

Good News: Men's Ministry Can Work

I've got bad news. They don't put music on 8-track tapes, vinyl or cassettes any more. You can't find a rotary-dial phone anywhere, and even the cellular flip phones are off the map.

The Betamax videotape experiment failed, and you would be hard-pressed to find a VHS tape anyplace other than perhaps a garage sale table. And CDs and DVDs are on their way out since music and video are all downloadable on your laptop computer, smartphone or tablet.

More bad news? If you have an avocado-colored refrigerator, wood paneling, shag carpet or orange countertops, your home is going to need some serious renovations before you can sell it. Times have changed ... again.

If you are anything like me, the concept of how fast things change is pretty overwhelming. My dad is a lawyer who refuses to use email most of the time, and he may even still have a fax machine that uses that weird paper that came on rolls. It's almost impossible to keep up with the iPad or the smartphone or all of the apps that are available for each of them, since they are in a constant state of flux.

Here's the worst news of all. If you still define men's ministry as a Saturday morning breakfast or Bible study, then you might as well stick a fork in it, because it's done. Times have changed, and so have men. Maybe you've noticed that no matter how many times you invite someone to a men's event, it's the precise day that he has to mow the grass, coach soccer or do his hair.

Craig Groeschel, pastor of Oklahoma City's and creator of the YouVersion Bible smartphone application, tweeted last week

that the YouVersion app was opened 43 times per second in January 2012. That's 2,850 times per minute. That should give you a pretty good indication of how today's man is spending time in the Word.

What's even more compelling is that men are often connected to a church yet completely disconnected from Jesus, the Word and other men. You ask how this can happen? Simple. We are totally missing the mark when it comes to reaching men. Men are moving at Mach 2, and we are still building propeller airplanes for them. They see no value in what we are doing, so they don't show up.

Let's put this in sports terminology for a minute. I live in Tampa, Fla., and I am not a hockey fan. Despite their winning the Stanley Cup in 2004, I just can't get into the Lightning. If a guy I barely knew offered me a ticket, I would probably pass. Now, if that same guy offered me a ticket to see the Florida Gators play football, I'm going. Period. If a good friend invited me to that same Lightning game, I would probably take him up on it just to hang out with him. The difference is obvious: There is a relationship there that transcends whether I even enjoy what I'm about to attend.

In ministry, we have this misconception that it's all about the "what" we're doing and not the "who" we're doing it with. I am a pretty big Bible reader, but if a guy I barely know invites me to a 32-week study of Leviticus, I can assure you that I will be mowing the yard. Yet this is what we do as men's ministry people year after year. It's really the definition of insanity personified. Shame on us.

I truly believe that the Word is living and active and sharper than any two edged sword (Heb. 4:12). I absolutely believe that "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). It's not the Word that has changed, but much like an 8-track or a VHS tape, we absolutely must change the way we are getting men exposed to the Word of God. They are

ready, but our methods are archaic and we are losing men fast.

If we want guys to get to know each other and Jesus, then it's time to catch up to them. It's time to create avenues where men can just be real and get to know each other. Keep it short, meet real needs, and encourage them to accept others and to be accepted. Once they trust us, then God will inspire them to spend time with Him too.

And that's Good News!

David Dusek is founder and director of *Rough Cut Men Ministries* and author of *Rough Cut Men: A Man's Battle Guide to Building Real Relationships With Each Other and With Jesus*. *Rough Cut Men* has been presented to NASCAR teams, at West Point and the U.S. Naval Academy, at military bases around the world and at hundreds of churches and men's conferences of every denomination. To find out more about the *Rough Cut Men* or to book David for an upcoming men's event, please check out .