

Reach Out

Valentine's Outreach

Acts of kindness and love can change our relationship with those around us. To express our church's love for our community, we participated in an outreach endeavor on Valentine's Day. What better day to spread the good news of God's love than a day when love is the theme! Since candy and Valentine's Day go together, we distributed free candy bars to employees of local businesses. (Businesses generally won't let us distribute to their customers.) The following tips may assist you in planning your own outreach.

1. Ask your church family to donate funds to purchase candy and business cards. The front of our cards has a smiley face and a message of thanks for letting us freely serve the person. The back has our church logo, a map to the church, contact information, and the words of Romans 5:8.

2. Purchase a variety of candy, chocolate and non-chocolate, at a wholesale store.

3. Visit smaller businesses, as they are often more receptive. Chain stores worry about the potential liability of allowing people from a church to do something nice for their employees.

4. Ask the businesses for permission to give free candy to their employees. If employees ask why you are doing it, you may reply, "We are demonstrating God's love for you in a practical way. Enjoy the candy!" The business card will do the rest of the "talking" for you.

5. Never accept donations. Reply to offers by saying (with a smile), "Thanks for the offer, but we don't take money. God's love is a free gift, and we want this free candy to remind you of that."

6. Do something fun after the outreach. Meet together at a restaurant for lunch to celebrate the opportunities to spread God's love in a practical way.

This outreach by our church was well received. Business managers appreciated someone coming in and giving the employees a lift.

Brad Pellish, outreach pastor
South Baptist Church
Flint, Michigan

synergy

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Synergy

a newsletter for pastors & wives

Vol. 7, No. 1

A note from John and Daria . . .



Dear friends,

We are challenged by the descriptive phrase used in Genesis 1 to refer to God's creation: "And God saw that it was good." God did His work with excellence. As redeemed image-bearers of God, we should do the work of the ministry with His standard in mind. Sin has impacted our world and us, but that must not be an excuse for carelessness or shoddiness. Let's always do our best so that it might be said, "And God saw that it was good."

In service with you,
John & Daria

Toolbox

Ebb and Flow



Do you feel like quitting? Yes, that's right, walking away—quitting your church and quitting the ministry. You may be thinking about going back to that secular job where you were effective and appreciated. The prophet Jeremiah had the same feeling (maybe on a Monday!) when he said, "Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging place for wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! For they are all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men" (Jeremiah 9:2).

The "quitting feeling" can overcome a veteran pastor who feels abused and not as sharp as he was earlier in his ministry. The urge to quit can happen to the rookie who graduated from seminary with high hopes and great ability but who fails to experience the crowds, conversions, and contentment that he had hoped for in his first ministry role.

How can a person who is called to full-time Christian service last in the ministry for decades? Consider the ebb and flow of the ministry. Are you familiar with the ebb and flow of the ocean's tides? The ebb tide goes out, and the flow tide comes in. The tide happens twice a day, in both

directions, every six hours. As with the tides, the ministry has both ebb and flow.

Flow tide represents the good times of the ministry. Those include studying and preaching the Word, participating in weddings and baptisms, rejoicing over babies' births, observing new attendees, witnessing conversions, seeing young people go into the ministry, experiencing big crowds, moving into a new building, using new equipment, participating in church outings, receiving encouraging cards, getting pay raises and bonuses, experiencing good health, speaking at other churches and community events, and even visiting the Holy Land or mission fields. (The list could go on and on!) The ministry has wonderful perks.

Ebb tide represents the tough times of the ministry. Experiences may include suffering the loss of members through death, moving, or dissatisfaction; becoming aware of a couple's pending divorce; observing low church attendance; noticing people sleeping through messages; counseling teens who choose drugs and promiscuity; learning that your facility has been vandalized or robbed; leading painful counseling sessions; reading letters and e-mails expressing

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IDEA Exchange

Strengthening MEN



"Lord, what do You want us to do?"

we prayed as we began planning for our men's ministry. The Lord gave us the goal of encouraging and strengthening the faith of pastors, men, and teen boys from our church and neighboring churches.

On one Saturday morning each month, we host a men's fellowship breakfast at a local restaurant. After gathering in a private room, we welcome and introduce our guests and give each first-time guest a pocket New Testament. During the morning we fellowship, sing, pray, listen to a devotional or to testimonies—and eat! Each month we invite one church and ask that church's pastor to prepare a spiritual challenge for the group. Annually we invite all neighboring churches in the GARBC to attend the breakfast.

