

Consider this ...

## The Framework for Men's Ministry

### 1. The Biblical Model for Making Disciples

The following men's ministry strategy will help you define a men's ministry. It is not a new strategy. Jesus used this approach during His ministry on this earth. He ministered to the masses, the 500, the 120, and the 70. He also ministered in more intimate settings: the 12, to three, and one-on-one. He found ways to minister to the needs of people no matter the event or the size of the group. Jesus knew how to touch people's lives in every situation and took advantage of every situation to help them to grow and mature.

### 2. Application of the Biblical Model for Men's Ministry

Every effective men's ministry must provide a variety of **entry points** that facilitate a man's involvement in the church. An exciting element of this strategy is that it provides **every** man

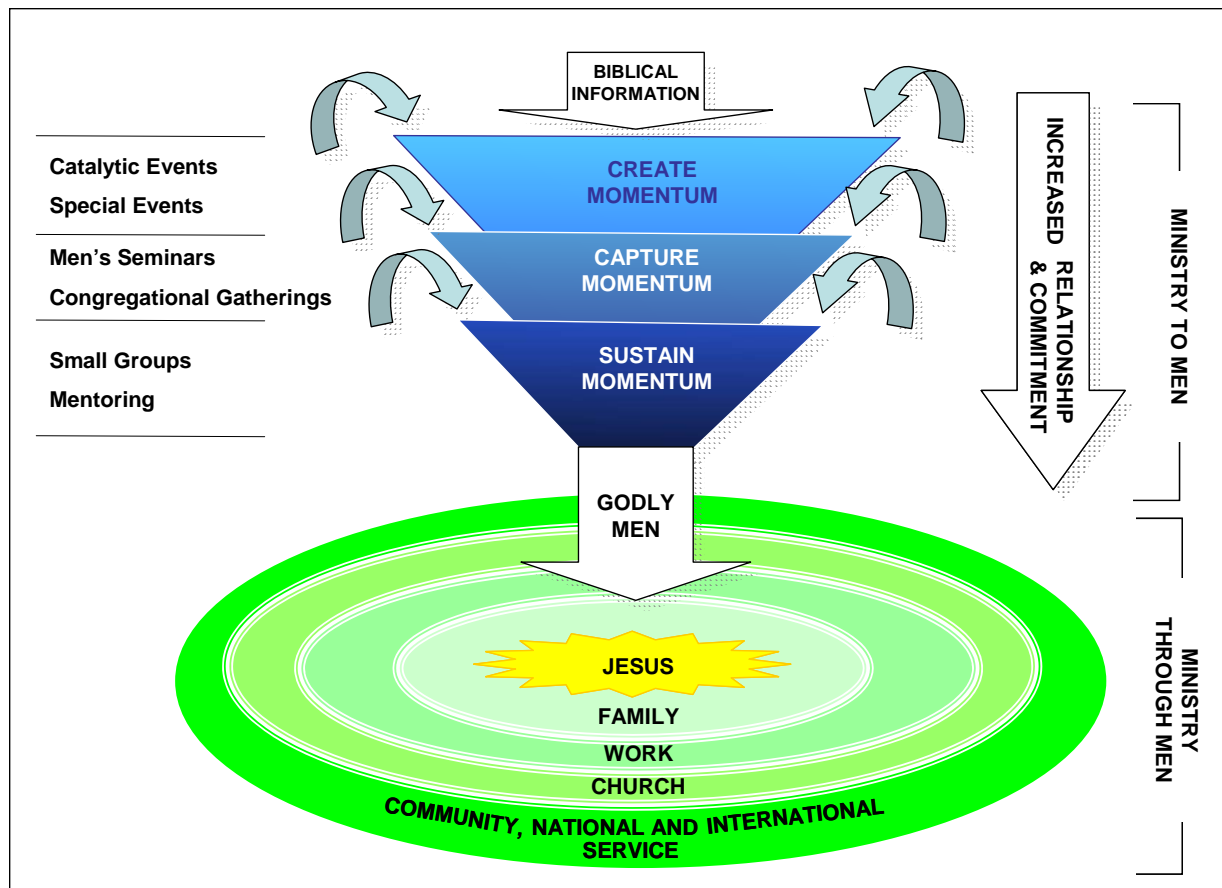
an opportunity to be involved at various levels, depending on his spiritual maturity and the time he has available.

