

5 Steps to Reaching People Indifferent to Church

If the majority of your community couldn't care less about church, then how can you attract those people in a compelling way? Here are some first steps.

1) Identify people groups in your community based on their passions. What do they want to pour their time into when they get home from work? Get a diverse group of people together to brainstorm and answer this question.

2) Who can you most effectively reach? Let's be realistic. You can't reach all of these groups. The way you reach Harley-Davidson fans is typically different from the way you reach gardeners. You are uniquely equipped to reach some of these groups very effectively.

3) Learn what keeps these people up at night. What are those deeper emotions that drive people to obsess over their motorcycle, climbing a corporate ladder, or never-ending home improvement projects? What chronic problems do they deal with in their lives? These fears and problems will vary a bit from each group you identified in steps one and two. Sometimes, it relates to the passion, but usually the thing they pour their time and passion into is just a facade for what keeps them up at night.

Step three may make you uncomfortable. But advertisers are capturing consumers' hearts by speaking to them at a deeply emotional level. They tell them that the thing they are selling will make them happy. Advertisers do it in a manipulative way, but you don't have to. Don't lose sight of the fact that you're sharing the Good News.

4) Develop practical biblical teaching. In step three, you identified a chronic problem or fear these groups of people

face. What does the Bible say about this topic? If you've listed a problem or fear in step three that you don't think the Bible addresses in a practical way, then you're probably still listing symptoms instead of root problems.

Pick one of these fears or problems. And study what the word says about it. Then offer this group practical action steps.

5) Don't water it down. It's tempting to dilute your teaching to make it more seeker-friendly. But if you hit on a problem that speaks to them at an emotional level, they want all the information they can get. People who think Scripture is irrelevant have probably never discovered practical answers to their problem.

Jeremy Harrison *is the owner of Spire Advertising Inc, a Web design and Internet marketing firm in Ashland, Ohio.*