

Leadership

“Practicalities Of Ministry”

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The following chapters focus on some key practical matters than will help you sharpen your ministry sword. Things are accelerating in the spiritual realm as the culmination of this phase of the end times draws near. Like the increasing intensity and frequency of birth pangs in a natural birth, the spiritual ‘birth pangs’ that accompany a dramatic spiritual event are happening before our very eyes. There is a surge of spiritual intensity around the world that will play its part in sweeping the Body of Christ into the mainstream of its destiny to prepare the World for the Lord’s Second Coming.

Be blessed as you prepare your heart and ministry for the great storm of blessing that the Lord unleashes on His people as a witness to His goodness. It is this outpouring of goodness that will lead to massive repentance.

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Chapter 1

How to Do an Effective Altar Call

Introduction

The Lord used an 'altar call' at the end of a church service in a rented smelly old cinema in Johannesburg, South Africa to get me to come off the proverbial intellectual fence I had created and commit to Him as Lord. Since that time I have had the pleasure of seeing many thousands of people commit their lives to Jesus as Lord through first the ministry of various pastors in South Africa, my own ministry and more recently of several fruitful pastors here in the United States.

This chapter speaks to giving an effective altar call in public services or any other group setting and does not focus on one-on-one witnessing, something that God calls each member of the Body of Christ to do in their sphere of influence.

At the outset, ministry is about co-laboring with the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that He will not do what you and I must do, and we cannot do what only He can do. We proclaim the gospel and He does the convincing.

And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. John 16:8-12

Why Give An Altar Call At All?

Altar calls as we know them are relatively 'modern' – used since the 19th Century. However, responding to the gospel is not. God always expects a response when He reaches out His hand to man. An altar call is a means to facilitate an appropriate response in a meeting. It should be obvious that without God we cannot do anything of true lasting value, so avoid any sense of 'soulish manipulation' that relies on technique and personality rather than on the drawing power of the Holy Spirit (John 6:44).

The great preacher D. L. Moody once preached the Gospel but did not give an invitation that night; he told the people to go home and think about it. That very night the Great Chicago Fire broke out, and many people who had attended his meeting died. From that day forward, Moody determined never to tell people to go home and think about the Gospel. He would ask them to choose each time he preached. Scripture teaches that 'now' is always the time of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2).

God expects us to make the most of any unashamed proclamation of truth. Truth always demands a response, you may take it or leave it, but you cannot ignore it.

The Scriptural basis for altar calls (on the spot response) includes the following examples from both the Old Testament and New Testaments.

Old Testament Examples:

The great Old Testament prophet Elijah challenged the people of Israel who wavered between two opinions to settle the matter that day as to who they served in the dramatic confrontation between

him and the false prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18:20-40. God expects no less today. It is our responsibility as God's representatives to powerfully present His reality and expect a response. People should never leave our meetings without knowing who God is and what He expects.

He even cautions those who call upon and seek Him to make a definite choice in favor of the reverential fear of the Lord, otherwise they will not enter into His provision and protection (Proverbs 1:28-33).

In Deuteronomy 30:19 God dramatically presents a choice before His people. He instructs them to choose life and blessing for themselves and the next generation. This principle applies to those that do not yet know Him. When you choose the Lord as your God, you are privileged to enter into a covenant of life, protection and blessing. It requires a definite act of decision, and is not a slow process of evolutionary spiritual osmosis. Growth comes after choices are made.

New Testament Examples:

When Jesus called His disciples to follow Him and become fishers of men, they 'immediately left their nets and followed Him' (Matthew 4: 19-20).

On the Day of Pentecost those that heard Peter's impassioned message were baptized right there and then (Acts 2:40-41).

When Phillip witnessed to the Ethiopian Eunuch on his way back from Jerusalem, he preached Jesus to him. The ruler responded and asked to be baptized right there (Acts 8:35-38).

Peter preached to Cornelius and his household and they were profoundly impacted by the Holy Spirit in the middle of his message. They were filled with the Spirit, spoke in tongues and got baptized (Acts 10:44-48).

At most Church services there is a mixture of people who are saved and those that are not. Remember you do not get saved by proximity, only through repentance and belief – a choice you make. So altar calls during church services are appropriate. People need a clear concise challenge to respond to God's gift of righteousness.

If you have not yet developed a clear altar call read on, it's possible to learn how to done effectively.

Different Types Of Altar Call

Not all altar calls are the same. First there is a call for believers to consecrate some aspect of their lives during a worship service. This ought to be engaged in as the Holy Spirit leads you, as you don't want to make an altar call for consecration an empty religious tradition in your church.

Second, unbelievers need an opportunity to respond to Jesus' command to repent and believe the gospel.

30 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." Acts 17:30-31

From God's point of view there really is no option but to respond. It is His command, not ours. Selah.

At a funeral or wedding you might want to get people to respond differently than at a 'regular' worship service. People may be asked to see you after the meeting or indicate their response by the raising of their hands. In these two types of gathering (funerals and weddings) it is wise to integrate your altar call in such a way that does not oppose the main purpose of the meeting in which you were asked to officiate.

Some Practicalities

In your sermon or any presentation at a funeral or wedding weave at least a 'scarlet thread' of what Jesus' blood has achieved for all mankind. You always want to leave people with a remembrance of Jesus and what He has done for us at the cross. This does not mean that focused motivational or topical talks do not have their place, but they ought not to be empty of Jesus. Principles do not get people saved. Jesus must always be lifted up in some way.

To be effective, allocate enough time to your altar call. Plan for the altar call as you do everything else: the offering, announcements etc. Practice doing your altar call as you might do anything else. Practice is not plastic but practical instead.

Although most altar calls amount to creating a 'place of contact', don't make a 'religion' of getting people out of their seats to come to the front, especially if there are no suitable aisles in your meeting place. People are not saved by coming to the front, they receive the gift of salvation when they make a choice to accept Jesus in their hearts. The altar call is but a means to facilitate contact and communication. In cases where people cannot easily get to the front, you might want to use a card system where people indicate their heart response by means of filling out an easily accessible response card.

Use language that the 'unchurched' understand. Keep it simple and do not use 'in house' Christian jargon – words like the 'flesh', 'justification', 'walk in the spirit' or 'part of the body' etc. They mean a lot to you but little or nothing to them. If you ever use key Bible words, take time to define what they mean. For example if you use 'repent', explain that it means to make a 'turn around in your thinking' about Jesus. Keep it simple.

If you choose to have people respond by writing out a card, then give them enough time and the wherewithal to do so (pen or pencil at hand).

If you ask that they go to a special place (or the front) after the dismissal, and then train your ushers, counselors and regular congregation to 'spot' the people who respond and personally ask the responders to accompany them to the room or place allocated. This should be close by. Reassure them that friends and family will wait in the meeting place, and also that they should take their personal belongings with them.

Don't end the service on a 'fizzle' with a weak, somewhat apologetic altar call 'dribbling' off into some inconclusive ending. You want to convey the importance of the altar call to the congregation at large so that their prayerful participation is encouraged. Irrespective of the response, the truth is the truth and people must be challenged to respond. Of course if you have a meeting with twenty people whom you preach to each week, it may seem unnecessary, but preachers have testified that people they thought were saved have eventually given their hearts to the Lord after sitting through many altar calls without responding. I did.

You Can Learn to Give a More Effective Altar Call

It is advisable to learn and practice giving an effective altar call. The following pointers will guide you in this process. Obviously we rely on the convicting work of the Holy Spirit who uses our efforts to cooperate with Him.

- Build rapport with the people. As you preach you are representing Christ to them. Prepare your heart and presentation in such a way that Christ shines through and they are attracted to His goodness. Preach happy and give them good news, not a set of 'Christian' law that kills.
- Overcome their typical objections: people must clearly know where they stand before God. They cannot think they are right with God simply because of their own opinions, tradition, or even previous church experience or otherwise. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that anyone get saved by having a religious conviction, thinking or hoping so. Jesus told Nicodemus, a good and sincere religious man that he must be 'born again'. His own efforts would not do it, he had to submit to God's gracious provision of the free gift of righteousness. The fact that they are in a church meeting, even know some Christian doctrine is of no consequence if they have not submitted to the Lordship of Christ in a real and meaningful way.
- Build a desire in their hearts to accept Jesus. The real Jesus is attractive. His goodness melts hard hearts. So magnify His grace and mercy. The promise of an abundant life is found only in Him, so focus on His love towards them in their need (and ours).
- Bring them to a point of action. The Bible teaches that we are saved when we are prepared to confess Jesus as Lord before men (Matthew 10:32). This is a strong argument for a public confession of faith in Christ at an altar call.
- Clearly identify who needs to respond and how you want them to respond. Tell the people you expect them to respond, and that by initially raising their hand, they are indicating their unashamed trust in Jesus. For example, "In a moment, I will ask you to raise your hands to show me that you want to accept Christ today. I will clap my hand on the Bible (or whatever you are comfortable with), and this will be your signal to raise your hand. Now is your time to accept Jesus." Then proceed with the altar call with its 'point of contact' moment you have identified for the congregation to respond to. Make the appeal and ask the people to raise their hands counting them off as they do. Get your ushers to stand and assist you as they do, especially if you have a large auditorium.
- Clearly identify who you expect to respond: don't confuse those who don't trust the Lord yet at all with those who have fallen away and need to 'rededicate' their lives to Jesus. If you combine the two categories, make sure the distinction is clear.

- Be bold and expect people to respond in faith. Never be embarrassed about any response, and don't slip by the moment too quickly. It sometimes takes people a few moments to act. Verbally acknowledge each response, and get your ushers to help you identify people wherever they are seated. Count them off if needs be: God counted on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41)! Adopting a heartfelt posture of persuasive posture is legitimate, whereas manipulation is not. Indecisive people may need more time to respond. So give it to them by simply and briefly repeating your invitation and instructions.
- Background music can be used to help facilitate the moment, but never to cajole or manipulate the feelings or emotions of the people without relying on The Holy Spirit to do the convicting.
- If possible, in a word, connect in some way with the sermon you just preached. If say, you preached on godly marriage, and then liken the relationship between God and man to some positive aspect of marriage you have outlined earlier in the sermon.
- Make the altar call your own. In God this is not so much about perfecting some technique, but more about facilitating something that is alive in your heart.
- It usually helps to have the congregation stand along with the candidates when you ask them to come forward. This helps them get out of the rows more easily. Require that none leave at this time, as they can hinder what God is doing in the hearts of those under conviction. Their friends and family that came with them can be invited to accompany them to the front, taking all their possessions. Train your congregation to make this a moment of rejoicing by clapping as the people come forward. Your altar workers ought to be ready and positioned to welcome the people at the front and position them before you with sensitivity and love. Remember, this is very often the first time they have ever done such a thing in public. Avoid 'hype' and do not create a false impression of who is coming down in response to the altar call. God only honors truth and integrity. Earlier on, you have acknowledged the people who have responded by counting off the number of hands raised.

After The Altar Call

The altar call is but a moment in the service and should be part of a well thought out, planned and resourced follow up process. New born babies 'in the Lord' need to be taken care like babies in the natural.

The candidates should be led in a 'salvation prayer of commitment' (see sample below) either by the minister right up in the front or by a trusted and trained associate in a side venue as the service for the rest of the congregation is concluded.

In this case, simple, short instructions should be given by the delegated, personable and trusted assistant in a nearby place that ideally does not have distractions. This associate should avoid further 'preaching' and giving detailed explanations that can often overwhelm candidates with too much information.

After the altar call the following key elements should be observed:

- **Equip** each person with some free follow up material that will help solidify what has happened.
- **Ensure** that they register their contact details for any follow up and prayer. Use a simple card and provide pens. Have helpers assist the associate get the mechanics done quickly so the people can rejoin whoever they came with. (If family and friends came into the room with them, encourage them all to go on strongly with the Lord and support those who have just made a decision to follow Christ).
- **Encourage** them to engage with any discipleship pathway your church has in place: classes / mentors / disciplers etc. Invite them to come back to your next meeting to help them identify with the ministry so that they can grow in their relationship with the Lord.
- **Exalt** Jesus in the process by keeping the personal nature of their commitment to Him central and not 'joining' the church. They are giving their lives to Jesus, not the church.

Conclusion

As with anything in ministry more is 'caught' by impartation than by being 'taught' by precept alone. Make it your business to receive an impartation in this important area of altar calls.

