



Tell

Me

The

Story

Of

Jesus...

2012

Men's

Ministry

Plans

Tell Me the Story of Jesus

As a father, husband, teacher, friend, and Christian, the best words you could ever hear are "Tell Me the Story of Jesus." Whether those words are from the lips of a child or a friend you have recently met, to be able to tell the story of the One who has changed your life and gives us the gift of salvation, the joy is the same.

In 2012, you, as men, will again be challenged to be diligent in sharing the saving message of Jesus with lost people in your communities. Never before has there been such need or such opportunity as we have today. You are encouraged this year to lead your men to become reflections of Jesus as we carry the saving words of His life and message to everyone we meet.

Jim Didlake

Don Gann

Men's Ministry Department

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Telling the Story

Acts 4:20

Emphasis: To help men accept the responsibility of telling the story of Jesus.

Teaching: Matt Emmons was only one shot away from winning his second gold medal in the 2004 Olympics. He had performed so well he only needed a 7.2 score to win the fifty-meter three-position rifle event. He took his position, carefully aimed at the target, and squeezed off his shot. Yet the judges gave no signal; his target showed it had not been hit. Upon examination, it was found he had hit a target, just not his. He fired at the wrong target causing him to lose the gold medal.

How many of us today miss our opportunities to serve our Lord by setting our sites on the wrong target? How can we restructure our lives to become men with a common spiritual goal? How can we be spiritual storytellers?

- We must know what we possess as Christians from a personal experience. We must understand the game we are in. No coach or player can ever win a sporting event without knowledge of the rules and objectives.
- We must be aware of the players around us. How well do we know the guys in our church and mission group? Are we aware of their needs, talents, and abilities? Opportunities abound around us but we must know our capabilities to make a difference.
- We must be willing to get in the game. No team ever wins by their ability to sit and watch. They can only win if they compete. The early disciples quickly realized they needed to be in the world if they were going to make a difference. Men need that same excitement in sharing their faith.

Mission Application: There is a recipe for success in the Christian faith. It includes a belief in our Lord, practicing our faith, and giving it away by telling the story. Give your men simple witnessing tools that they can use in their daily walk. Consider having a training session for them on story-telling. Take time to pray that your church would be renewed and recommitted to engaging the community evangelistically. Make this a frequent prayer.

Notes

February 2012

Love in Action

James 2:14-17

Emphasis: To help men understand that loving God must translate into loving people through words and deeds.

Teaching: James teaches us that loving Jesus involves much more than theory and theology. It must prove itself through acts of kindness to others to be authentic. Notice that James says simply confessing Christ as Lord is not enough to persuade people that you indeed know the Lord. Biblical faith always involves action or it is not truly biblical faith.

Is your faith in Christ causing you to get involved in the human need within your community? Do you know what the most pressing needs are in your neck of the woods? Sometimes we as Christians are so cocooned in our own little worlds that we are oblivious to the have-nots.

Recently a group of pastors and I toured our city and visited four human needs agencies on the front lines of meeting needs. Our eyes were opened and our hearts were broken over what we saw and heard. Because of the bad economy many of the shelters are struggling to feed the masses of people coming their way.

As we came back to our churches and showed the videos our people became burdened to intervene and thus we are now collecting food the first Sunday of every month and delivering it to one of the food banks. Faith in God has sprouted feet and legs. We are truly being the body of Christ each time we love people through action.

Mission Application: Are you ready to put your love for Jesus into action? Start by getting in touch with those in your community who need assistance. Ask your pastor if he knows of a family that needs help. Then make yourself and your church available to assist. Visit some of the human agencies in your community. See what their pressure points are. Ask how you can help.

Notes

Praying for Renewal

Luke 18:1-8

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Emphasis: To help men realize the importance of renewal in their spiritual lives.

Teaching: In almost every town in Mississippi, there's an informal gathering place where the latest political issues are discussed. Men may gather at a restaurant, convenience store, farm supply center, or coffee shop. If you have listened to these rap sessions, you have probably heard someone say, "This country is in a mess!" Well, in many ways that is true. Foreign threats to our peace, financial uncertainty, and rampant immorality indicate that our world is in chaos, confusion, disarray...a mess. Many people see no hope for their communities and nation to be pleasing to God. But, does talking about problems seem to solve them?

During his ministry, Jesus faced a similarly messy world. His people, the Jews, were oppressed by the ruling government. Many religious leaders were more concerned about what they could get from people than what they could do to help the hurting folks around them. Widows were mistreated. Children were ignored. What a mess!

To instruct his followers on how to live in an unstable world, Jesus told a simple story. This type of story is referred to as a parable. You will find an introduction to the story, the details of the parable, and the truths Jesus stressed in explaining the parable in the Gospel of Luke (Read Luke 18:1-8). Please note that Luke was compelled by the Holy Spirit to tell us why Jesus told the parable. He said that the Son of God told the story to remind us that "men always ought to pray and not lose heart." Sounds like a story we need to hear today.

The story features an unjust judge, who was not concerned about God or what other men thought of him. The judge was asked by a desperate widow to rule in her favor against someone who had become an adversary. The judge delayed making a decision. But, finally he decided to rule in her favor in order to keep her from, as a modern translation reads, "wearing me out."

