain Momentum	Men's Small Groups		
	Mentoring		

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