Remember you need to 'own' your altar call that is 'natural' to you and your ministry. Be open to what the Lord is saying through all this.

You may wish to post on your website your own altar call in video and written format, along with an online response section that communicates a person's decision to your church offices for online and other follow up. (An increasing number of people search for truth online these days. Use this resource to reach them).

Sample Salvation Prayer to Use in Your Altar Call

(Romans 3:23 / Acts 3:19 / Romans 10:9-10
2 Corinthians 5:17-21 / John 1:12)

The sinner's prayer guides the people who respond through the three key steps:

Admission of their need as sinners,
Belief in God raising Jesus from the dead,
Confession of Jesus as Lord.

Remember the prayer is not about technique but a heartfelt response to God's goodness through repentance.

Dear God in Heaven,

I admit I need Your forgiveness for my sins.

Thank You for sending Jesus to die on the cross for me.

I believe You raised Him from the dead so that I could live.

I confess Jesus as my Lord and promise to serve Him alone.

Thank You for saving me and making me brand new.

I am now Your child, part of the family of God.

In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

Chapter 2

How to Receive Tithes and Offerings

The Importance Of A Well Thought Out Plan

This chapter focuses on tips on a) the importance of having a well thought plan in receiving tithes and offerings in a church service and b) the 'how to's' or practicalities associated with the plan.

For God's ministers to neglect this vital area is as bad as neglecting to teach someone on prayer, worship and missions. There are over 2000 verses in the Bible that deal with material matters. Jesus even dedicated two thirds of His parables to the subject of money and possessions.

A number of steps must be taken to counter the naturally selfish tendency of many immature Christians. It takes faith, commitment and trust to be a giver. It is estimated that most churches level of tithing commitment among regular members and attendees is below 10%. That means that 90% of your people are ignorant, indifferent or simply disobedient to God's command to support His work. Your responsibility is to equip and exhort your people with the Word to support the gospel.

Consider the following outline or plan that you could use to **develop a culture of giving** in your church. This culture of giving does not happen by wishful thinking or by 'spiritual osmosis'. You have to lead in this matter and speak the Word on giving so that faith can arise in the congregation.

The Plan

#1 Establish Bible Reasons for Giving

First, establish Bible reasons for a lifestyle of giving. Giving to a ministry is not about keeping the show on the road, the bills and salaries paid. It is about financing the greatest adventure given to man: preaching the gospel to the ends of the earth! The gospel message may be free for all to receive, but it costs money to get it out. Even Jesus relied on the substance of His supporters to facilitate his ministry (Luke 8:3).

In the Jewish mindset, there was no artificial separation between a person and their finances. In fact, how you conducted yourself in the natural affairs of life indicated the state of your heart.

#2 Eliminate Excuses

(Your own, and in your ministry).

Tackle those excuses. Not all giving problems are rooted in the congregation's ignorance or indifference about giving. Sometimes we have to begin by eliminating the embarrassment about raising funds for the work of the ministry in your own ministry and in the leadership. Some people will always be critical of preachers asking for support. They will think what they want to, but what God thinks is really what counts in the end. He will honor your commitment to truth and integrity.

As a leader you cannot be apologetic and awkward about fund raising. You cannot slip in offering time 'under the radar' so to speak. If the preacher is not free on money matters, how can the congregation be free? Jesus who never seemed to have a problem about receiving contributions from

rich and poor alike, even talking at length about giving and all its associated heart matters. Don't be held hostage to fear and intimidation. Live free from the fear of man in this matter, and do what God called you to do.

Set the tone by creating a respect for this part of the gospel. Tithes, offerings is a just as holy as communion. Whatever we touch ought to be sanctified. Let God work on your heart and settle things about finances. The righteous are bold as a lion. Deal with any questionable stuff in the handling of finances, personal and church related. When your conscience is clear before God you can roar like a lion and scatter the enemy.

When you give a clear exposition of God's requirements and promises you eliminate excuses in the congregation. Hold your people accountable to the Word.

Although everyone must individually give an account to God for their own stewardship, leaders will undergo stricter judgment for whether they have equipped and challenged their people in the importance of financial stewardship or not.

Your job is to teach or equip the ignorant with God's Word (Ephesians 4:11-12); exhort the indifferent or dull of hearing; and challenge the disobedient to become thither and givers.

#3 Expose the Vision

Expose the church's vision to your people on a regular basis. People give to vision and generally are not well motivated to simply meet the budget. Don't put the emphasis on 'making ends meet'. Some leaders have found that people need to be reminded of the cardinal elements of your church's vision at least every six weeks. You cannot assume that because you, the leader, have got the vision burned into your heart, that everyone else in the church has it too.

You could use your website, bulletin and even the back of your offering envelope to communicate the church's vision and mission. A monthly PowerPoint / video / photo presentation at offering time for a minute could also expose various aspects of the vision to the congregation. Not too much, nor too little. A well prepared presentation by an associate and or a respected and trusted elder, board member works well to vary things during the year.

#4 Exhort with Testimonies

Exhort the congregation with vetted and qualified testimonies of God's faithfulness in the area of finances. Testimonies encourage faith for the hearer to trust God for themselves in similar situations.

Choose people from all walks of life to show your people that not only ministers can enjoy God's financial blessings but single moms, laborers, and others not in the ministry too. Reach people at the spiritual level they are really at. These could also be printed up in your bulletin. Whatever it takes to exhort the people with integrity, do it. God gets the glory when His people testify of His goodness in these practical areas.

#5 Establish Giving as an Act of Worship

Establish offering time as an act of worship. The congregation must not see tithe and offering time as mere 'bucket plunking!' Giving must be seen as a holy thing, not to be passed over in an embarrassing moment. The emphasis in your people's thinking must shift from where they see the preacher asking for money to a holy moment in the worship service.

The following account shows giving as an act of rejoicing and worship.

"So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders.

*He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, "a land flowing with milk and honey"; and now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O LORD, have given me.' Then you shall set it before the LORD your God, and **worship before the LORD** your God.*

*So **you shall rejoice** in every good thing which the LORD your God has given to you and your house,..." Deuteronomy 26:8-11 (emphasis added).*

#6 Equip your People with Resources

Equip your people both during offering time and at other times to become financially healthy God's way. The Bible literally has more to say about practical financial matters than some of the doctrines that preachers preach week in and week out. It speaks of debt recovery, priorities, and responsibilities to the poor, stewardship, sacrificial giving, and much more.

You might find it useful once you have broken some barriers, to conduct an annual 'Financial Focus' Series. Many ministries also make a variety of other resources available to their people through books, tape, CD and DVD, online links, workbook outlines on budgeting etc. When your people see your commitment to their financial well-being is genuine and unashamed, they will receive these resources gladly.

Topics you might want to make available include:

- How to get out of credit card debt.
- How to establish a personal or family budget.
- The difference between tithes and offerings?
- What is our responsibility to the poor and needy?
- How to invest for the future.

The Practicalities

Who Should Receive The Tithes And Offerings?

Usually the pastor or ministry leader is the most visible and respected authority figure. Sometimes it may be suitable to share the load with others in leadership anointed and trained to lead and equip alongside the primary leader. It is important for the congregation to have confidence in its leadership that works together as a team. You might want to consider a rotation or monthly pattern where the Senior Pastor takes the lead in this, but delegates to others this responsibility so the load can

be shared. This provides variety, new insights and raises up leaders. As the pastor you could briefly introduce and thus endorse the person you have asked to receive tithes and offerings. Be sure to give them a time limit and get them to practice both the content of their exhortation and the mechanics of the moment: envelopes, passing buckets etc.

When Should Tithes And Offerings Be Received?

Some pastors prefer to receive tithes and offerings at all major church meetings. Some of the congregation only attends some meetings, and opportunities for the congregation to worship the Lord with their tithes and offerings must be frequent and regular.

As to when to actually pass the 'buckets,' some may want this part of the service to connect with the worship or song service. At this time, an atmosphere of worship is already set, and if the transition between singing and worshipping God with our substance is handled sensitively and with integrity, then things will flow in the Spirit.

Some pastors prefer to receive tithes and offerings at a time when they are sure that the congregation has actually all filtered into the auditorium. There is no absolute pattern here. The bottom line is that all the people must be present and given the opportunity to hear the word on giving.

How Should Tithes And Offerings Be Received?

Practically, this should be done efficiently. The people should be seated and focused on the matter at hand. If people are standing, it is difficult for them to write out checks or fill out offering envelopes. They must also have enough time to fill out any details.

Most churches use ushers, buckets, baskets, bags, whatever. Some take the opportunity to make announcements or show special projections as the receptacles are being passed around. Others prefer to play music or have a special song item delivered at this time. Avoid being 'religious' and contrived at offering time. Learn also to flow with the 'mood' of the service: whether it is upbeat, celebratory, and reflective or whatever the Holy Spirit is doing.

Envelopes, Bulletins, And Credit Cards

Some churches make use of an offering envelope to communicate scriptures on the subject of giving. Some churches chose to include portions of their mission statement on four variations of the same envelope. This is done to bring the mission of the church before the people on a regular basis. The envelopes also include details of credit card giving. This may be controversial to you, but many people in today's modern generation see credit cards as a convenient way to handle their money in almost all their transactions. They generally don't carry around much cash and often even avoid writing checks. Certainly don't encourage them to borrow money to give to God. They simply use a card as a cash alternative and manage their monthly this way on a monthly basis.

Online giving is another innovation. Once again it is all about the heart. If your heart is right, the means by which money changes hands is not the issue! Make sure ushers have enough envelopes and that pens are readily available. Give people enough time too.

During The Worship Service

You might find it useful to present a short PowerPoint display and / or an exhortation on financial stewardship and giving at offering time. It consists of a scripture reference, followed by two or at most three points related directly to that scripture, and an opportunity for the congregation to worship God with a declaration of faith and devotion. This can be done in approximately 3 - 4 minutes, and highlights the value God places on this subject. When you take too long over this part of the service, you run the risk of overloading the congregation with too much information. Be wise.

On the other hand, this time should not be slipped in 'under the radar' as we have said. It should be front and center at this time in order to properly honor God. If you consider and administer this moment with reservation and hesitation, the congregation will adopt a similar attitude in their giving. Be positive and encouraging.

After Tithes And Offerings Are Received

Make practical arrangements to carry off and safely store funds received during a service. Security may not seem to be a big issue to start with, but as your church grows it will become very important.

Properly steward the resources released to your ministry to satisfy God's word and the law of the land. Be sure to have proper accountability measures in place with counting, recording and disbursing funds. Select at least three trusted people to count and sign off against what has been counted before forwarding to a trained bookkeeper, cashier or accountant responsible for church finances for processing and banking. (As the church grows in size you may need to enlarge this group).

All these measures will play their part in instilling confidence in your members, partners and supporters. Some churches even show their weekly giving as an accountability measure, others only monthly or annually.

Whatever you do, your wise transparency will breed confidence. Then, always 'tithes off the tithe' at least.

"Speak thus to the Levites, and say to them: 'When you take from the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it to the LORD, a tenth of the tithe. Numbers 18:26-27"

Who Is Giving What?

In ancient temple times giving and sacrifice was out in public for all to see. On one occasion, Jesus even called his disciples over to examine what was going on and pointedly showed them who was giving and even how much (Mark 12:42-43)! Jesus knew what was going on with the finances in His group. He even knew that Judas was embezzling funds when the rest did not!

Some pastors feel that if they don't know who is giving what, they will remain pure and uninfluenced by who is giving. Yet, have you met a pastor who does not know who the big givers in his church are? Purity is not a matter of ignorance, pretended or otherwise, but of a heart that has been purified of improper motives. Let the Lord cleanse you of any intimidation and or impurity. You can't lead without knowing what's going on behind you!

The 'Spirit and Letter' Of Giving

Encouraging a lifestyle of giving is a heart matter. When your heart is right, your hand willingly does what God requires. When we are willing and obedient, God is pleased to bless us with the fat of the land. When people are cajoled into giving, a bad taste is left in everyone's mouth. Faith is of the heart, and it comes as the word is shared with integrity and conviction. We enter into the joy of giving when life is ministered through the spirit and not as a legalistic formula.

When we understand God's will and ways we can easily partake of His nature through His precious promises (2 Peter 1:1-4). Giving then becomes a part of who we are, not merely what we sometimes do! In short, we give because of who we have become in our worship, not because we are told to follow some rules and formulas.