Jesus stressed that a major lesson could be learned from the actions of this unjust judge. If an ungodly man can do what is right, certainly God will answer believers who cry out to him day and night? Jesus asked, "Will he keep putting them off?" Of course, he will not. God has done some mind-blowing things to prove he loves us (See John 3:16). He does not like the mess sin caused in this world, but He will not abandon His people who are willing to be used by Him to be a transforming instrument by sharing the love of God with unbelievers.

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Notably, in another follow up to the story, Jesus demanded a decision from his listeners. He referenced the promise that He, the Son of Man, would return to the world someday and he questioned "Will he really find faith on the earth?" In other words, if Jesus returned today, how many faithful and prayerful men would he find busy trying to make a difference for God? Or, will he find churches full of people who have given up on their community and are doing nothing to reach people who are facing an eternity in hell without Christ? Will he find men who are all talk and no action? Will he find us praying and not giving up?

Mission Application:

- Answer the following questions: "How often do I pray for the spiritual renewal in the life of my church and community? Recently, have I spent more time "talking about" the shortcomings of the government or "praying for" leaders of the local, state, and national government? Do I pray more in public than in private? Do I really believe that my community and nation can be transformed by the power of God? Have the men in your group answer these same questions.
- Challenge the men to think of real ways they could address the "messiest" concerns they have listed. Examples: If crime is a problem, assign someone to contact someone in law enforcement to see what the church could do to help address needs. Explore prison ministry by calling the Men's Ministry department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (1.800.748.1651).
- Take time to pray that your church would be renewed and recommitted to engaging the community evangelistically. Make this a frequent prayer.
- Mention the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering will be collected next month. Pray that the funds would be used to reach the nation for Christ. Cite the church's goal. For more information, access www.anniearmstrong.com.

Growing Stronger

2 Timothy 2:1-2

Emphasis: To help men grow stronger and walk deeper in their relationship with Jesus and to help others do so.

Teaching: Paul took Jesus' command to make disciples seriously and it shows in his instructions to the young preacher boy Timothy. He directs Timothy to mentor other believers, to help them grow in the grace of the Lord, to help them become established in their faith.

Unfortunately, many churches have not grasped the Great Commission when it comes to disciple-making. Much attention and energy is given to making converts but too little on making disciples. We must recommit ourselves to helping young believers get established in their faith. While placing one's faith in Christ is absolutely necessary and encouraged so is becoming spiritually mature.

Mentoring can be done by:

- A senior adult man taking a younger man under his wing
- An adult man who spends time with teens and children
- Help men meet through activities which call out multiple generations

Are you currently helping another young believer grow in his faith and understanding of the Lord? Jesus modeled this with The Twelve. He poured Himself into a handful of men who would carry on His work after he was gone. Are we doing the same?

Mission Application: Begin asking the Lord to connect you with another person whom you can encourage and help in his spiritual journey. Spend time weekly with that person praying, studying God's word, discussing life, etc. You will be amazed by the joy derived from making disciples. So many men today need a Paul or a Barnabas in their lives to help them along the way. They need encouragement, accountability, and a traveling buddy through this thing called life.

Notes

Caring for the Vulnerable

James 1:27

Emphasis: Caring for the vulnerable is a good way to tell the story of Jesus.

Teaching: In recent years, survey results released by "Pew Research" indicated Mississippi is one of the most religious state in the country. When measured against four factors of religious practice – the importance of religion in people's lives, frequency of attendance at worship service, frequency of prayer, and absolute certainty of belief in God – Mississippians responded well above the national average. However, other research statistics released by the Intercultural Institute for Contextual Ministry reveal that almost 70% of the resident of the "Magnolia State" are not connected to an evangelical congregation. While many people in the state may consider themselves religious, the truth is that their faith does not seem to impact their behavior.

The Bible teaches a close connection between caring for the vulnerable and living out faith. In the Letter of James, the Holy Spirit inspired the writer to clarify what God expects from true believers. James wrote, "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world (James 1:27, NKJV)." Godly men will care for unfortunate children and troubled widows. While many churches are sensitive to widows connected to their congregations, how is your church caring for hurting children?

According to the website MissionFinder.org, there are about 143 million orphaned children, and tens of millions more abandoned, in the world today. Over a half-million American kids are in foster care.

During the month of May, many churches in Mississippi collect a special offering on Mother's Day to help the ministry of The Baptist Children's Village (BCV). Since 1897, BCV has provided compassionate care to over 33,000 children. BCV continues efforts to expand the ministry in a way that allows more accessibility to private families who seek assistance and to Department of Human Service Social Workers who need to access services for children in their care. BCV is privately funded. Consequently, BCV receives no funding from the government. The Lord continues to use His people to accomplish much through the BCV ministry.

While BCV and other Christian organizations care for troubled children, many Baptist leaders are encouraging Christians to adopt children. Russell Moore in his book, *Adopted for Life*, declared, "The gospel of Jesus Christ means our families and churches ought to be at the forefront of the adoption of orphans close to home and around the world. As we become more attuned to the gospel, we'll have more of a burden for orphans. As we become more adoption-friendly, we'll be better able to understand the gospel."