As a man progresses down this "funnel," he will grow in biblical knowledge and understanding and develop a greater commitment to building relationships, applying his spiritual gifts and serving others.

The goal of the funnel strategy is to provide a developmental environment where a man can transfer biblical truth into action, so that he can learn to keep his commitments to Jesus Christ, his family, friends, church, and community and help build the kingdom at home and abroad.

### 3. Ministry to Men

The top portion of the funnel represents the events and experiences that make up ministry



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to your men. The objective of ministry to men is spiritual growth. Spiritual growth is not a linear process. Growth can be stimulated by any number of events or activities with varying degrees of spiritual emphasis. The fundamental question is: Do we have an intentional discipling strategy in our churches? In an intentional discipling strategy there should be events that *create momentum* for your men's ministry. Other events *capture momentum*, that is, engage the men and establish involvement in the fellowship. The third type of event *sustains momentum* over time. These events build on the *capturing* foundation and establish a commitment to the fellowship and to spiritual growth.

Within the top segment of the strategy, there are a variety of events, as described in the model below, that serve as entry points where a man can enter into a meeting of men. Some of these events are designed to be larger than others. For example, a men's catalytic event will normally be much larger than men's seminars or men's small groups. However, each meet a particular need and can be used by men when they are ready to get involved. A successful men's ministry is based on a variety of entry points.

### a. Creating Momentum

To create momentum, there are two types of events that can be used. A key principle in creating momentum is that men attend because other men ask them. These events begin the process for men to identify with a group of men, i.e., men doing things together.

#### **Catalytic Events**

The first entry point is catalytic events. See Matt 5-7 and John 6:1-14 for biblical examples of catalytic events. It has been said that the wisest of men are those that recognize their need to change. In many cases, men need to hear and see that they can experience a life of freedom and joy. Catalytic events are designed to capture men for growth. These events require the least commitment of ministry resources and do not require relational commitments from those attending.

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

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

#### **Special Events.**

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

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

- *Focus:* Special events focus on non-threatening activities, allowing men to begin to become acquainted with each other. They are not necessarily Bible toting events. Special events are organized by a local church to provide an entry point or "first step" for men on the periphery of the church or in the community (examples: outdoor events such as barbecues, softball games, fishing trips, basketball tournament, Super Bowl parties, men's ministry "kick off" breakfast, etc.).

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- *Implications for Your Church:* Special events are a way to publicize your church's men's ministry. Guys will enjoy these activities, and they are a good place for your men to bring their unchurched friends.
- *Key Questions:* Do the men know why you are doing a special event? Follow up for special events is crucial. What further opportunities for involvement will your church offer a new man? Are your men prepared to help a new man through that process? How will you encourage your men to invite their friends and acquaintances to your men's special events? Can you hold your event in a "neutral" location?

### b. Capturing Momentum.

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

#### *Men's Equipping Seminars.*

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

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

- *Focus:* Seminars and training sessions give men an opportunity to grow and to develop leadership skills. They are another good entry point for men on the periphery of the church (examples: Fathering seminars, marriage workshops, financial seminars, etc.).
- *Implications for Your Church:* Most of the men in your church know what they "should" do. Men's seminars encourage them and help show them how to do it. Men, their families, and your church will all benefit.

- *Key Questions:* Have you surveyed the men in your church to discover what seminars will address their needs? When the seminar is over, what are some ongoing men's activities in your church that would strengthen a man in his relationship with God and others?

### **Men's Congregational Gatherings:**

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

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

- *Focus:* These gatherings invite all the men in the church together for biblical teaching, fellowship and prayer. They challenge Christian men to interact and build up one another, as the men pursue godliness (Examples: monthly men's breakfasts,<sup>1</sup> men's retreats, workdays, etc.).
- *Implications for your church:* Your men need a place where they are encouraged in their walk with God and can develop friendships with other Christian brothers. A gathering at your church or a retreat site will begin to do that, as well as giving your men a "taste" of what can happen in a men's small group.
- *Key questions:* How will you plan your men's congregational gatherings in order to have a healthy balance of time for fellowship, prayer and scriptural teaching/application? What are some ways that you can strategically use the congregational gatherings to encourage your men to become involved in men's groups? When and where is the

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<sup>1</sup>Men's breakfasts in and of themselves do not make a men's ministry. As an entry point, they should be conducted as one piece in an overall men's ministry strategy. Consider having the pastor speak or invite an outside speaker. Speakers raise the bar in terms of event quality. Breakfasts can be a part of the creating or capturing momentum strategy.