Sample Offering Outline

Have **one scripture** as a foundation (any more begins to sound like a sermonette), then two or three points of **clarification and application**, followed by a **declaration of faith** as the Tithes and Offerings are publicly presented to the Lord (He is our High Priest of the New Covenant and we receive the congregation's contributions on His behalf). It is His money, not ours. Sure we collect it, count, and bank and spend it, but it is still His money to direct and He should be honored for this.

Maybe use a PowerPoint projection as your backdrop as you speak. It helps focus people's attention to what you are saying.

God's Delight in our Prosperity

Psalm 35:27

*Let them shout for joy and be glad,
Who favor my righteous cause;
And let them say continually,
"Let the LORD be magnified,
Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."*

(Points that could be made: you could add, adapt or amplify your own points from the verse).

- Giving in support of God's righteous cause is reason for rejoicing.
- We are to continually declare or say out loud that God takes pleasure in or delights in our prosperity.

When the congregation has reflected on what has been said and been given an opportunity to prepare their Tithes and Offerings i.e. writing checks, filling out envelopes etc., lead them in a bold out loud declaration of faith and devotion as they give to the Lord and His work. People can even be asked to take their offerings and hold them up to the Lord.

*“Dear Lord,
We rejoice in this opportunity to favor Your righteous cause with our Tithes and Offerings.
We magnify You as you take pleasure in our prosperity.”
In Jesus name,
Amen.”*

Have the ushers receive the offering, while the worship team leads in a song or instrumental or show church video announcements if you produce them weekly. At this point keep the congregation seated to facilitate the whole process, and then move on in the service. If this all seems too mechanical, realize that when Jesus distributed the food, He had them sit in groups of fifty [Luke 9:14]. Being practical is actually being spiritual.

Adapting To Your Style

Each minister has their own style, so it is important to be free to adapt and flow so that receiving Tithes and Offerings becomes part of your natural delivery. Receiving Tithes and offerings, involves both an **efficient technique**, and a natural expression of your **heart** of worship.

What Could A Year Look Like?

Many ministries after a while, default to three or four of their favorite scriptures, say Malachi 3:10 / Luke 6: 38 / 2 Corinthians 8:9, and really don't give too much thought to this aspect of the service each week.

Each **month** could have a four or five week **theme**. The pattern must make allowance for special days: visiting ministries; Christmas; Easter; Father and Mother's Day; and other cultural days.

Example:

January could have a theme that focuses on *God as the source of our blessing*.

February could then focus on *Seed time and Harvest*.

March on *Generosity*...and so on through the twelve months of the year.

The following example uses **four** scriptures to serve as your basis for a month.

Week 1

**God is the Source of all our supply
1 Chronicles 29:14**

(Scripture)

*“But who am I, and who are my people,
That we should be able to offer so willingly as this?
For all things come from You,
And of Your own we have given You.”*

(Points to focus on)

- God is the source of all our blessings.
- What we give back to Him was His to start with.

(Confession of faith or prayer)

*“Dear Lord,
We honor You as the Source of all our supply.
We recognize it all belongs to You.
We worship You today with that which You honored us with. Amen.”*

**Week 2
He owns it all
Psalm 24:1**

(Scripture)

*“The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness,
The world and those who dwell therein.”*

(Points to focus on)

- The earth's fullness / abundance belongs to God.
- We are privileged to utilize all its fullness for His glory.

(Confession of faith or prayer)

*“Dear Lord,
Thank You for blessing us with the earth's fullness.
We commit to glorify you with what we us. Amen.”*

**Week 3
We are accountable as Stewards
Psalm 115:16**

(Scripture)

*“The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's;
But the earth He has given to the children of men”*

(Points to focus on)

- As the creator, God owns the heavens and the earth. We are given the earth to manage or steward to His glory.
- We are thus accountable to God for what we do with our resources.
- His word teaches us our responsibilities: tithing / offerings, giving to the poor...

(Confession of faith or prayer)

*“Dear Lord,
Thank You for giving us the earth and its resources.
We desire to manage them in line with Your word.
Receive our tithes and offerings as our worship. Amen.”*

Week 4

God wants us to enjoy all that He gives

1 Timothy 6:17

(Scripture)

“Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.”

(Points to focus on)

- We must trust in the Lord, and not our riches.
- What we have comes from God in the first place.
- Proper trust leads to true enjoyment.

(Confession of faith or prayer)

*“Dear Lord,
We commit to properly trust in You and not riches.
Help us to truly enjoy what You have given us. Amen.”*

Summary Of Things To Ensure During Offering Time

- Be bold and encouraging.
- Establish a worshipful moment.
- Give a Word foundation.
- Share brief and relevant points.
- Get congregation to identify by declaring their faith and or agreeing in prayer.
- Give enough time for the tithes and offerings to be received as people are seated.

Scriptures To Build Your Own Money Moments

Budgeting:

Proverbs 6:6-8
Proverbs 21:5
Proverbs 22:3
Proverbs 24:3-4
Proverbs 25:28
Proverbs 27:12
Proverbs 27:23
Luke 14:28-30
1 Corinthians 16:2

Contentment:

Ecclesiastes 5:10
Luke 3:14
Luke 12:15
Philippians 4:11-13
Colossians 3:15
1 Timothy 6:6-10
Hebrews 13:5

Co-signing:

Psalms 37:26
Proverbs 6:1-2
Proverbs 11:15
Proverbs 17:18
Proverbs 22:26-27
Proverbs 27:13

Debt:

Deuteronomy 15:6
Deuteronomy 28:12
Psalm 37:21
Proverbs 22:7
Proverbs 22:26-27
Ecclesiastes 5:5
Romans 13:8

Giving:

Deuteronomy 14:23
Deuteronomy 15:10
Proverbs 3:9-10
Proverbs 11:25
Proverbs 22:9
Matthew 23:23
Luke 6:38
Acts 20:35
1 Corinthians 16:1-2
2 Corinthians 8: 13-14
2 Corinthians 9:6-8
Hebrews 7:1-2

Our needs met:

1 Chronicles 28:20
Psalm 37:25
Matthew 6:31-32
Matthew 7:11
Luke 12:7
John 21:6
2 Corinthians 9:8
Philippians 4:19

Investing:

Proverbs 15:22
Proverbs 24:27
Proverbs 28:20
Ecclesiastes 11:2

Matthew 25:14-26

Lending:

Exodus 22:25
Deut 23:19-20
Leviticus 25:35-37
Proverbs 3:27-28
Proverbs 28:8
Matthew 5:42

Planning:

Genesis 41:34-36
Proverbs 6:6-8
Proverbs 15:22
Proverb 16:9
Proverbs 21:5
Proverbs 22:3
Proverbs 24:3-4
Proverbs 24:27
Ecclesiastes 11:2
Luke 14:28-30
1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Priorities:

Exodus 23:12
Matthew 6:21
Matthew 6:24
Matthew 6:33

Prosperity:

Genesis 39:3
Joshua 1:8
1 Chronicles 22:12
2 Chronicles 31:21
Psalm 1: 1-3
Psalm 37:4
Proverbs 10:22
Malachi 3:10
Matthew 6:4
Matthew 19:29

Ephesians 3:20
3 John 1:2

Saving:

Proverbs 21:5
Proverbs 21:20
Proverbs 27:12
Proverbs 30:24-25
1 Corinthians 16:2

Stewardship:

Exodus 35:35
Deuteronomy 10:14
I Chronicles 29:11
Psalm 50:10-12
Luke 3:11
Luke 6:30
Luke 12:47-48
Luke 14:33
Luke 16:9-11
Romans 14:8

Success:

Joshua 1:8
Psalm 1:1-3
Psalm 37:4
Proverbs 22:4
Proverbs 22:29
Matthew 23:12
Luke 9:48
Ephesians 3:20

Taxes:

Matthew 22:21
Romans 13:7

Tithing:

Genesis 28:20-22
Exodus 23:19
Proverbs 3:9-10
Proverbs 11:24-25
Ezekiel 44:30
Malachi 3:8-10
Matthew 23:23
Luke 12:33-34
2 Corinthians 9:7
Galatians 6:7
Hebrews 7:1-10

Work:

Genesis 2:15
Exodus 23:12
2 Chronicles 31:21
Nehemiah 4:6
Proverbs 10:4
Proverbs 12:24
Proverbs 13:4
Proverbs 14:23
Proverbs 18:9
Proverbs 22:29
Proverbs 24:27
Proverbs 28:19
Ecclesiastes 5:12
Ecclesiastes 9:10
Daniel 6:3
Matthew 5:41
Colossians 3:17
Colossians 3:23
2 Thess 3:10-11
1 Timothy 5:8

Chapter 3

How To Preach With Purpose

*18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."*

Luke 4:18-19

Mandate And Message

We are mandated to preach a message of God's grace and love extended to mankind through the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. We are to 'preach the Word' something that all Bible believing denominations would claim to do. Yet sometimes it seems as the manner or style, the tone and even volume of preaching is of more importance than the content, doctrine and practical application of eternal and time tested truth.

Then, very often the focus is so rooted in the future, or the past or the present that the richness of all three is lost. Life is impacted by all three time dimensions. In Christ our past is cleansed, our present is secure and the future is certain. To be of some earthly good we must be at least 'heavenly minded'. How else can God's kingdom come and His will be done on earth if we have no idea of what heaven is like (Matthew 6:10)? Some preaching amounts to no more than behavior modification and motivational pep rallies and is so rooted on earth that it is of no eternal or heavenly good. Eternity is an inescapable reality that must be addressed in this life, as there is no second chance.

Whether you preach topically by series, verse by verse, or rely on a 'word' for the week, you are mandated to 'preach the Word'. This chapter explores what is involved in preaching the Word.

True And False Balances

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Matthew 28:19-20

The process of making of disciples is linked closely with baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as well as teaching them to observe all things Jesus commanded. As this process unfolds, we are reminded of the reassuring ever-present presence of the Lord.

It is my conviction that to preach and teach a 'balanced' diet of spiritual food we ought to baptize or 'immerse' in encountering all three persons of The Godhead, because there is a tendency to focus on one or two persons to the exclusion of the others. Let me explain.

The one true God has revealed Himself to mankind in three persons each with their own characteristics and roles. Hopefully, without doing an injustice to this revelation and material gleaned from Christian A Swartz of ChurchSmart Resources, we can gain an understanding of the need to balance our teaching and preaching with the 'whole counsel' (Acts 20:20) of God's person. When we truly know God in His fullness, can we truly make Him known in His fullness. Anything short of this will be 'spiritually weak or anemic', like a food diet that does not contain the wholesome balance of proteins, carbohydrates, healthy fats, and fiber.

Like one source of light split into different sections of the spectrum we begin with the Father who is characterized by the following distinctives:

- Creator or 'Father' of all life.
- God above us in heaven.
- Level of reality expressed in nature.

The Son communicates the following distinctive of the trinity.

- Savior of all life.
- God with us (Emmanuel).
- Level of reality expressed in his history (the Word).

The Holy Spirit is the one who comes to live within the heart of every believer on the Lord Jesus as savior.

- Sanctifier of all life.
- God in us.
- Level of reality expressed in experience.

In short, you may recognize a tendency in your preaching to focus on one or two aspects of God's person as your 'default'. You may find yourself focusing on the experiential, 'touch me, feel me' presence of God. Here the emphasis is on the Holy Spirit and you may preach a lot from the book of Acts, highlighting the power of God in us to work miracles. Or you may emphasize Jesus as savior, the one who connects us receptively to the Father. He is touched with our human frailty and our need for mercy. You may find yourself preaching a lot from the gospels. Then again you may preach a lot from the Old Testament and focus on the Father heart of God with His care for social justice and need of judgment. He is Lord over nature and world history. None of these are wrong as you know. It is not a matter of 'either or' but 'both and'.

Perhaps you have been categorized into a particular 'camp' of Christianity by your doctrine and practice. You might be an 'evangelical' who focuses on the need for salvation through Christ alone. This is true. Or you may be a 'charismatic' who strongly advocates a life changing personal experience or encounter with the Holy Spirit. This also is true. Or you may be considered a 'liberal' who concentrates

on themes of social justice, management of creation and the need for order and peace. This too is true. (Liberal here is meant to convey God as the liberator of man – for example Moses and the enslaved nation of Israel).