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Consequently, Christians have many opportunities to care for children in the name of Jesus. "Pure and undefiled religion" can be practiced by supporting the BCV, Crisis Pregnancy Centers, and assisting couples seeking to adopt. If we are busy putting love into action, we are more likely to remain "unspotted from the world."

Mission Application:

- Determine if your church is planning to collect an offering for the Baptist Children's Village on Mother's Day. If not, prayerfully consider asking the church to do so.
- Evaluate the manner in which your church ministers to widows and single mothers. Discuss ways you can improve this ministry.
- Plan ways to help the boys of your community who do not have a father's Christian influence. Consider an event in which the men of the church can spend time with the boys of all ages. Examples:
 - Plan a fishing trip for all ages.
 - Schedule a trip to Central Hills Baptist Retreat for a Lad/Dad weekend.
 - Consult the Men's Ministry department for upcoming activities in which men and boys can participate.
 - Collect funds to pay for the fees for children to attend summer mission camps at Central Hills Baptist Retreat and Camp Garaywa.



Becoming Spiritual Leaders

Ephesians 4:12

Emphasis: To lead men to become spiritual leaders.

Teaching: If our communities are to be reached with the Gospel, it will take men leading the way. As men step up to the plate and begin telling their story, people will be reached and communities will be changed. Homes will be different when men become the spiritual leader in their home. Churches will be different as men take their place as spiritual leaders. Pastors will be different as men become spiritual leaders and become an encourager to them.

Dwight L. Moody heard a preacher say: "The world has yet to see what God can do with one man that is totally committed to him." Hearing that, Moody is reported to have said that he wanted to be that man. There are men in your church who could be that man. Encouraging and equipping them in telling their story could enable them to become that man. Our homes, our churches, our communities, our world is waiting for that man. "Then I heard the Lord asking, 'Who should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?' I said 'Here I am. Send me.'" Isaiah 6:8 (The Living Bible)

Mission Application:

- Equip your men by training them to write and/or share their testimony.
- Encourage the men to share their personal story.
- Provide a context where men can develop relationships.
- Provide mentors.
- Partner with other Men's Ministry groups in your association in equipping men to tell their story.
- Have a "men's only" supper and watch the movie, *Courageous*.

Notes

Moral Purity

Ephesians 5:3-5

Emphasis: God calls men to absolute purity.

Teaching: One of the fastest growing addictions for men today is pornography. It is destroying not only the males who have the addiction but their marriages and their families. Many ask, "In a world that is saturated with sexual images how can men be pure before God"?

First of all, Christian men need to understand that God's standard of purity and holiness is fixed. It's only when we mix our standards with his fixed standards that we begin justifying our impurities. Paul reminds us in Ephesians that there should not even be a hint of sexual immorality, or any kind of impurity among or within God's people. How much is a hint?

A wonderful resource that can help men in this area is a book entitled *Every Man's Battle*. Pastors across our state have led groups of men through this study and it has literally changed their lives. Authors Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker share their stories of how sexual immorality once ruled their lives but Jesus set them free.

For too long the church has dodged sensitive issues such as this. Consequently, men are very reluctant to share their struggles in these areas and thus they are out there struggling with guilt, shame, and defeat. But isn't that what the cross of Christ is all about? Isn't that where all of our sins were dealt with and done away with?

Mission Application: As you close out this session, ask the men in attendance to share with you privately if they feel that a study on this topic or issue would be helpful. Then purchase a copy of *Every Man's Battle* for each one interested and begin a confidential study.

Pastors constantly counsel men who share in secret their struggle to stay pure in their hearts and minds. I'm so glad the blood of Jesus covers all areas of our lives.

Notes

August 2012

Strengthening Men's Ministry

Acts 2:41

Emphasis: Special events can energize your Men's Ministry.

Notes

Teaching: Everyone loves a crowd. Sports arenas are filled with people cheering. Churches open their worship centers seeking to fill every seat. Many people judge the success of an event by whether the room is full or not.

In the early church, in Acts 2, 3,000 people followed Christ in salvation after Peter's sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2:41). In Acts 4, through the ministry of the early church, the number increased to 5,000 (Acts 4:4). The numbers were overwhelming. Yet, nestled between chapters 2 and 4 in the Book of Acts, is the story of one man who is healed. This leads us to understand that God uses both the large crowd and the personal touch to reach men.

Men's groups can participate in established special events to build energy in Men's Ministry. Plus, groups may decide to plan their own special event with a view to reach men who may not currently be involved in church or Men's Ministry.

Some of the Men's Conferences in which men may want to participate:

- Momentum Conferences – Steve Hutton, coordinator
<http://www.momentumevents.org/site/node/35>
- Mighty Men of God Conferences – Dr. Paul Freed, coordinator
<http://www.mightymenofgod.com/>
- FBC, Woodstock, GA Men's Conference – Dr. Johnny Hunt, coordinator
<http://www.johnnyhuntmensconference.com/>

Conferences can touch men's hearts in a profound way. Utilizing the follow-up materials of the conference can help the event be long-lasting.

Special Events can be planned by local church Men's Ministry groups. These events can be tailored to the interests of the church.

