

Mich. Church Gives Charlie Sheen Strategy for 'Winning'

✖ A big house. Cars. Money. All are held in high esteem in everyday life. People who attain such riches are, in the words of actor Charlie Sheen, "winning." But NorthRidge Church launched a new campaign for Easter to demonstrate a different kind of winning.

"We believe that Charlie Sheen is not alone in presenting a concept of what genuine winning is all about," says Brad Powell, senior pastor of Northridge Church in Plymouth, Mich. "Our culture tends to get it wrong as well. We want to present what we believe to be a true path to winning."

NorthRidge is promoting itself as a church committed to sharing the truth of Christ which sets people free and gives them hope. And, Easter is the ultimate celebration of that truth and hope. When you put them together, Powell figures, then you can genuinely experience "winning." As Powell sees it, anything else is, to put it bluntly, a false promise, at best an illusion.

"We are trying to wake people up to the fact that, though all of us have experienced boredom with church at one time or another, it doesn't have to be that way," Powell says. "We want people to wake up to a new and different opportunity this Easter. Church can and should be authentic-a place where people can genuinely get to know God and His truth, move past their failures and experience the hope and promises of God. That's really winning."

The NorthRidge Easter campaign includes billboard advertising, direct mailing, digital ads and social network activities. NorthRidge has used similar advertising campaigns in the past. Powell says that past campaigns have drawn some criticism, but

argues that Christ used “unconventional” tactics to wake people up, too.

“Though there may be some backlash, it won’t be from the people that we’re trying to reach. It will tend to come from people who believe that Jesus only speaks the language of tradition rather than God’s truth in the language of the world,” Powell says. “Sadly, many people are seeking to lock God in the past. The good news is that He’s alive and speaking right now. Of course, as was proven when Jesus was rejected and crucified, not everyone loves to hear God speak.”

What does winning mean to you?