All three ‘camps’ have something of God that the other two would do well to incorporate into their ‘flow’ if they are to know God in His fullness and indeed make Him known in His fullness. Problems and division arises when we segment God into our limited history or experience of Him. Let us be reminded that He is much bigger than we make Him out to be in our denomination or movement. In these times God is increasingly desiring that we all come to the unity of the faith (Ephesians 4:13). Fearful or prideful isolation only hampers the work of God.

Isolation from one another may also produce a tendency among ‘Liberals’ to syncretize or adopt common elements from other religions that adhere to the notion of a creation. This may result in a weakened conviction of the unique claims of Jesus as the world’s only savior.

Then ‘Evangelicals’ can tend towards dogmatism where the claim to correct doctrine begins to cloud the need for a personal relationship with the savior through the convicting work of the Holy Spirit.

The ‘Charismatic’ camp may fall into error by over ‘spiritualizing’ their experiences, making them more important than the standards of scripture.

A profound appreciation for God both in His ‘oneness’ as well as the marvelous way in which He expresses His person in the form of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is needed to avoid an unbalanced scale in doctrine and practice. Let us say it this way: we need all that we can know about God, and a heart that is humble and teachable, able to learn from imperfect fellow followers of the true God.

When we see God in His fullness we will not fall in the proverbial ‘ditch’ on either side of the road. For example, Charismatics may (and obviously there are exceptions) err towards the side of organic (natural) expressions of ‘doing’ church. They are largely opposed to an ‘over organized’ institutional approach to church as this will surely quench the Spirit. On the other hand ‘Liberals’ are more into liturgy, order and strict church government and control. They too fear being so ‘loose’ as to create confusion and thus ‘quench the Spirit’ once again. ‘Evangelicals’ and (increasingly) ‘Charismatics’ may be criticized for being on the ‘right’ while ‘liberals’ for being on the ‘left’. This may be called ‘bipolar disorder’ in Christianity! This need not be if we learn to walk the high road of the whole counsel of God.

Some argue that we should stick to the ‘objective’ side of Christianity (and preaching) and conclude with the following false (incomplete) assumptions:

- The Holy Spirit is automatically present when we do things decently and in order (according to a set liturgy).
- Believe certain dogmas and creeds and you will automatically be a Christian.
- Use a certain church growth program and your church will automatically grow.

On the other hand, if you favor the more ‘subjective’ side comes to these false (and equally incomplete) assumptions:

- If you are ‘set free’ from restrictive liturgy, practice and order, the Holy Spirit is automatically present.
- If you emphasize experiential ‘reality’ over dogma, then you are automatically ‘spiritual’.

- If you avoid any strict planning and procedures, then the Spirit will move and growth will happen organically.

It seems as if we are determined to seek security and predictability in our formulas, whether they are 'left' or 'right' leaning. The Bible teaches the ascendancy of faith over our human machinations. Whatever is not of faith falls short of the mark. We restrict or limit God (and ourselves) by our tradition (Mark 7:13): liberal, evangelical, or charismatic!

God is the God of order and spontaneity. Jesus proved this. He based His teaching, preaching and ministry on the infallible Old Testament Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit. We have no other choice to do but the same.

As representatives of the Lord, we carry the responsibility to communicate a living and true faith in The Lord (Father) Jesus (Son) Christ (Holy Spirit) – for that is His name by which any man may be saved.

If we understand and comprehend God in His fullness, we will not fall into error in both doctrine and practice. We will present God in His totality as He has revealed Himself to us. We will be concerned for social justice and the poor, preach in no other name than that of Jesus and encourage the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We will not hide behind the argument that 'that is not our calling or expression'. We must not conveniently compartmentalize God, and thus control and cut short our experience of Him. We owe it to ourselves and a world hungry for the reality of God, not some short changed construct of our own.

We will sidestep conflict and erroneous interpretation when we understand and yield to God in three persons. For example, some emphasize self-denial as they read Matthew 10:39, while others self-fulfillment.

*He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. **Matthew 10:39***

Losing and finding cannot be understood without the other. There is a dynamic tension of truth illustrated here. Either extreme ends up in the 'ditch', but when held in tension we stay in the middle of covenant rights and responsibility 'road'. Know what glasses you are wearing and you will discern the particular filter or lenses you are currently seeing things through. God is after 20/20 vision!

Change comes through revelation. Revelation often comes in times of crisis and frustration as people cry out to God. You certainly don't want to keep doing something that does not produce the promised results. Be open to embrace the insecurity of crisis in your belief and behavior. You are sure to find God in the fire. His goal remains to bring us from faith to faith, glory to glory, an increasing Christlikeness. True reformation comes when we embrace the Father's unbending principles, the Son's loving motivation and The Spirit's anointing of power.

Truth Held In Tension

Teaching people to live a pertinent practical Christian witness provides balance to a just scale. Where any truth or emphasis is taken to an extreme it becomes an error. All facets of the one truth are held in tension with other facets of the whole truth, so to say as a pastor who functions as an 'all-rounder' that you only preach some favorite topics is to shortchange your followers. The **entirety** of God's Word is truth (Psalm 106:160) and we must not be neglectful to deliver the whole counsel of God's Word.

Most pastors 'specialize' or default to their strengths or favorite topics or series. In itself this is not a bad thing, but in order to plug the gaps and for heaven's sake reinforce the schedule with associates

(in multi staff churches) and guests who can impart things that you cannot do so well. Team ministry in the pulpit can be tricky, but stronger if trust is built in a plan orchestrated by the Lord (Acts 13:1-2). God has set in the church a plurality of ministry gifts to equip His people. Pathways need to be found to accommodate those who are 'apt' to teach (1 Timothy 3:2) and those called as 5-fold ministers in the preaching and teaching schedule at any one church whether it be at the home group, class or main pulpit levels.

Together, we are called to bring the saints to fruitful and stable maturity (Ephesians 4:1-13) but this is impossible without the sound doctrine outlined in Hebrews 6:1-2. When was the last time you preached on eternal judgment or the laying on of hands? Without a 'balanced diet' we will not see healthy growth. Perhaps that is why we have so many unstable, immature and unfruitful people filling our churches.

Then 'positional' truth – who we are in Christ, a complete and 'real' work of grace must be followed by the outworking of who Christ is in us or 'practical' truth - how he works through us by His Spirit. Protective truth caps this by knowing your authority in Christ – how to stand your ground against the adversary's assaults.

Another Look At 'Paradigms'

A 'paradigm' is something that describes a thought pattern or a general encompassing approach, pattern or model: the way we think and do things. In context the way we do things in church depends on our particular paradigm.

Take your church's preaching & teaching ministry / discipleship program or approach for example. Depending on how you 'see' or understand who, how, when and where things ought to happen or be done, you are likely to more or less fall into one of the following approaches or paradigms.

You may lean towards **training** with its set of characteristics or **learning** with its own set of characteristics. Please note that some of these may be stereotypic but be open to evaluating things without being defensive.

'Training'

- Teacher focused
- Goal: to train
- Teacher's role is expert
- Learner's role is passive
- Individual
- Program driven
- Standardized
- Linear, sequential
- Periodic, as needed
- Long term-semester
- Classroom located
- Memorize information
- Feedback - knowledge retention

'Learning'

- Learner focused
- Goal: to produce learning
- Teacher is coach, facilitator
- Learner's role is active
- Team/Collaborative
- Process driven
- Customized
- Experiential, Relational
- Continuous, life long
- Short term - E.g. Seminar
- Learning environment
- Critical thinking, problem solving
- Feedback - knowledge application.

You could argue that the 'training' approach is more convenient and easier to manage or oversee. It certainly was that way in my sixteen years of Bible College experience both as a student, instructor and Dean. Let me be clear, good things 'rub off' or are imparted in a 'training' environment, but we are talking about sharpening our focus even more than before.

On the other hand, if you are hoping to see more lasting life changing results then you would lean towards **the 'learning' approach.**

'Training'	'Learning'
-Goal is knowledge transfer	-Goal is obedience / behavior change
-Focus on Bible knowledge	-Focus on life skills/application
-Content/doctrine/beliefs	-Felt needs / ministry maturity
-Church based Home	-Community based
-Sunday only	-Lifestyle: all week
-'In House' curriculum only	-Best available / 'In House' + other.

In short, the differences between the two approaches could be described as follows: Training emphasizes decisions, growing church attendance and personal growth, whereas the learning approach focuses more on making disciples, growing people holistically, and reproducing disciples according to Matthew 28:19. In summary chart form:

'Training'	'Learning'
-Decisions	-Disciples
-Growing church	-Growing people
-Personal growth	-Reproduction in the community.

An Example Of Jesus And His Disciples 'Lord Teach Us To Pray'

On one occasion Jesus' disciples saw Him praying and one of them asked Him to teach them to pray. They had grown up in their community where much prayer was offered. Surely they knew how to pray? However, this time it was different and they realized their need. So Jesus responded: "We have not scheduled a teaching on prayer till next year in Semester two on Tuesdays...." Of course He didn't, he stopped everything and focused on them together in community and launched into His teaching on prayer.

11:1 Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." 2 So He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name... Luke 11:1-2

How much of our preaching and teaching program is not hitting the mark, because we presume that the mark is what we see it to be according to some schedule? I am not sure, but I do believe we must seek the Lord for what The Spirit “is saying” currently (Revelations 2:7, 11, ...) and also listen carefully to the congregation for felt needs of what we are to teach and preach in any one season.

Measuring The Content Of Preaching 'Content Counts'

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

Matthew 4:23-24

15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Mark 16:15

3 but we preach Christ crucified, ...

1 Corinthians 1:23

6 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, Galatians 1:16

2 Preach the word! 2 Timothy 4:2

The medium or manner in which something is delivered is not the message. Content counts. God has given us His Word to preach, not some watered down set of stories that change no one. When we preach the Word, preach Him, preach His gospel, people should be saved, healed and delivered. They should be growing in God's grace, favor and wisdom so that they can naturally produce fruit and reproduce disciples.

There is only one gospel – there is no such thing as the ‘prosperity’ or ‘healing’ or ‘kingdom’ gospel, only one gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which comprises many facets: forgiveness, healing, well-being etc. Yes, there are principles and pathways to follow in the faith, but our central focus ought to be on encountering the person of Jesus Himself. He needs to be at the center of our lives and our preaching.

18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. Colossians 1:18

And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. Revelation 1:12-14

Very often you come away from sermons that are full of principles and no person of Christ with hardly any sense of His presence. Remember the Holy Spirit is present in a service to glorify Jesus as He and His grace is lifted up. Much preaching amounts to a set of ‘Christian’ laws and processes, and often

inadvertently falls into the Colossian problem where the centrality of Christ was lost to the 'commandments and doctrines of men' (Colossians 2:19-23).

It is no accident that Jesus is presented to us in the four gospels with four 'faces' (Ezekiel 1:10 / Revelations 4:7):

- Matthew – as a lion, signifying kingship or dominion,
- Mark – as an ox (calf), showing servant hood,
- Luke – as a man, identifying with human needs,
- John – as an eagle emphasizing the Deity of Jesus.

God expects us to proclaim Jesus in His completeness, and avoid being focused on anyone facet of His glory to the neglect of the others. Just as there are four seasons, four elements to healthy church life (Acts 2:42), four winds of the Spirit (Revelation 7:1), four types of soil (Mark 4), and four dimensions of God's love (Ephesians 3:18), so Jesus cannot be adequately described in terms of one aspect of His ministry to us. Over time, be sure to preach Jesus from at least all four major perspectives.

Bible Literacy

One of the unsettling trends in many churches today is a low level of 'Bible literacy'. The average church-attendeer has learnt to 'experience' God very often more according to the atmosphere created by look, music and style than the actual content of truth or what things actually mean. All experience must be interpreted in the light of scripture, not the other way round.

Four Pillars Of Content

There are four major aspects in teaching and preaching content that scripture shows should be covered:

- Doctrine: simple teaching presentation of truth.
The six basic doctrines of Christ plus maturity (Hebrews 6:1-2).
- Reproof: confrontation and refutation of error.
Jesus confronted the error of His day (Matthew 5-7).
- Correction: to straighten or restore to an upright state.
Improvement in life & character (Gal 3:1-2).
- Training in righteousness: instruction and nurture – the application of doctrine.
How to walk in the finished work of Christ (Ephesians 4:1, 24, 5:2; 6:11).