- Wild Game Supper
- Antique Car Show
- 4 Wheeler Rally
- Dove Hunt
- Fishing Tournament

These are sample ideas; the list of possibilities is endless.

Mission Application:

- To have balance in Men's Ministry, special events must be a part of the ministry and not the whole ministry.
- Use special events to springboard into other regular Men's Ministry events.
- Because special events can be a lot of work, make sure not to overload one person with all the responsibility for the event.
- Thorough planning and evaluation can ensure greater success of special events.
- Be open to new ideas and unafraid to try something new to reach men in your community.
- Share successes with other men's groups.

Notes

September 2012

State Missions: Telling the Story through Disaster Relief

Matthew 25:34-46

Emphasis: To help men accept the responsibility of telling the story of Jesus.

Notes

Teaching: Earthquakes in Japan, tsunami's in Indonesia, hurricanes and tornadoes in Mississippi are all reminders that disaster can strike anywhere. Disasters also come in a variety of forms: bombings, chemical spills, ice storms, fires, etc. A disaster is defined as "...an occurrence that causes human suffering or creates human needs that the victims cannot alleviate without assistance." (Involving Southern Baptists in Disaster Relief, pg. 9, 2004.)

Southern Baptists have been trying to alleviate the sufferings and needs that people encounter as a result of a disaster since 1967. Following Hurricane Beulah in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas in 1967, until the present, Southern Baptists have been greatly involved in Disaster Relief and have played a huge role in helping Southern Baptist Disaster Relief to grow into one of the three largest disaster relief agencies in the United States.

Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief responds to any and all disasters that affect our state. The many trained responders are willing to go at a moment's notice to provide assistance in a disaster.

Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief (MBDR) derives part of its funding from the Margaret Lackey State



Missions (MLSMO) offering. This funding enables MBDR to meet the needs of Mississippians when disasters occur, as well as assist other state conventions when they experience disasters.

In Matthew 25:34-46, Jesus speaks of ministering to people in times of disaster in their lives. It is in times of disaster that the church has the opportunity to minister to people who possibly will never come to church. When people are hurting and needing help, they will be open to Christians demonstrating Christ's love through cleaning mud out of their home, serving a meal, cleaning debris from their house and yard, etc. And when we minister to hurting people, Jesus says that we are ministering to Him.

Through giving to the MLSMO, the men of your church, along with other church members, have the opportunity to minister to hurting people in times of disaster. These are people your men may not know and probably will never meet. However, hurting people's lives can be changed and brought to faith in Jesus because Baptist men give to the MLSMO and made it possible for MBDR responders to "give a cup of cold water in Jesus' name."

Mission Application: Consider having a trained disaster relief responder to come and speak to your men's group or church. Contact the Men's Ministry department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention for a list of speakers. Contact your church office to determine your church's goal for State Missions and how much your church has given toward this goal. Encourage the men to give to the MLSMO.



Hunger: Physical and Spiritual

Matthew 25:35

Emphasis: To teach men that Jesus expects them to focus on all types of hunger: physical and spiritual.

Teaching: In the parable of the Sheep and the Goats, Jesus challenges listeners to care for the 'least of these'. In doing so, we are focusing on Him. Helping people in their need is the call of all Christian men.

In America, hunger may seem far away. We are grateful to live in a nation that is well-fed. Yet hunger is at our doorstep. Men of God are called to feed hungry people and give water to thirsty people as much as they are to build churches and repair homes.

Ron Thomas was homeless and in need. In an instant, his life changed when, while sitting on a park bench, a little girl delivered a simple message to him: Jesus Loves You. "I knew without a shadow of a doubt, this was my way out: through the Lord Jesus Christ," said Thomas.

Compelled by the power of Christ, Thomas cleaned up his life, got off the streets, and left Los Angeles for a fresh start. But the same power of Christ soon sent him right back to Skid Row - this time to plant and lead Set Free Church in the heart of the homeless population. Set Free Church is part of the Los Angeles Baptist Association and the California Southern Baptist Convention. The church seeks to meet the hunger needs of people first. Thomas explains; "They need to eat, they need to be warm, but I think with that, if we really minister to the hearts and minds of the people, that's where we see change."

Most Baptist men have little contact with hungry people. Sometimes our opinions of hungry people reflect our discomfort rather than our faith. Every Baptist man can be involved in caring for hungry people. With the U.S. economy continuing to struggle, people who have never had a hunger related need may now have such a need.

Hunger ministries across the U.S. saw 33,000 professions of faith through this ministry. Many of these ministries are supported by the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund. Worldwide \$1.00 = 5 meals.

Notes

Mission Application:

- Are there 'out of work' people in your church who may need some help with basic food and other necessities during their time of struggle?
- Are there senior adults on fixed incomes who have trouble stretching their dollars to feed their families and themselves?
- Learn about hunger ministries near your church. Take the boys of your church (Royal Ambassadors) to help feed at a soup kitchen in your community. Doing this will open the eyes of these boys and their leaders.
- Go to the North American Mission Board web site to see videos and find information about hunger in the U.S. <http://www.namb.net/hunger/>
- Lead your church to get involved with World Hunger by taking a special offering for the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund.