The men have responded enthusiastically: "Thanks for inviting us"; "It was good to get acquainted"; "I saw brethren I hadn't seen in twenty years!" Men from our church have gotten to know pastors and laymen from twenty-two churches of like faith. Sister churches in outlying areas have started their own men's fellowship breakfasts. "Together we can accomplish more!"

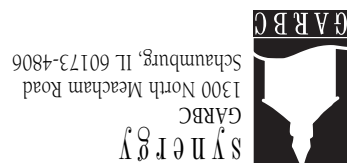
Jason Jones and Mel Jones, lay leaders
First Baptist Church
Walnut Creek, California



Together We Can Accomplish More



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KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

grievances; undergoing physical ailments; and receiving no pay raises or bonuses.

Ebb and flow are part of the ministry. Get used to it! What were you thinking when you signed up? For instance, many of you love to golf. How silly it would be if you went off the course with tears in your eyes after a bad round, vowing never to go back because of the hazards of sand traps, trees, water, divots, brush, and other golfers who were better than you!

Did Jesus know about the ebb and flow of ministry? As I read the Gospels, I see Christ visiting in the homes of his friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus; preaching to multitudes; fellowshipping with His disciples; attending weddings; riding on boats; going along on fishing trips; enjoying campfires on the beach. I also see Him dealing with self-righteous Pharisees; prompting dull disciples; counseling late at night with

Nicodemus; advising a lady who had five husbands; spending time with the sick, blind, and crippled.

Did Paul know about the ebb and flow of the ministry? He had great fellowship with his team of missionaries, traveled the Mediterranean, went to foreign countries, started churches, enjoyed singing, spoke on Mar's Hill, led people to Christ, rejoiced with those who rejoiced.

However, he also spoke of afflictions, hardships, distresses, beatings, imprisonments, labors, sleeplessness, hunger. He was even in a shipwreck! Paul was the subject of evil reports and experienced hounding by the Judaizers from Jerusalem. He knew how to weep with those who wept. He said in Philippians 4:11 and 12, "I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have

learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." Paul knew clearly the ebb and flow of ministry.

By the way, do you remember Jeremiah, who wanted to quit (Jeremiah 9)? In Jeremiah 40 he actually had the opportunity to leave. The captain of his bodyguard basically said, "You are free to go. Come with me to Babylon, and I will take care of you. Do what you want!" Jeremiah had a chance to leave his people. Watch what he did! "Then Jeremiah went to Mizpah to Gedaliah . . . and dwelt with him among the people who were left in the land" (Jeremiah 40:6).

Thinking of quitting because the ministry has been tough? Of course it is! That is the ebb. Don't forget the flow tide! It may be coming in right now.

Tom Ruhlman, pastor
Tabernacle Baptist Church
Shoreline, Washington



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Gordon Jones, pastor
Karen Street Baptist Church
Omaha, Nebraska

BUILDING YOUR MINISTRY

INTERVIEWING TEACHERS

To encourage and challenge our teachers about their vital ministry in winning souls and growing useful Christians, the Sunday School superintendent and I spend time each year interviewing our teachers. As we meet with individual teachers, we use the following questionnaire to guide our conversation. The informal interview usually takes place in a quiet restaurant over pie and coffee.

Teacher's Personal Interview

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

1. How long have you been teaching your present class? What are the total years you have been teaching, including your previous classes?
2. What kind of impact does your teaching of God's Word have in your students' lives?
3. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = meaningless, 10 = extremely significant), how do you rate the influence of the Sunday School/children's church in the lives of believers? in the lives of unbelievers?
4. Would you say that Sunday School/children's church have more or less significant impact than the preaching services? Why?
5. Describe your normal preparation for each class session.

6. If you had more time, would you spend it on class preparation? Why or why not?

7. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = meaningless, 10 = extremely significant), how do you rate the importance of a teacher's timely arrival?

8. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = meaningless, 10 = extremely significant), how do you rate the impact of your personal walk with the Lord on the lives of your students?

9. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = extremely reluctant, 10 = extremely willing), how would you rate your response if you were asked to teach another class?

10. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = extremely reluctant, 10 = extremely willing), how would you rate your response if you were asked to have a teacher trainee in your class?

11. What could the Sunday School Department do to enhance your teaching ministry?

12. What prayer requests do you have regarding your teaching ministry?

We pray that by taking time to visit with each teacher, we will encourage his or her growth in teaching and relationship with the Lord.

Sharing the Gospel with Latinos

With the help of two church families who spoke Spanish and had a burden to reach Spanish-speaking people in our community, our church began a Spanish language Sunday School class. To accommodate the Latino culture and its time structure, we hold our class on Sunday evenings. My wife and I participate in the class, using our Spanish Bibles and joining in the singing and Scripture reading.

We desire to accommodate both the first-generation Latino people, who generally wish to speak Spanish, and their children, who most often prefer to speak English. Occasionally during the morning worship service, the Latino people read the Scripture publicly, first in English and then in Spanish. We use PowerPoint to display the sermon outline in English so Spanish-speaking attendees can both hear and see the words, which helps their comprehension.

Our goals are to reach Spanish-speaking people for Christ, integrate them into the church, and help them and their families make the adjustments to life in an English-speaking country. My wife's and my willingness to immerse ourselves in the Latino culture has encouraged our church people to be open to cultures other than their own.

Dick Dayton, pastor
Urbandale Baptist Church
Des Moines, Iowa

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the Hispanic community grew by more than 13 million people, or by 58 percent. The number of non-Hispanic Whites increased by 6.4 million. During the 1990s, the Spanish-speaking population in Washington State grew by an astounding 387.5 percent and is now approximately 1/2 million.

When opportunity knocks, the wise person opens the door! The Lord has brought to our doorstep these souls in need of Christ, the Savior.

J. Don Jennings, state representative
Northwest Association of Regular Baptist Churches

MINISTRY TIPS

Tips for Growing Family Relationships

Warren Buffet, one of the richest men in America, acquired his wealth through investing. If you had the opportunity to get investment tips from Warren, would you? Consider this: In place of money, assume that your family is your greatest investment. If you could get some investment tips on how to grow your family in quality, would you be interested? The Bible contains countless principles regarding the family. Learn and practice the following principles; you will make your family relationships wealthy.

1. Understand each other. "Husbands, dwell with [your wives] according to knowledge . . ." (1 Peter 3:7). Husbands, you are to understand your wives. This principle of understanding one another applies to all family relationships. What does it mean to understand another person? For one, *make what is important to a family member as important to you as that family member is to you.* For instance, a father who was not much of a sports fan took his hockey-loving son to as many hockey games as possible. The father's efforts resulted in a strong father-son bond. When asked, "Do you like hockey that much?" the father responded, "No, but I like my son that much."

2. Keep your commitments. Someone once said, "It is better to be generous with praise but cautious with promises." You must be careful to keep the promises you make to your family. Why? Your family constructs their hopes around promises. When a man promises to love a woman "until death do [they] part," the woman gains security to become all she was meant to be in the marriage relationship. Proverbs 3:3 states, "Let not mercy and truth forsake you. . . ." By keeping our commitments, we build trust. A healthy relationship cannot exist apart from trust.

3. Offer encouragement. "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11; NIV). The words you speak can do enormous harm or amazing good. So how can you encourage your family members? Speak words that build them up, and point out their positive attributes. When a reporter asked Andrew Carnegie why he hired forty-three millionaires to work for him, Mr. Carnegie explained that those men were not millionaires when he hired them. The reporter then asked, "How did you develop these men to become so valuable that you paid them so much money?" Carnegie replied, "People are developed the same way gold is mined. Several tons of dirt must be moved to get an ounce of gold; but you don't go into the mine looking for dirt—you go in looking for gold!" Look for the gold in your family!

4. Forgive one another. You encourage others when you seek and offer forgiveness. Disappointments and hurts are inevitable in every family. Colossians 3:13 states, "Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do." Instead of forgiving, you may carry a grudge, remember wrongs, or think of ways to get back at those who hurt you. Yet the Bible clearly instructs that just as you have experienced forgiveness from God, you are to forgive one another. Be quick to both seek and offer forgiveness.

These tips will enrich your family relationships. Begin working on them today!

Joe Wilson, state representative
Indiana Fellowship of Regular Baptist Churches