All communication (topics, series etc.) should also focus on and facilitate one and all of the following:

- Relationship with God:
Studying the Word / Prayer / Bible Meditation Praise & Worship.
- Giftings of God:
Gifts of the Father (Romans 12:6-8); Son (Ephesians 4:11-14) and Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7-10) – how these apply to some and all.
- Function and relationships in the body:
Where we all fit in, the rank or place we occupy and what we are to supply to the body (1 Corinthians 12:18 / Ephesians 4:16).
- Release into ministry: personal and public.
Playing our part in service and witness (Mark 16:15 / Acts 1:8).

Evaluate your teaching and preaching balance and ask the Lord for wisdom where and when you need to ‘plug any gaps’. For example you may focus on the how to’s of practical Christian living and totally ignore the simplicity of a love relationship that the Lord wants to have with his people. Sometimes we are so task oriented in our approach to God that we forget that at the heart of our relationship is pure love, and no work.

Then, do not shy away from going over material and thus serving your people by reminders. Jesus Himself – the perfect teacher and preacher - had to repeat Himself: “again I say to you” (Matthew 18:19; 19:24). Peter put it this way:

12 For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you,... **2 Peter 1:12-13**

Counter the tendency to ‘settle’ by stirring up your people by way of timely reminders of the truth, even though they ‘know and are established in the present truth’ – Vs 12. Have you ever noticed how you can slip back from ground you personally had once held. That is why Romans 10:17 teaches that faith comes by ‘hearing’ and continually hearing.

Preaching Towards A Target

*2 And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword;
In the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me,
And made Me a polished shaft;* **Isaiah 49:2**

It has been said that if you aim at nothing you are sure to hit it. God want our teaching and preaching to be marked with clear purpose. The son of man came seeking those whom He may save. His preaching was with purpose; in fact everything he did was with a specific target in mind.

It is useful to summarize a single main focus for any teaching or preaching session and write it down. Very often it is reflected in your title. If you have more than one, you may have too much and diffuse your efforts. State your focus at the start of your session and stick to it. Wandering is not always an indication of the anointing; rather it may be a sure sign of ill-discipline!

Here are some pointers to use to improving your aim.

- Identify the goal for the session.
Information / Inspiration / Impartation.
- Use appropriate tools to communicate to a variety of learning styles.
Visual / Tactile / Auditory.
- Build into your message the appropriate response you are expecting.
Altar calls, prayer, ministry, sign up / follow up action.
- In your challenge provide pathways for people to apply what they have heard.
If it's to visit those in prison: actually facilitate ministry in this area.
- Afterwards solicit and listen to feedback.
Verbal - from trusted, honest counsellors / Twitter / Website / Testimony.

Questions To Ask Yourself

It takes courage to look at yourself in all honesty without a sense of condemnation, guilt, or frustration. Use this list as a sharpening stone.

- Does my preaching primarily inspire, inform or impart? Titus 2:15
How can I balance out all three elements?
- Do I teach the how to's of living life in Christ?
2 Timothy 3:16
Or do I focus mostly on the "You should's"?
- Is the Word like fire – does it burn in me?
Jeremiah 20:9
Or do I communicate a 'take it or leave it' attitude?
- Do I preach a balance between the humanity and deity of Christ? Isaiah 9:6
Is Jesus up close or far away?

- Am I too culturally 'cool' to make any difference?
2 Timothy 4:2
To make a difference you have to be different – gone on ahead, seen and experienced things to come before others.
- As a pastor am I prepared to be more than an 'instructor'? 1 Corinthians 4:15-16
Fathers guide, guard and govern.
Fathers impart life / initiate.
- Am I cerebral or emotively engaging? Acts 2:37
Greek Mindset: concepts & wisdom of words. 1 Corinthians 1:17
Hebrew Mindset: commitment & Christ crucified. 1 Corinthians 1:23/2:3-4
- Is my preaching focused on law or grace? John 1:17 / Romans 8:2
Is my emphasis on the finished work of Christ or on attaining to a position through behavior modification and steps of human effort.
- Do I 'rightly divide' the word of truth or confuse the covenants? 2 Timothy 2:15
Or do I interpret the New Testament through Old Testament glasses?
- Is my preaching characterized by the spirit or the letter of a matter? 2 Corinthians 3:6
Do I encourage living from the inside out or from the outside in?
- Am I preparing, presenting, promoting or facilitating the way forward? Isaiah 62:10
What is my focus for the session?
- Do I tend 'twist' the scriptures to make them fit what I want to say? 2 Peter 3:16
Am I tempted to come up with something 'exotic' and 'extreme'?
- Do I make the difference between good and evil clear? Ezekiel 22:26 / Hosea 9:7 / Zephaniah 3:4
Have I learned to separate good from evil when it is not clear? Isaiah 7:15
- Do I want to be remembered for preaching Christ and Him crucified? 1 Corinthians 2:2
Or do I have some other doctrinal trademark?

Apostle Paul's Preaching Tips To Pastor Timothy

An apostle 'fathers' his sons in the faith. Good fathers are prepared to say things others won't. This is what Paul did in the preaching advice he gave to the young yet successful Timothy.

- Preach only that which edifies and avoid endless genealogies / fables or topics that lead people to dispute or intellectually argue. 1 Timothy 1:4 / 6:3-4

- Use the law 'lawfully' – to show sinners three things: God's holiness, man's sinfulness, and Jesus as the solution. 1 Timothy 1:8
- Don't be seduced into preaching doctrines of demons who deceive and detract from God's purposes; forbid marriage and certain foods. 1 Timothy 4:1
- Reject profane and old wives tales. 1 Timothy 4:7
- Focus on reading, exhortation and doctrine.
1 Timothy 4:13
- Teach and exhort proper relationships between masters and servants: employers and employees.
1 Timothy 6:2
- Use these measures to see if you are producing right results. 1 Timothy 6:4-5
Envy / Strife / Reviling / Disputes / Arguments / Greediness
- Avoid profane and false babblings & contradictions (false knowledge). 1 Timothy 6:20
- Give unashamed testimony of the Lord. 2 Timothy 1:8-13
When you face difficulties the suggestion is that serving God is shameful.
The context of 2 Timothy is continued preaching of the unadulterated gospel despite the difficulties Paul faced. 2 Timothy 3:10-12
Focus on the scriptures, and don't be tempted to 'rework' (interpret) scripture in the light of bad experiences, but keep focused by interpreting bad experiences in the light of scripture. Scripture is enough!
2 Timothy 3:16-17 – It covers everything.
- Preach the Word. 2 Timothy 4:2
In time some people turn away (depart) from the truth (faith) and seek only to be 'spiritually coddled' by nice doctrine that essentially feeds their flesh (1 Timothy 4:1-7).
Sound doctrine is 'wholesome', 'whole bodied' like organic unrefined whole wheat bread (carrying all the nutrients) and not 'fables' - Vs 4

A 'fable' that Paul warns against means a 'fictional' story, saying or myth that usually focused on 'gnostic' errors or hidden knowledge that only some special initiates were privy to. Truth is universally available in Christ to all whether they are initiated or not!

In the book of **Titus** Paul continues to give preaching and teaching advice in both chapters one and two.

- Hold fast the faithful Word. 1 Vs 9
Why? Because you come under pressure to back off the truth.
- Avoid impure motives for dishonest gain. Vs 11
- Be prepared to rebuke because it produces soundness. Vs 13
- Filter out unhelpful traditions of men. Vs 14
- Speak sound doctrine. 2 Vs 1-6
Sober mindedness among older men
Temperance or sober minded self-control
Old women to purvey practical truth to next generation.
- Doctrine marked by integrity, reverence, incorruptibility and sound speech. Vs 7
'Sound' means wholesome and that which promotes health.
- Practical market place exhortations to make witness pure. Vs 8
- Speak the things listed in Vs 12-14
Deny godliness / live soberly / look for Jesus to come back / be purified people zealous
for good works.
- Exhort and rebuke with all authority. Vs 15
- Remind people how to live as a witness in society / watch your tongue / maintain good works
and avoid foolish verbal disputes, genealogies... 3:1-9

The above list should provide a broad picture of the 'field' of preaching endeavor. They highlight pertinent and practical truth that the Holy Spirit will honor by anointing to the hearer, for He is the Spirit of Truth and not obliged to uphold 'faddish' or 'cute' doctrine devoid of the testimony of Jesus.

Different Strokes For Different Folks At Different Times Milk And Meat To A Mixed Audience

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; 1 Corinthians 3:1-2

Our mandate is to bring a Word suited to the needs of the people we minister to. Of course not everyone is at the same place in their walk with God. Some require milk and some meat. Milk speaks of growth and development, whereas meat speaks of strength for producing results. Then there are people

who are raw and tender having being bruised by life's knocks. They are like 'bruised reeds' or 'smoking flaxes' needed tender care. They are barely getting by, surviving in life, and certainly not thriving. They ought not to be blown away by some overly forceful approach, but rather carefully nurtured with sensitivity.

*2 He will not cry out, nor raise His voice,
Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.*

3 A bruised reed He will not break,... **Isaiah 42:2-3**

Paul encourages us to be gentle like a nursing mother and impart (share) our very lives as well as the gospel. The imagery is one of tenderness and warm fondness. This atmosphere is conducive to growth and is marked not by weakness but quiet strength through acceptance.

7 But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. 8 So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.

1 Thessalonians 2:7-8

On the other hand religious hypocrites, the Pharisaical types in church even, get different treatment. The Lord rebuked them on several occasions, calling them 'vipers' – Matthew 12:33 and 'empty tombs' – Matthew 23:27. They brought this sharpness on themselves by their pride, envy and refusal to repent.

The wisdom and favor of God is needed to cater for a mixed audience in any one church congregation. A truthful but non-judgmental spirit will keep your preaching pure, and accurately reflect the Father's heart. He desires all men to be saved and delivered from themselves, the devil, ignorance and hypocrisy, but wants you not to be weak or compromising.

Preaching With Persuasive Power Naturally Supernatural

15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." **Mark 16:15-18**

2:1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. **1 Corinthians 2:1-5**

A supernatural ministry is not an optional extra in a preacher's arsenal. God is supernatural and if we co labor with Him the supernatural becomes a natural occurrence. God is bringing His church back to a place of commonplace miracles as it was in the book of Acts with one difference. The intensity will be greater. Whenever God restores something, He does it with abundance. The former and the latter rain (Joel 2:23-31) will fall together with greater power and demonstration which is now being fulfilled in many parts of the World where revival is welcomed and facilitated.

Acts 4:29 underlines the vital necessity that healings, signs and wonders follow the preaching of the Word. The disciples were being pressured to shut down on their preaching with power. They appealed to God to embolden them to continue preaching unashamedly with charismatic power. They asked for and enjoyed a 'refilling' of The Holy Spirit and continue to preach boldly in the face of intense opposition.

29 Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:29-31

Chapter 4

How to Set Up an Effective Website

Introduction

First impressions are vital. First time visitors to your website take only ten seconds on average to decide whether they will continue looking. In a world where people encounter hundreds and sometimes thousands of highly professional marketed messages per day, your website cannot afford to be poorly designed and presented.

Research shows that up to 70% of visitors to any church go online first to familiarize themselves with the ministry. In America, 50 million people seek answers for spiritual questions on the internet. Your church's website is not just a sign 'over the door' on cyberspace; rather it is a vital tool in furthering the gospel.

These tips are designed to encourage an efficient and effective use of your church's website. They do not cover technical 'IT' stuff in any detail - that's for the techno guys you should use.

What Makes A Good Website?

Not all websites are good. A good website is one that fulfills the purposes for which it is designed. The first step is to clarify why you are setting up your website, and then design it to match your purposes. A good website must have a clearly defined set of purposes and a design that facilitates them. Thinking things through with these tips will help clarify things and make the website a sharper tool.

The Main Purposes Of Your Website

Essentially the website should help you fulfill any church's stated mission of reaching, serving and discipling people. Specifically this involves identifying at least the following three purposes.

#1 An outreach tool - engages the community.

How to know God & other relevant & current spiritual topics / Maps & directions / Service times / What to expect etc.

#2 An inreach tool - facilitates communication within the church itself. Your website must reach both visitors or guests and members or partners at both an information and interactive level.

Signups / calendar of events / news / prayer requests / online donations / blogs / Testimonies

#3 A resource tool - equips people to fulfill their calling to know God & make Him known.

Podcasts / articles / Video clips / CD's / Books / etc.

What Makes A Website Efficient and Effective?

Your website is all about effective communication and appeal. To this end it must be visually appealing, (how it is presented), and contain content that is useful, relevant, current, interesting challenging and enlightening (the what). You want to give people reasons to come back to your sight.