Notes



November 2012

Thanks-Living

Philippians 4:6

Emphasis: Leading men to a lifestyle of thankfulness.

Notes

Teaching: Two men were walking through a field one day when they spotted a charging bull. Quickly, they began running toward the nearest fence. The storming bull followed in hot pursuit, and it appeared they would not scale the fence in time. One of the men shouted to the other, "Put a prayer up for us, John!" John answered, "I can't. I've never prayed in public." "But, you got to. The bull is going to kill us." "All right," panted John, "I'll say the only prayer I know, the one my father used to repeat at the table: 'O Lord, for what we are about to receive, make us truly thankful.'"

Paul wrote, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. (Philippians 4:6, NKJV)." While we may have a hard time thanking God for an encounter with an angry bull, we must live our lives with the awareness that nothing catches God by surprise. He wants us to acknowledge this truth in prayer.

God answers prayer. Think of recent prayers you know God has answered. Have you truly expressed thanks to God in word and in actions that exhibit your gratitude?

Jesus saves. Jimmy Draper once said, "The problem with many Christians is that they have forgotten how it felt to be lost." What was your life like before you became a Christian? What do you do to show your gratitude to Christ for your salvation?

Mission Application:

- Determine a way in which the group can put their Thanksgiving spirit in direct "thanks-living" actions this month. Example:
 - Call and thank the individuals who were key in leading them to Christ.
 - Send a thank you to elderly men who have been key leaders of the church in the past.
 - Do something to honor veterans.
 - Consider holding a men's Sunday school class in the home of a homebound member for just one Sunday.
- Remind the men that the Lottie Moon Christmas offering for International Missions will be collected next month.

December 2012

Time to Tell the Story

Philippians 4:6

Emphasis: Leading men to tell the story of Christmas.

Teaching: Christmas time is an ideal time to tell the story of Jesus Christ. People are searching for peace and hope in these uncertain times. What better message of hope could they receive than the message of Jesus Christ? Encourage the men of your church to be open to opportunities for sharing the real message of Christmas.

Contact the church office to determine your church's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal and how much your church has received toward that goal. Challenge the men in giving to reach the goal. Also contact your WMU director and discuss ways to cooperate in achieving the church's goal.

Consider the following ways, from the International Mission Board website, to involve your men in reaching your church's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal and telling the story.

Sunday Lunch - Instead of eating out for Sunday lunch, a group of friends took turns cooking for each other. Those who did not cook gave the money they would have spent on lunch to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. You too can turn Sunday lunch or a supper club into something that will reach the world for Christ!

Sock it to Missions – Church members in one North Carolina church were encouraged to fill a sock with change and bills throughout the fall and bring them to church for the missions offering.

The \$4 Plan – The pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Erwin, TN, devised an approach to the annual offering that he calls the "maximization and personalization" of missions. The personalization part of the plan included writing to and praying for international missionaries. Calvary Baptist Church members have traveled to several countries to help their adopted missionaries on short-term volunteer projects. And the missionaries have spoken at the church while home on stateside assignment. To maximize missions, the pastor challenged Calvary members to give two weeks' salary to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and he gave them a way to do it. He calls it "The \$4 Plan." Here's how it works: for example, if your net pay for a week is \$500, you gave \$4 from every \$100, and that equals \$20. Multiply \$20 by 50 weeks, and the amount is \$1,000. If you start with your first check in January, you can give two weeks' pay to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering by December 15. In the first decade of using this approach, Calvary members increased their gifts to missions by 1,000 percent.

Check the IMB website, www.imb.org, for other suggestions.

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When the men of your church participate in events like these, they will have the opportunity to tell the story of Jesus. Telling the story of Jesus has been around for a long time. The shepherds probably began the process. "After seeing (them), they reported the message they were told about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them." (Luke 2:17-18, Holman Christian Standard Bible).

When the shepherds had seen Jesus, they spread the word about what had been told them about this child, and everyone who heard their story was amazed at what the shepherds said to them. Everywhere the shepherds went they reported the message they had been given and what they had seen, to everyone they met. They became the first Christian evangelists. The miracle of Christ had touched them and they just could not keep quiet. They not only told their story in their town, they spread the news throughout the entire district where they lived.

They were just common people, yet the shepherds had enough faith to believe they were important to God. The message they had been given consumed them with a sense of urgency; everyone must hear their story. They could be compared to a scientist who has just discovered a cure for heart disease. However, the disease is now sin, and the only cure is the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

What does that have to do with us? We are Christ's witnesses and ambassadors, just like the shepherds. At Christmas, it is so easy to get caught up in the shopping, parties, travel, etc., that we forget the reason for our celebration.

The shepherds had it right. Christmas is about receiving God's gift of salvation. And Christmas is about telling the story of this miracle to your friends and family. That is what Christmas is all about. Someone like the shepherds received God's gift and told you the story. And you were given the greatest gift of all. Will you go and tell the story and give this same gift to others?

Mission Application:

- Cater a Christmas party for a small local business, community group, or Sunday school class, with proceeds going to Lottie Moon.
- Offer your house-cleaning services to families in the church or community. Let them know you intend to donate the money you earn to missions.
- Hold a yard sale and make money for missions while you clear out some space in your garage.
- Have a bake sale in the community.
- Sell handmade Christmas ornaments or decorations.
- Offer your decorating services to busy families. Many families would gladly make a donation in order to have someone help them get ready for the season.