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best time and place for the men in your church to gather together?

### c. Sustaining Momentum.

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

#### ***Men's Small Groups:***

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

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

- *Focus:* Men's small groups focus on understanding and applying scripture to the issues and challenges that men face. They provide practical Biblical teaching. Small groups offer a man the great opportunities for spiritual growth, because he chooses to become a member of a team committed to mutual support, self-disclosure, and honoring Jesus Christ in their relationships and church. These groups usually involve four to seven men meeting on a regular basis.
- *Implications for Your Church:* Men's small groups are vital to the spiritual health of the guys in your church. If your church is just starting or has few men attending, men's small groups are where you should begin. .
- *Key Questions:* How will you encourage and promote men's small groups in your church? Who are some men that are relationally strong and spiritually mature, who could serve as men's small group leaders in your church? What will you train your small group leaders with and when?

#### ***Mentoring:***

One-on-one discipling, or personal mentoring, is the most effective forum for long-term spiritual growth. It allows in-depth focusing on the challenges and issues facing men. Personal mentoring involves deepening interpersonal relationships providing high potential for encouraging the application of spiritual gifts and involvement in ministry. Personal mentoring can be face-to-face (John 3:1-21), or, in Paul's case, by correspondence. (Timothy, Titus and Philemon). Mentors can be successful using either prepared discipling resources or scripture studies.

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

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

### 4. Planning for Momentum

Momentum refers not only to moving men toward spiritual maturity, it also refers to moving a men's ministry toward maturity. The

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challenge, particularly in small churches, is gaining traction with limited resources. The men's ministry leader or core group may be overwhelmed when attempting to plan and conduct entry point events such as men's equipping seminars or congregational gatherings. Here are four approaches for planning and carrying out entry point strategies for gaining traction.

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

**Spread Events Out.** Set up a multiyear calendar and schedule events for future years. Key questions in this situation are: Who do we need to bring into our ministry? Which type of event will work best? Are there regional men's events that meet the entry point needs of our men?

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

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

## 5. Ministry Through Men

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

The ministry-*through*-men area of the model represent men who have progressed down the

funnel to spiritual maturity and are ready to serve in one or more areas of life. In our highly mobile society, men may come into your church that are spiritually disciplined, equipped and ready to minister. This is where men are released to do ministry, to pour their own spiritual maturity into others. It is the output of the "funnel." It is the active application of their faith.

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

- **Jesus:** The spiritual man is able to lead himself by being centered in Christ. Spiritually mature men take their direction, set priorities, and make decisions based on their relationship with God. Their lives are characterized by prayer, reading His Word and **worship**.
- **Family:** The spiritual man places a priority on his relationship to his family. His **legacy** is carried on through his family.
- **Work:** The spiritual man sees his work as a means toward an end. The marketplace is a place where he **models** Christian values and shares the gospel when opportunities arise.
- **Church:** The spiritual man has a **responsibility** to serve his church through his time, talents, and treasure. He serves as part of the local team in advancing Christ's kingdom.
- **Community, National and International Service:** The spiritual man's relationship with Christ will **influence** his world through secular or ministry services in the community, disaster relief or short-term mission trips.

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

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This article was adapted from a paper, *Why Minister to Men*, written by Dr. Dan Erikson, People Matter Ministries, May 1, 2004. The original article was prepared for the International Pentecostal Holiness Church Men's Ministry. We have integrated Erikson's discussion of five entry points into the Man-in-the-Mirror model of men's ministry (create, capture and sustain momentum). That integration is based on a seminar, *Focusing Men's Ministry in the Local Church*, presented by Chris Van Brocklin, Director of Men's Ministry, Evangelical Free Church of America presented at the 2004 National Coalition of Men's Ministry Conference, November 11-13, 2004. C&MA Men's Ministry further modified this material to highlight mentoring as an entry point, expand the "areas of influence," address issues faced by small churches and provide a list of suggested resources.