The following five areas of focus are highlighted.

#1 Visual Design

The design must compliment and not detract from the sites' main purposes.

- Graphics are not just decorative but purposefully chosen to communicate content.
- Suited to your intended and known audience E.g. Use recognizable local landmark photos... say Seattle's Space Needle, Sydney's Opera house, Cape Town's Table Mt.
- Images should be brief and not too 'busy' and thus overwhelming.
- Graphics and color are to reflect your church's flavor: E.g. Youthful, alive etc.
- Choose symbols, logos that have wide appeal.

#2 Structure and Navigation

This gets people to where they want to go quickly and easily.

- Domain name to be simple, short as possible, and easily remembered.
- User friendly with 2-3 clicks at the most to get to desired page / action.
- Structured the way people think and process what they see.
- Consistent approach to all pages.
- Gives people options.
- Clear bold labels: don't need glasses to see them.
- Use common phrasing: E.g. Use 'Youth Ministry' with its name as subtitle.
So, 'Youth Ministry' – Explosion / 'Woman's Ministry' – Girlfriends...
- Use brief titles, not long phrases as subheadings.
- Up to date with current technology so that new users are not put off by any 'old' and relatively slow or inefficient technology.

#3 Interactivity

The site must give and gain information.

- Users can do sign ups, donate, send contact details, prayer requests and praise reports.
- Secure online donations.
- 'Ask the pastor a question' facility.
- E-mail / e-newsletter signups.

#4 Functionality

The experience of the site is central and not the technology itself.

- All media: podcasts, flash videos, pop ups, photo galleries must work.
- Loading time must be short.
- Limit scrolling down need.

#5 Content

The content must effectively communicate with both visitors and members alike.

- Must put a friendly welcoming 'face' of both leadership and members to the site that people can easily relate to.
- Easy to read, short and 'punchy' – provide 'More' links if content has to go deeper.
- Convey a sense of: "This is the kind of church I want to, and can be part of."
- Easy directions / map / Service times.
- What to expect: parking, kids, clothes, music, etiquette...etc.
- Media resources: Podcasts, YouTube's, Vimeo's, Books, CD's, Blogs, Free articles of relevant & current interest.
- Testimonies of lives changed.

The All-important 'Home Page'

The first page most visitors will visit is your homepage. It must set out clearly, quickly and simply the following key elements (everything else is subordinate to these):

- What's on your website.
- Where to find it.
- How to contact you.
- Why they should explore further.

As a general rule your homepage should look slightly different to the rest of your site. It's then recognizable as the base camp to which visitors can return and explore from.

Most people don't read websites – they scan them. There are millions of pages out there and life isn't long enough to read them all. Split your homepage into chunks so that visitors can quickly assess whether there's anything on your site they want. Link these to more detailed content on separate pages.

Expand Your Influence And Drive Traffic To Your Site

Have your website address on everything you print and show visually (Example: Projections during service announcements etc.).

Develop and use 'touch cards' with your website address on them. A touch card is your congregations church invite business card.

Send out a monthly email newsletter and avoid postage costs. Your members can also forward this to their friends providing a non-invasive way to invite them to look into the church via the links on the e-newsletter to the church's website. The e-newsletter can be used for weekly / monthly and upcoming events, and cut down on bulletin costs. (Wean your people off printed bulletins). Work at collecting e-mail addresses during church services and via signups to build your database.

The emails are easily put together and can be done in a very short time and sent out immediately. Companies that provide this service are Constant Contact, Intellicontact and Mailbuild. These are reputable services that provide powerful tools to get the job done.

If you send out mailers, insert a postage paid return envelope asking for e-mail addresses.

Train secretaries, staff and team leaders to ask for e-mail addresses when people call in or they interact with them. This can be a very fast way of building your database.

Sign up people on the visitors on the spot at your guest / visitor / info center before or after services.

Make sure every single printed or web form that the church uses has a required e-mail field on it. It is just as important to capture an e-mail address as it is a phone number or a physical address.

Use a social networking site like Facebook to promote your e-newsletter. Social networking is such a fast way to meet your friend's friends that it creates a literal snowball effect if you use it to your advantage. Once you begin collecting friends and followers to your account, start posting teasers or teaching nuggets that are associated with the content of your current e-newsletter and just end the teaser with a link to either the e-newsletter on your website or the place on your website where they can subscribe to receive your e-newsletter. Remember – the people that will be seeing your 'posts' on your Facebook or Twitter accounts are more than likely not going to take the time to visit your website.

Another effective way is to develop separate websites for the different departments of your church or ministry. If the youth group, children's department, college ministry, and praise and worship team all have separate websites, that's four quality sites (that you control) that can be linking to the main church website (and vice versa) while at the same time helping those areas to create their own identity and communication tool for all involved. A note of caution: this needs to be done according to practices that will not 'sandbox' (send to oblivion) your main website.

Update Your Website Regularly

A website that is not updated regularly tells the visitor that the website exists only to serve the purpose of saying that you have a website, and that no real time or effort has been put into making sure that the site can be used as a valuable tool to anyone on a regular basis.

When you keep an updated or 'fresh' website, not only are you telling your website visitors that you are in the business of providing a tool that they may want to use, but you are also telling the search

engines that your site is a relevant search for people that enter search criteria that matches your site. When search engines return to crawl a website only to find that it no changes have been made to the content, it will eventually become invisible in the search engines because it has become clear that the site will not provide up to date and relevant information.

Update your site at least once every month, *especially* the home page.

First Steps In Getting Started

Here are the simple steps for planning your website:

- Identify the goals of your website.
- Identify your audience: visitors and members.
- Create a content list that achieves your goals.
- Make the content relevant to your audience.
- Divide this list into pages.
- Draw a chart of links between pages.
- Create a navigation scheme that links these pages in a simple consistent way.

Technical Stuff for IT To Look Into

These few tips get you pointed in a good direction.

- Search engine visibility that drives enquirers to your site is encouraged by the fact that your site a) answers typical questions and b) uses common language. Search engines like Google do not read pictures, so it is important to have a appropriate word or text content.
- ‘Optimizing your site’ means to ensure that the title, description, and keywords for each page actually match the content itself for that page. Don’t go overboard on the keywords, either. Any more than 10 per page and you’re not doing yourself any good.
- Loading time for media stuff: flash videos, audio and video clips, downloads etc.
Ideally needs to be browser independent.
- Make sure the site has easy content management capability for updating.
- Be responsive to 56 kbps modems. Not everyone has high speed connections.
- Go online and Google ‘What makes a good website’ for more technical stuff.
- Before hiring anyone or a company to build your website, please ensure they have a proven track record of effective results. Ask for references and or portfolio.

Chapter 5

How to Conduct Business Meetings

*To everything there is a season,
A time for every purpose under heaven:*
Ecclesiastes 3:1

What is a 'Meeting'?

The act or process or an instance of coming together; an encounter.

An assembly or gathering of people, as for a business, social, or religious purpose.

Have you ever come away from a meeting, muttering, "That sure was waste of time". Or maybe you rushed out, excited that things are looking up, life in the office has meaning after all, let's go!

I have dragged my feet going into many a meeting, interested more in the menu of provided snacks, than in the agenda. I have even thought of ways to legitimately skip the meeting (without lying) and get on with some 'real work'.

Studies point out among surveyed professionals that as much as 50% of meeting time is unproductive and up to 25% of meeting time is spent discussing irrelevant issues. Typically, those surveyed complain that meetings are too long, are scheduled without adequate time to prepare, and end without any clear results.

Very often meetings are an encounter with boredom, where paper 'doodling' skills can be honed. Wow! Then there are other meetings that produce dramatic results. Huge things happen, and new direction and impetus is injected into the group. You were glad you were there, making history. We did that a few times in my years in a large growing ministry in South Africa. We saw a burgeoning congregation take its place on the national stage in dramatic times in that nation during the eighties and nineties. Some of those board meetings helped steer the mega-church from a few thousand into the tens of thousands. Yet all the business meetings were not pleasantly run affairs, quite volatile in fact. There were times when my wife knew the moment I walked in the door at home what kind of meeting it had been, just from the color of my face! Sometimes it was whiter than six months in the shade could produce.

Meetings can and do produce more benefits than costs, if they are conducted well. The purpose of this chapter is to outline some pointers on how to conduct staff or business meetings. (Another chapter will address how to conduct powerful congregational / church wide meetings).

Meetings Mean 'Team'

If you can do it all alone, why have a meeting? Meetings imply team work where some key elements are summarized as follows:

- T** - Tolerance of one another's weaknesses.
- E** - Encouragement of each other's efforts.
- A** - Acknowledgment of everyone's value.
- M** - Mindful that success depends on everyone.

The people you want in your team (and meetings) should be competent (able to do the stuff); have the right attitude (heart / character); and relational skills. If you don't have or are developing competence, character and 'chemistry' in the team, you may as well not have a team or meetings for that matter.

Patrick Lencioni defines five common dysfunctions of a team. These will impact how effective meetings are, and the leader is to work on creating an environment of 'health' in all these areas. They are:

- Absence of trust.
- Fear of conflict.
- Lack of commitment or 'buy in'.
- Avoidance of accountability.
- Inattention to results.

We are talking about relational lifestyle here. These issues must be addressed before, during and after the meetings. This amounts to a lifestyle – the way you relate and do things in your church or organization.

First, the leader must admit or convey a sense of his / her 'need' for input. He 'entrusts' himself to the team members and values their input. This builds confidence and trust as the people see you as being just like them. If you are seen as the all-powerful and all-knowing leader, then why bother to have others in the mix. The meeting becomes another example of your insecure power play. Trust can be built when you are real, transparent and vulnerable. In the church it is what 'every joint supplies' (Ephesians 4:16) that causes growth and edification in mutually respectful love.

Second, make 'healthy' creative confrontation everyone's business, not just yours. People will often look to you as their 'hit' man, and won't do it for themselves. They will refuse to talk about the 'elephant in the living room' – the central stumbling block facing everyone at the time. You have to draw it out of them so that hidden issues and fault lines are uncovered. If you don't, resolution cannot come. You are the leader and must obviously take the lead in this. It takes courage to promote 'spirited debate' so that the real issues come to the surface.

Third, to avoid a lack of commitment or 'buy in' on a decision, you have to be prepared to do the necessary leg work before a decision is made. If you make a decision too quickly, the decision may be 'sabotaged' after the meeting by a lack of commitment to it. So, different decisions take different

amounts of time to reach the point of 'planting the flag' and sticking to it. You don't want 'subtle noncompliance' after the meeting to derail your efforts during the meeting. Even small 'gaps' at an executive level can become chasms further 'down' in the organization or church as the communication process unfolds.

Fourth, leaders must follow up with accountability measures. Most followers are generally not self-starters (except at closing time), and therefore need accountability to ensure productivity. Without measures, mediocrity (setting your own standards) can set in. Measures are independent of personality, especially if they are agreed upon in mutual consultation between the leader and team members. Simple and regular reviews are better than cataclysmic moments and drama in an unsuitable setting under extreme pressure close to a deadline.

Fifth, if you don't pay attention to results, and slip into a mode of mere activity for activity's sake – a 'looking busy' treadmill, you diffuse effort once again. Productivity is defined as 'activity towards a target' or a defined end result. People become discouraged and morale weakens when goals are ignored or fudged. When you focus on results, you avoid being easily distracted. Achieving measurable goals should be clearly communicated and celebrated as a motivation to the team. Rewards for effort and attitude alone can send a signal that results don't actually count. So, be wise in how rewards are dished out.

The Benefits And Costs of Meetings

If time is largely measured by money, then the cost of a meeting equals the time taken times number of people. This gives you the man hours spent at a meeting. If you have twenty five people attend a two hour meeting that equals over a full work week for one employee. Depending on the results the meeting produces, you might want to seek ways to be more efficient in conducting meetings. The first step is to recognize that there different types of meetings. One size does not fit all.

Different Types Of Meetings

Not all meetings are alike and are usually held for one or more of the following reasons.

- To disseminate new information or provide feedback
- To receive a report
- To coordinate efforts and obtain group support
- To win acceptance for a new idea, plan, or system
- To reconcile a conflict
- To negotiate an agreement
- To motivate members of a group
- To initiate creative thinking within a group, and
- To solve a current problem within a group.

Some meetings may combine two or more of the above objectives, but if you try to do too much in one meeting, you run the risk of aiming at everything and hitting nothing.