HIS HEART HIS HANDS HIS VOICE

Men's Ministry Resources

Books to help Church and Men's Ministry Leaders

- ☞ How to Build a Life-Changing Men's Ministry
Steve Sonderman, 1996, Revised, 2010, Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis, MN, 55438
ISBN: 978-0-7642-0748-8
- ☞ Effective Men's Ministry: The Indispensable Toolkit for Your Church
Phil Downer, Editor, Zonderman, Grand Rapids, MI, 49530
ISBN: 0-310-23636-3
- ☞ No Man Left Behind
Patrick Morley, 2006, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL, 60610
ISBN: 0-8024-7549-3
- ☞ Mobilizing Men for One on One Ministry: The Transferring Power of Authentic Friendship and Discipleship
Steve Sonderman, 2010, Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis, MN, 55438
ISBN: 978-0-7642-0790-7
- ☞ Drawing Men to God – Men's Ministry Manual
Compiled by Sid Woodruff, 1999, LifeWay, Nashville, TN, 37202
ISBN: 0-7673-9077-6
- ☞ Men's Ministry in the 21st Century
Brad Lewis, Editor, 2004, Group Publishing, Loveland, CO, 80539
ISBN: 0-7644-2699-0

Books to Help Churches Understand Men

- ☞ 10 Passions of a Man's Soul – Harness Your Strength, Impact Your World
Mark Elfstraud, 2006, Moody, Chicago, IL, 60610
ISBN: 0-8024-0866-4
- ☞ The Man God Uses
Henry T. Blackaby, Tom Blackaby, 1999, Broadman & Holman Publishing, Nashville, TN, 37202
ISBN: 0-8054-2145-9
- ☞ Unleashing Contagious Faith – The Hidden Power of a Man's Soul
Paul Coughlin, 2009, Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis, MN, 55438
ISBN: 978-0-7642-0647-4
- ☞ Why Guys Need God
Mike Erre, 2008, Harvest House Publishing, Eugene, Oregon, 97402
ISBN: 978-0-7369-2126-8
- ☞ Why Men Hate Going to Church
David Murrow, 2005, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, 37202
ISBN: 0-7852-6038-2
- ☞ The Map – The Way of All Great Men
David Murrow, 2010, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, 37202
ISBN: 978-0-7852-2762-5
- ☞ Truth That Sticks
Avery T. Willis, Jr and Mark Snowden, 2010, NavPress, Colorado Springs, CO, 80935
ISBN-13: 978-1-61521-531-7

The kids are together again.

THE BOYS ARE BACK WHERE IT ALL BEGAN.

WMU® welcomes the opportunity to unite Royal Ambassadors® with Girls in Action® and Challengers™ with Acteens® through our organization. We pledge continued partnership

with the North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board to maintain high-quality missions education that inspires boys and girls from first grade through high school.



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January 2012 – August 2012

NAMB will be responsible for RA materials.

Beginning September 1, 2012

RA and Challenger materials will be written and distributed by National WMU.

What this means:

- RAs and Gas will purchase their materials from the same source (www.wmu.com)
 - RAs and GAs will study the same missionaries each month.
 - RAs and GAs will memorize the same scriptures each month
 - RAs and GAs will study the same Mission Bible Studies each month.
- While RAs will still have Lads (1st – 3rd Graders) and Crusaders (4th – 6th Graders) they will not have separate magazines. RAs will have one magazine for all boys called ***RA World***.
- The leader magazine will be called ***RA Leader***.
- RAs will still have advancement, badges, vest, outdoor activities, etc.

For Challengers (young men grades 7-12) materials will be purchased from www.wmu.com similar to Acteen materials.

Tell Me the Story of *Jesus*

An Emphasis to Help Men Witness

Can you imagine what it might have been like to have just finished spending three years with Jesus; to have experienced the resurrection and ascension and then to be left with the knowledge that you must now go and make disciples? The followers knew the responsibility they had been given, but the question remained where and how do we begin? Peter and John were not sure exactly where to start but their words were clear "We are unable to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Now two thousand years have passed. Christianity has had its successes and setbacks in reaching the world. But is meeting Jesus any less exciting and life-changing for us now than it was for that initial small group of followers? There are still lost people in the world and it is time for those who believe to tell others the story of Jesus.

Where Do We Begin?

Let's face it, for most men it would be easier for us to face David's bear or lion than to share our faith. When it comes to taking a witness plan into a home, no matter how simple the plan, we immediately freeze up and fear becomes our controller.

But what if we could simply tell a story? All men like a good story. Jerry Clower became famous with his story of Marcel and the 'coon hunt. Each morning as I go by a local service station, there are 10 – 15 men gathered to tell the latest stories of what is happening. They love to gather and tell their adventures. Can we learn to be story tellers of Jesus and the life He promises? Can we learn to enjoy relating the story of the Jesus who can reach our world?

How Do We Tell a Good Story?

