

Psychiatric Crisis Specialist Engages His Community Through Honesty

Many Christians view psychology with a skeptical eye. But for Jamie Blaine, psychology has been his way to reach his community with Christ's love.

Early in his career, Blaine was assigned to handle late-night psychiatric crisis calls for the only mental hospital in his small southern town. His pastor told him that it would be a good opportunity; he could teach the "least of these" about Jesus.

A year later, Blaine came back to his pastor with a surprising truth: "Pastor, these people are teaching me about Jesus."

"I know it's the way most Bible translations say it, but I've just never felt comfortable using the term, 'the least of these,'" Blaine admits. He added later, "I don't think I was any different from them. I was the least of these too. ... In the dark, lonely places, we are all so much the same."

That realization prompted Blaine to embrace honesty and transparency, whether talking with a lifelong church attendee or a disenfranchised atheist. The key to evangelism isn't a "four-point plan" or elaborate apologetics, says Blaine: "Just be humble. Just be down to earth. And if you find something to appropriately laugh about, that's just bonus."

While Blaine recognizes the church sometimes fails at promoting honesty, he thinks the church is on the right path overall.

"I've seen good things happening in the last 10 years or so," he said. "I love the church. ... Let's be sure not to forget all

the good and wonderful things the church does, and we need to keep doing those things. I think the church is doing a lot better than people give it credit for.”

Blaine’s book, *Midnight Jesus* (Thomas Nelson), releases Oct. 13. {eo}