Different types of meetings therefore demand different things. For example not everyone needs to be at a brainstorming meeting, only select people suited to this purpose. At general staff meetings that cover issues that directly affect everyone it sure helps if all staff are there to get it all from the 'horse's mouth' in person. The meeting's purpose drives the protocol: who needs to be there, where and when. Generally there are three categories of people to be invited to meetings: decision makers, implementers, and those affected by the decisions.

All meetings have some common elements. They need a facilitator / moderator or chairperson; a recorder to ensure key points and decisions are recorded; and the necessary participants whether they are to make a report, presentation or be there to ask and answer questions.

What To Do Before The Meeting

Decide whether a meeting is the answer to the matter at hand. Would a memo or e-mail do? Don't assume that another meeting will automatically solve everything every time. 'Google Wave' is something you might want to consider in facilitating group input and discussion.

Begin everything with the end purpose in mind. Do you want fresh ideas and discussion, or do you want to follow through with a focus on planning the implementation of a previous decided upon idea.

Establish and communicate the 'Who, What, Where, Why and When' of the meeting. Make sure the right people are to be there and always have a written and published agenda with its points prioritized in order of importance (in case you run out of time at least you have covered the most important items first). Have a general item at the end where people can bring something up that they could not get on the agenda before the meeting, if time allows. Everyone thinks their thing is important, so learn to manage agenda item inclusion according to the purpose of the meeting and the meeting roster as a whole.

Facilitate the distribution of the agenda and any relevant documentation or issues before the meeting. People need to know what is coming up so they can prepare. If too much is on the agenda, then people will not be able to prepare adequately. Start your meeting by checking whether people are up to speed in the pre meeting materials. Wise preparation is never lost time.

Set time limits for the meeting. Most people start to 'zone out' or lose focus after an hour. If you need more time, set a short bathroom break and get everyone back in the meeting room within five minutes. Punctual starts and endings promote integrity and morale as you send a signal that you value the participants time as much as you do your own. Having said that, build flexibility into the time frame: add a few minutes into the mix to allow for spontaneity or as some may put it: to allow the meeting to 'breathe'.

If needs be, create a weekly reporting roster that covers all departments say at least once a month. Everybody need not report each week: you don't want people manufacturing things to say when they are not important. Require that the reports are properly prepared and presented with time and length limits. In general, the shorter the better, say a minute or two.

I remember one meeting I attended where this person presented a razzle-dazzle report that seemed to bamboozle everyone for a while. A few months later, he was fired as it was discovered that he was a master, (up to that point), at obscuring the real truth about his responsibilities. Very often it is the people you don't fire, that harm you the most, not the ones you do. But that is another subject.

If there is food or refreshments available, encourage attendees to come early so that you can actually start proceedings on time. If the facility allows, serve it in the meeting room or right next door to save time and create a relaxing atmosphere. Heavy food will be counterproductive after a while, when it settles in the stomach. Be diverse: allow for the organic celery and broccoli types as well as the SAD types (Standard American Diet) if you are in America: starch and soda staples... go ahead have a giggle. Loosen up. Tea and scones for the Brits!

About the meeting venue: make sure it is comfortable, has enough air, microphones that work if needed, flipcharts, projection equipment etc., sound proof for confidentiality. We had a board room that had windows that opened out to passersby and other staff on higher floors. And we wondered how some stuff got out before the meeting was even over...!?

Ensure that everyone in the meeting can actually see and hear everything and also easily participate (see and hear, be seen and heard).

Most people say that for acceptable discussion to be encouraged, the number of participants ought not to exceed twelve. If more attend, the more formal the meeting becomes and the stricter the rules. Once again, the primary purpose of the meeting will very often drive decisions on size. If you want to brainstorm, a smaller the group is generally better. If you want to announce a salary increase, or communicate a victory, get everyone in and make it a celebration!

What To Do During The Meeting

The leader / meeting facilitator starts and ends the meeting. This person also ensures that the agenda points are covered; clarifies points made; summarizes positions and decisions taken; and generally steers the meeting so that it stays on track with the stated purpose. Out of hand conflict must be brought to order with wise discipline that does not let members get abusive, but at the same time does not stifle constructive debate.

The following checklist outlines the qualities and practices a meeting leader should be willing to have and follow:

- Engage with participants in light conversation during a "warm-up" session at the beginning of the meeting.
- Give the other participants an opportunity to present their ideas, opinions, and recommendations without interrupting or degrading their comments.
- Listen wisely and well to the other participants.
- Accept new or fresh thoughts and ideas expressed by other participants, provided these thoughts and ideas support the objective(s) of the meeting.
- Assist in the process of arriving at a consensus by combining ideas with those of others, reconciling them through compromise, or coordinating them with other ideas.
- Do away with non-relevant issues, perceptions, or personal conjectures as soon as they arise and before they can become disruptive. Determine what points raised can be later discussed perhaps at another meeting.
- Always be patient and flexible (but with caution). You do not want to be run over with irrelevance.

Start the meeting well by praying and encouraging the people's value to you and the church or organization. You might want to on occasion allow for a guest appearance of someone who can serve as a motivator / expert / friend / or 'spark plug' – just for a few minutes, in person, on speaker phone, Skype. Use whatever works for you.

Then diversify presentation methods: visual and auditory. Some people don't do well with pages and pages of typed notes. Mix it up. Use a tablet PC, Overhead, Flipchart etc.

Set a time limit on agenda items as a framework within which to work. If you don't, you can easily drift into a situation where one item dominates the whole time. However, be flexible and allow valuable discussion to proceed and naturally conclude. It takes practice and skill to get a 'feel' for when to step in and move things along without quenching valuable input.

Keeping Things On Track: Is Conflict Good?

Some call conflict 'passionate unfiltered debate', while others say it is plain old conflict. Whatever you call it; people are going to differ either internally in their thoughts or externally in their words and actions. If differences (conflict) are artificially pushed down through misunderstanding, their value or fear of unpredictable consequences, then the potential to make the most of differences is lost.

Conflict foiled Chamberlain's leadership in the dark days preceding the Second World War, yet it fueled Churchill's leadership months later. Churchill thrived in the battle and was bored by tame agreement. I guess that is why he lost the election immediately after peace was gained at the end of the war.

Artificial harmony or unity through appeasement amounts to a veiled manipulation by the other party, and is equally unproductive as great ideas remain unearthed and people shut down and maybe only partially commit to any decisions taken. Some call this resigned or even 'malicious compliance'. You don't want to be 'hit' by 'friendly fire' after the meeting through someone's frustration at not being heard. This is often expressed as passive aggression or low morale and poor interpersonal relations.

To ensure healthy conflict (input) the leader / facilitator must be comfortable with conflict themselves. Family conflict resolution background is an indicator here: fight or flight! As a leader you must dig for, demand, or encourage spirited debate.

Meetings must move the team forward, so positive results of this kind of interchange must be celebrated and rewarded. People who have the courage to contribute (disagree) must only be judged for their attitude, not for the content of their contribution.

Be aware also that there is a 'leveling effect' that occurs where people tend to meet in the middle of divergent opinions for the sake of consensus and thus give up thinking like an individual and more like a 'grey' group. On the other hand, this can be a good thing as it tends to curb autocratic decisions from a dominant individual, as well as wild unreasonable ideas from some other forceful personality.

Listening In A Meeting

19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;
James 1:19-20

Listening is a skill that must be learnt by the leader. Leaders are learners, and learners are listeners. Besides facts and figures and obvious contradictions, listen also for the following team function indicators:

- Creative thinking
- Attitude
- Frustration
- Tension
- Satisfaction
- Morale.

Meeting 'Hogs' And Other Personality Issues

People may have difficulty communicating due to age, sex, rank and personality differences. It is the leader's responsibility to note any of these potential barriers and create an environment of respect that facilitates effective and productive communication.

The leader must tactfully deal with people who 'love the sound of their own voice' on the one hand, and encourage participation from those that do not want people to even notice them at the meeting.

Respect all input but categorize it as either central to the current matter at hand or if it is peripheral, table it for later discussion or another meeting.

If a decision cannot be reached, the meeting has the potential of being defined as a failure. Equally if people are railroaded into following the chairperson / leader without 'buying in' then this is likely to end in failure too. Once again, it takes skillful leadership to coalesce members into action around clearly stated and valuable objectives. Someone somewhere is going to have to yield at sometime. This is life in the 'meeting jungle'.

End the meeting well by summarizing progress and agreed upon action items and follow up procedure. Credit must be given to those who made significant contributions, and unresolved conflict matters be tactfully dealt with. The leader is a problem solver, so look for ways in which issues can be solved after the meeting if needs be.

Remember 'activity' or the mere fact of having a meeting is not necessarily an 'accomplishment'. Results must flow from any meeting.

What To Do After The Meeting

Publish the recorded minutes of the meeting within twenty four hours when memories are fresh. These key areas must be covered in any after meeting follow up:

- Decisions made,
- Tasks assigned and
- Deadlines for follow up and completion.

The leader or assigned overseer must follow up with progress on any action items and due dates. This holds people accountable; otherwise the purpose for having the meeting is completely lost. When you follow up, you avoid the embarrassment and obvious inefficiency of getting together again and discovering that no progress has been made.

Follow up need not be in the form of another all-round meeting, but be targeted as much as possible using e-mails, memos, calls, texts etc.

Solicit feedback for how the meeting went from other people's perspectives. This may surprise you as people get different things from a meeting.

Don't undermine decisions. If new facts come to light, communicate these to relevant parties and inform everyone at the meeting of any changes.

Train meeting participants who are responsible to communicate decisions and items that affect their departments (if they have one). Teach them how to get people 'on board' with decisions and proposed action items made 'higher up'. It takes maturity and character to do this when the decisions are necessary but not popular.

A word on communication: simply because you know about and use modern communication tools, does not make necessarily make them effective. The communication process has three elements: transmission, reception and feedback. Do not assume that when something is sent out that everyone actually understands and therefore 'gets it'. You must require feedback, whether electronic or otherwise.

Summary

Hopefully these brief observations have stimulated you to consider making your meetings more effective. The value of an effective meeting may be summed up as follows: It serves as the cornerstone for successful team-building and overall progress within any organization. So take time to plan and prepare for your next meeting and make the most of your opportunities for group synergy.

Chapter 6

How To Lead A Worship Service

How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. 1 Corinthians 14:26-27

Introduction

Your church's public congregational services form the central 'hub' of the ministry's 'wheel'. How you conduct your services should send a signal to the congregation what is expected in the rest of the ministry during the rest of the week, and through all departments or sub ministries. Your congregational services will also provide the impetus and focus for the implementation of your overall vision.

If you want a spirit of excellence to pervade everything you do with and for God, then you must decide that a Biblical set of measures are to be used, and not some convenient set that you may have become accustomed to. Also it should be noted that 'little' changes here and there can make a significant difference to the whole. Very often you don't need 'major surgery', just a simple adjustments that add up.

The Measure Of Things

*Dishonest scales are an abomination to the LORD,
But a 'just' weight is His delight. Proverbs 11:1*

Every day, we measure time, size, speed, money spent, weight, suit & clothing sizes, etc. It's a fact of life. When we pump gas (or petrol) we want to be sure we are paying only for what we get, and not a cent more. Why would we be any different when it comes to church? When we get together corporately before God, the whole experience should be real and engaged with integrity, meaning and purpose.

God expects us to be people of purpose, and so if you aim at nothing you will hit it, so you may as well describe your target with some accuracy.

God always measures our motives, manner, methods and message. The why, what and how we do church counts with God. He wants us to build according to the 'pattern' and he is interested in **how** we build and of what **sort** (the quality) the ministry is (1 Corinthians 3:10, 13).

This chapter examines some pointers as to what constitutes a congregational worship service. As with all things in God it is not so much a matter of technique and professional polish but one of a right heart, humility and a desire to establish excellence.

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.
Acts 10:44

Structure your service so that it can ‘breathe’ – allowing flexible time for unforeseen things. For example, a particularly anointed song is sung longer than normal; prayer time goes on for a few extra minutes, a word of exhortation that was not planned, etc. The outer time limit (when a service should end) can be set, especially if there is another service following. Dismiss people (for children’s ministry etc.) if service is going on really long, let those who want to leave go, and invite the others to stay. This seems always to be a bit ‘messy’ with revival type meetings, but avoid quenching the Spirit.