Who is the best story teller you have heard? Ask what makes his stories interesting and fun. How does he hold your attention? In the book *Truth That Sticks* the author spends much of the book teaching and encouraging the reader on how to tell oral stories. It is evident in our world that we are becoming less likely to read unless it is a brief statement or on the computer. Most of those computer literate get everything from a screen. Look at your news. Most clips have less than 50 words to cover a major story. But where do we learn? We spend hours listening to television, talk radio, or a good movie. We are a generation of listeners; especially if someone is entertaining.

Therefore, if we are to spread the message of Jesus, we must learn to be interesting story tellers. The most positive part is that our generation is so Biblically illiterate that they haven't heard the good stories. Opportunity knocks; are we ready to open the door?

Tips for Story Telling

1. Our Bible stories were passed on orally for centuries before they were written down. They were meant to be told. That makes it easier for us to share them with others.
2. In order to tell the story, you must know it well. That does not mean memorizing, but you must have a good understanding of the people and events. You need not embellish the basic story by adding content; just simply tell the story in modern day language as it applies to our times.
3. Make sure your listeners understand the story as it applies to them. Jesus used the things around him as he developed his stories. His stories applied to the daily lives of the people. Make sure you apply your stories to the lives and needs of your audience.
4. Prepare by choosing your stories wisely. As you prepare to tell the story you will want to read it over for several days. This instills the facts in your mind. Also it will give you confidence as you decide when it is appropriate to use your story as a personal witness.

30 Days of Planning for Telling the Story of Jesus

1. Begin by securing and reading the book *Truth That Sticks* by Avery Willis, Jr. and Mark Snowden.
2. For the first 21 days read a chapter from the Book of John each day. This will help re-ignite the desire to tell the story of Jesus. Take time to pray over the scripture and how it impacts your life.
3. For the remaining nine days read and study these stories that can impact lives with the excitement of the leading of God through history.
 - a. Genesis 3 The Fall of Man
 - b. Genesis 37:1-11 Joseph's Coat of Many Colors
 - c. Exodus 2:1-10 The Birth of Moses
 - d. Exodus 3:1-15 Moses and the Burning Bush
 - e. I Samuel 3 The Call of Samuel
 - f. I Samuel 17 David and Goliath
 - g. Luke 2:1-20 The Birth of Jesus
 - h. Luke 15:11-31 The Prodigal Son
 - i. Luke 24:1-12 The Resurrection



The book of John, along with these very special accounts of God's works, will give a good base of stories to prepare you to be a positive witness.

Designing the Basics for Men's Ministry

On a recent visit a man sat with a friend who had thrown his life away as he allowed sexual sin to overtake his entire being. As the two old friends tried to make sense out of a lost situation, the one who had lost it all voiced the question "Where did I go wrong?" He had, for all to see, been a model of faith and Christian commitment. He served his church, community, and friends faithfully in living out a ministry of love. But underneath he lost the inner battle as he was slowly destroyed by sexual sin. No one saw it coming. He was good at hiding his desires. But the world was better at picking him off to destroy him in its realm of pleasure.

How many of us, or the people we know, are plagued with the same temptations and problems in our everyday life? As Christians are we immune to the tactics of the world in falling to its temptations? If you think so, ask Peter how easy is it to deny our faith to get what we desire. The great need of men today is to understand that faith is a daily work in life and the need for support is critical. A man needs a brother to draw close, minister to him, and help him mature. He has a need for someone to demonstrate to him the true way to live, modeling a godly marriage, biblical parenthood, and the love of Christ. He needs a friend willing to invest time in his life to help him find new life in the promise of Christ.

The purpose of your Men's Ministry program should be to do that. You need a plan that designs a framework of vital relationships for men that can be fitted into their concept of masculinity and that will intentionally reconcile men to God and other Christian men. This will enhance the building of Christ's church to be both a place of healing and ministry as men learn to share their faith as they live. Men will then be equipped to face the common problems the world sends their way.

Basics

What does Men's Ministry need to relate to men in your church?

1. Vision...there needs to be a vision of what your men need and what your church wants as they relate to men. Without a true vision, your ministry will never get past the early beginnings. It will become another exercise in frustration. Men will not continue to meet for the sake of a meeting. They will invest time in something that makes a difference in their lives.
2. Leadership...effective leadership is a key to success. Don't try to be the sole leader of your group. Build a team with ideas, abilities, dreams, and talents. This team will be the creative genius of any success you achieve with men.
3. A plan...
 - Discover the needs, failures, and successes of the men. Offer helps that they will need in life planning.
 - Help them take a new look at the Bible and how it speaks to their life. Don't just plow through scripture, but select Bible plans that give direction that touches the everyday experiences of men.
 - Encourage men to build a prayer life. We only grow in faith as we talk to the one we follow.
 - Create opportunities for mission encounters. Most men want to do something to help others, but don't know how to begin. Use the creative team to design plans for helping others.
 - Help men explore relationships with family, friends, and others. Most great failures in the life of men relate to relationships. Offer opportunities to help men as they build and secure personal relationships.
4. Action...Challenge men to action. Use leisure time more effectively. We generally have adequate time that we waste in unprofitable endeavors.

Today's Man

In our world, society has opened the inter-most depths of men's lives and hearts and allowed all the evils of the world to slip in. This is the thought of many who deal with the spirituality of men. They see men today in a battle with the world that they are increasingly losing. What are the difficulties that they are facing?

1. World pressures
2. Work related stress and desire for success
3. Financial responsibilities that push men to the limit
4. Family issues that they feel incapable of dealing with
5. Moral deterioration in their personal life, environment, and communication

Making Christian Men

What will it take to lead a man to become the Christian, husband, father, and leader that he needs to be?

1. Help him develop worthy goals for his life.
2. Give awareness that his thoughts and actions need to be led by Christ instead of the world.
3. Provide opportunities to assist him in designing Christian values.
4. Lead him to have dreams that enhance his Christian life and value to his family.
5. Encourage a careful selection of Christian friends.
6. Provide opportunities for understanding relationships and how they develop.
7. Enhance his opportunities to build his faith through Biblical concepts.

Our Strategy

1. Determine the unique needs of the men of our church.
2. What will bring success in our church men's program and how will it look?
3. How can we measure success in our church?
4. What are the obstacles that we face?
5. What are the present challenges and weaknesses we face in our community?
6. What type of ministries would appeal to our men today?
7. What materials are available to use?
8. Design a systematic approach to ministry using the expertise of our men.
9. Move forward with a faith that this will enhance a relationship to Christ.

Planning Opportunities That Lead Men to Gather and Minister

1. Fun Events

- a. Plan a family night out for men and their wives. You can be as creative as you like. You may plan to go out to eat, have a cookout, or simply have a good movie with snacks that couples can enjoy together. Build a spirit of togetherness in your church.
- b. Plan a sports participation event for men. This could be a golf tournament, fishing outing, hunting trip, or other recreational event. Make it fun with a devotional or spiritual emphasis related to the event.
- c. Plan a men's breakfast that enlists the men of the community. Invite everyone in the area whether church related or not. Let the emphasis be the meal and fellowship. You may conclude by offering an opportunity to do some type of help project for a family or families in the area. Remember even those who are not connected to church like to help others. Your opportunity comes in personal contact and life style witness.
- d. Start a weekly power lunch or eye-opener breakfast for men in your community. Allow fellowship with discussion of the problems we are facing. Again, allow the spiritual emphasis to come through friendship or example; don't make this another worship service.
- e. Develop a community chili cook-off or wild game supper. Have a subtle spiritual emphasis built into the program. Allow this to be fun!
- f. Have a football party! Select an appropriate professional or college game. Invite guys to someone's home. Prepare a meal or snacks.

2. Development Events

- a. Offer a divorce recovery event for men in the church or community. Even with men who are now remarried, there are difficulties that they still face. Good opportunity for enlistment of new men for your church.
- b. Offer a father-son camp out or a father-daughter banquet. No father generally spends enough quality time with his family.
- c. Offer assistance or recovery group for pornography or addictions. This is destroying our families today.
- d. Offer seminars on finances, time management, marriage, parenting, or dealing with aging parents. These will offer something for every man in the church.
- e. Develop special Bible studies for men. This should be offered for a short time and relate to current life.
- f. Offer witness or prayer events to enhance personal growth in the life of a man.
- g. Attempt to develop fellowships for interest groups related to careers, interest, or hobbies.

3. Mission Challenges

- a. Develop a group that looks for mission opportunities at church or in the community.
- b. Plan automotive or lawn maintenance for widows or the elderly.
- c. Assist with church building maintenance.
- d. Provide career counseling for those without work.
- e. Help with community soup kitchens or look for those in your community in need and assist with support.
- f. Help relate to children in the community with no male influence.
- g. Develop a homework support group for children with little or no family support.
- h. Offer assistance with maintenance for your local school.
- i. Develop a building team for churches or homes that need assistance.
- j. Become a Mission Service Corps volunteer.
- k. Develop a church disaster relief ministry.
- l. Conduct an outreach Bible study in your home or workplace.
- m. If you have lawyers or accountants in your church offer limited advice or assistance to those who are financially unable to seek help.
- n. Help secure counseling for those unable to afford help with mental issues.
- o. Assist with children's homes.
- p. Develop a jail ministry to inmates, families, or victims.

2012 Men's Ministry Calendar Dates



March	2-3	Chaplains' Spring Retreat
	11-14	World Changers-Launch: Gulf Coast
	14-17	World Changers-Launch: Gulf Coast
April	21	DR Church/Associational Training
May	5	Lad/Crusader Day
June	11-13	Children's Mission Camp
	11-16	World Changers: Tupelo
	14-16	Children's Mission Camp
	17	Baptist Men's Day
	18-20	Children's Mission Camp
	18-23	World Changers: Gautier
	21-23	Children's Mission Camp
July	6-7	Lad/Dad Weekend
	9-13	Summer Mission Camp for Boys
	16-20	Summer Mission Camp for Boys
	23-27	Summer Mission Camp for Boys
	24-26	Children's Mission Camp
August	10-11	State Men's Ministry Leadership Training
September	21	Chaplains' Fall Training
October	29	Mission Service Corps Fall Meeting
	30	Chaplains' Fall Banquet



MEN'S MINISTRY

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARD



Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

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