Give your people an opportunity to **receive** from God in getting their needs met through prayer, ministry time, laying on of hands etc. Don’t rush on through the program for its own sake, nor try to make anything happen. Both are distasteful to the Lord. Learn to sense the ‘mood’ of the moment: whether the Holy Spirit wants to ‘linger’ or move on.

The congregation also needs an opportunity to **respond** to any challenge given in the preaching. God is always looking for a response to His presence and Word. All relationships involve two way interaction and response. Facilitate this response by means of an altar call, consecration time of prayer or bowing before the Lord etc. You cannot throw out a challenge, then suddenly dismiss the service and send the people home. After impartation comes consecration.

Guest ‘Sensitive’

The Bible gives us some guidelines as to how to be sensitive to the ‘uninformed’ in the things of the Spirit who attend a service. (See 1 Corinthians 14:1-39). This passage does not teach that we should bend over backwards to ‘filter out’ any Holy Spirit manifestations and ‘water down’ our services each week to supposedly avoid offending the uninformed. Any manifestation that is of God will be ‘attractive’ and not inherently offensive to the genuine seeker who is being drawn deeper into the things of God.

Most guests like to be greeted and welcomed but not smothered or totally ignored.

Train the congregation to be consistent with the friendliness your front door greeters’ show as people walk in. Use both genders and train some teenagers too for your greeters.

During service, if there is prophecy and / or tongues & Interpretation, give a short explanation and also refer to your website / card where you will have more detailed explanation of the Holy Spirit’s ministry. See the sample of points to put on the website and or guest card that explain ‘Spirit Filled Church Practices’ to the uninformed.

Your hospitality team should also be trained to answer questions and be proactive even with first time guests.

Other Practicalities

The goal in worship is to facilitate congregational participation and ‘entering in’. If the music is too loud people are ‘blasted’ and shut down on their participation. If too soft, they become self-conscious and don’t participate either.

Projection of words, announcements etc. The screen should be high enough that short people can see over the 'giant' that standing in front of them with his big hairy hands. Not too high that you have to pray for stick necks either. Check out positioning from all angles, front and back.

In the end, the style or medium of delivery (music, graphics,) must always facilitate the substance or message / content. You don't want the medium to overwhelm the message: after all, the gospel is the power of God to salvation, not song choice, tempo, and volume. In five or so years the 'style' will change again, but the eternal gospel will not.

Summary Questions To Ask Yourself

Is the person of the Lord exalted and the center of attention or is the preacher, program or presentation?

Are the people being equipped, edified and exhorted to fulfill God's kingdom vision?

Website Post / Card Explaining 'Spirit-Filled' Church

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: 1 Corinthians 12:7

Post the Scriptural foundation for some of the more demonstrative influences and ministry of the Holy Spirit on your website and/or make a card available to your guests and/or anyone 'uninformed' in the things of the Spirit. The following sample points should prove useful.

Why Do I See or Hear...

- People clapping and shouting?
(Exuberance is an expression of love for God)
"Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples
Shout to God with the voice of triumph!" Psalm 47:1
- People raising their hands?
(Lifted hands are the body language of praise)
"Thus I will bless You while I live;
I will lift up my hands in Your name." Psalm 63:4
- People giving their money in an offering?
(Support for the work of God comes from willing people who recognize the value of giving)
"Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering." Exodus 25:2
- People being prayed for with the laying on of hands?
(Hands communicate love by touch)
"...they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." Mark 16:18

- People being anointed with oil?
(Oil is symbolic of God's healing power)
"...and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."
James 5:14
- People falling when prayed for?
(The power of God overwhelms the natural)
"And I fell to the ground..." Acts 22:7
- People sometimes speaking or singing in unknown languages or 'tongues'.
(When we are 'full' of God, we overflow!)
"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:3-4
- Prophecy or inspired utterance from the Spirit
(Another form overflow from a person's heart to edify, exhort and encourage in the known language of the person or group)
"But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men".
(1 Corinthians 14:3)
- People called out with a 'word' of knowledge
(God shows a leader/minister something – a part of your life in order to help you.)
"...to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit". (1 Corinthians 12:8)

You don't want to come across to the people as apologetic of the Holy Spirit's ministry, only as 'guest aware'. Remember you will never please everybody all the time, so don't even try to when it comes to the things of the Spirit. If you do, over time things are likely to be 'watered down'.

Chapter 7

How to Maximize Guest Ministry

For you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain. 1 Thessalonians 2:1

Introduction

To ensure that guest or visiting ministry is the blessing you intended for the church, it helps to take care of the structure and logistics of their visit with some thought and foresight. Some of these pointers may be simple and fairly obvious to many leaders, but they all work together to make the most of guest ministry. It is assumed that you have prayed, and are led by the Holy Spirit as to whom is to come as your guest, and when. So to make the most of their visit makes a lot of sense.

Before Your Guest Ministry Arrives

1. Establish the purpose and expectations of the guest ministry whether it be for: Speaking / Music / Combination / Seminar / Moving in the Spirit / Evangelistic focus etc.

It is good to confirm this in writing with the ministry to clarify expectations and set the focus for the meeting/s. It is better to lay everything out up front than have regrets later on after all is said and done. Things like who will do altar calls, time to preach, and who and how offerings will be taken up. Some large ministries use meetings to solicit partners for their ministry. You should decide beforehand if this is what you want at your meetings. If these are sensitive issues with you, they will be more sensitive if you don't address them in advance.

2. Prepare the people ahead of the scheduled meetings to encourage them to anticipate and receive guest ministry with an expectancy of faith. Avoid 'hype' or exaggerated claims and questionable manipulation of emotions.

Jesus sent out His disciples ahead into the surrounding towns to prepare the people.

After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Luke 10:1

Guest ministry is most effective (the people receive the reward) when the leadership are seen to set the tone in warmly receiving them.

He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. Matthew 10:41

Make the necessary practical arrangements and promotions for the guest ministry whether by means of Promotional Video / Photos and Posters / Verbal Pulpit Announcements / Flyers / E-mail blasts / Facebook / Twitter / Website posts etc... If you do not make the effort in this area, it conveys the message that the special guest ministry is not really that special.

3. At service or session time, allocate someone to assist you (lead pastor) as a 'go to' person to help host the guest ministry, thus freeing you up to keep sensitive to overall service dynamic timing and flow.

4. Make timely arrangements for transport, airport pickups etc. - you want to maximize their ministry, not tire them out through any inefficiency or lack of foresight. Clearly communicate what you are prepared to pay for. If the budget allows, offer to pay for a spouse or 'armor bearer' as may be fitting.

5. Let your guests know what audio-visual capabilities your ministry has, so that any materials they may wish to play or project can easily be facilitated. Do this with plenty of time in hand, as you do not want to be scrambling a few minutes before the service as the worship team is rehearsing and everyone is arriving for the meeting.

During Their Stay

Hospitality is a Biblical practice (Titus 1:8). Choose a suitable restful place for them to stay according to their need, and the budget. Check on what to feed them, (any special needs) and leave them enough time to rest and prepare for the meetings. Don't cram in all sorts of local things to do and see. You might want to facilitate hotel check ins and provide a guest basket with healthy refreshments. If their stay is long 'top these up' where necessary.

Where possible make 'private' transport available so that if they want to visit a local park, gym, mall or run an errand, they are free to do so on their own timetable. Don't oblige your guests to attend all sorts of meals. Arrange your own time to fellowship with them; otherwise give them the space they might need.

1. Before the service: Restructure the service to maximize the effectiveness of your guest ministry.

- Songs sung; time spent in songs and other service aspects; announcements etc. Don't have a 'normal' agenda and then expect the guest ministry to deliver extraordinary results in the short time at the end you have left them.
- Communicate with key personnel any changes in schedule to promote cooperation and unity of purpose in the meetings: Worship leader, Sound and Tech team, Service Director or Head Usher / Hostess, and the person assigned to your guest as their 'go to' helper.
- Arrange for any resource material they may have brought with them to be easily available at designated area (resource table).

- When guest ministry is with your church maximize their visit and their resources: you brought them in to be a blessing to your people, so don't 'hide them away' when they come.
- Be sure they know where the bathroom is, have room temperature water, not cold as it is not good for the voice. Let your guest know when they will be presented during the service and when you expect them to be finished ministering.

2. During the service: Be sensitive to facilitate anything that might be needed to maximize your guest ministry.

- If possible, introduce them earlier on in the service so that they can start ministering when they get up without any unnecessary break in the flow of the service. If you have prepared your people before the visit, there won't be need for long introductions that take up time.
- 'Start the clock' for the guest ministry when they actually start ministering (after any introductions and announcements regarding resources etc).

3. After the Service: Depending on your protocol, and whether you your guest is to minister in multiple services, escort them accordingly. Don't leave them 'hanging' at the end of the service. Their host / hostess or 'go to' person should accompany them at all times. If you are speaking to congregants, join your guest as soon as you can as a matter of courtesy. They need your support and useful feedback and encouragement after the service. (Hopefully the meeting won't be a train wreck)!

After Their Stay

Tactfully solicit feedback and testimony about the ministry from your congregation. This should serve to encourage the guest ministry and 'sharpen' our ministry swords. Maybe you want to go so far as to get your personal assistant to develop a short feedback form that your guest can use to give you feedback on how they thought things went. Of course you can handle certain things on a personal level yourself, but other logistic matters can be assessed and improved upon by means of the follow up form.

Be sure that honorariums and or offerings are properly handled. Don't be handing the guest ministry an open check in public as they leave the door. Be generous, (1 Timothy 5:18) and personally bless them in giving and prayer as they go. If you receive a special offering for their ministry, and it is low, supplement it from the general funds – the laborer in God's word is to be honored in this way. A note of thanks a few days later will bless them greatly. Assist their departure by facilitating (if applicable) hotel check out arrangements and transport.

Finally, make sure all your assistants that deal with their stay have your heart and properly represent you and the ministry. Honor given is honor received.

On The Other Hand... How Guest Ministry Should Treat Their Hosts

If you are a guest minister yourself, here are some things to remember as you co labor with your host ministry and endeavor to show mutual respect for the pastor / leadership that has invited you (2 Corinthians 6:3-4). When you encourage respect for the pastor in the eyes of the congregation, you will please the Lord and be better received by the congregation itself. It's a matter of humility and will be a win - win moment in the life of the church.

1. Communicate any legitimate special needs you may have in terms of diet, accommodation etc. I am not talking about being 'over the top' expectations like fancy bottled waters, chocolate on your pillow etc.
2. Recognize you are a guest in his / her 'house'. Sincerely honor the leadership before the congregation. They were there before you came and will be there after you leave. Respect the staff and volunteers too.
3. Endeavor to build and strengthen the local vision and mission of the church you are ministering at. Your goal is not to receive an offering and build your own ministry. Rather you are there to impart a blessing and make a God ordained 'divine deposit' in the people. You have come to give, not to take!
4. Be open to fellowshiping with the pastor who may need someone trustworthy 'outside the loop' to share with. Be that trustworthy one and keep matters to yourself and the Lord. Don't be known as the 'travelling gossip'.
5. Stick within the time and other ministry guidelines for the meetings, especially if there are multiple services back to back. Don't wear the people out promoting your resources and then minister only for a few minutes at the end.
6. Engage with the pastor before the meetings as to content and purpose. You could be a help here, as oftentimes a guest minister can bring a fresh perspective on something that is needed. Then again avoid 'land mine' topics that are controversial doctrines. You are not to 'blow in, blow up and blow out' leaving the pastor to 'clean up' after you. Good doctrine is wholesome or sound, and will build up the saints.
7. Don't spring any travel surprises on your host. For example, if you happen to bring family or an entourage along with you, the arrangements need to be agreed upon before travel bookings are made. Don't be presumptuous and put pressure on anyone. Be proactive in this area.
8. Avoid any pressure to perform or impress at the meetings or anywhere for that matter. Be yourself as you minister. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit, but never 'force' a move of the Spirit. Be confident in the Lord in you and walk in His favor when you meet and minister to new people.
9. A handwritten note of thanks expressing your appreciation for the opportunity to minister would go a long way in promoting good relationships. Remember it is the little things in life that also count.

Conclusion

When ministers work together with mutual respect, there is a synergy that develops where you achieve more together than separately. God wants to produce wholeness and maturity through His five-fold ministry gifts (Ephesians 4:11-13). When you play your part by fostering respect and excellence between ministers, you glorify God and encourage growth in His people.