



## **Mobilize Your Men to Meet Pressing Needs in Your Church**

### **Part III: The Men's Team Ministry Model (Video Transcription)**

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#### **New Commandment Men's Ministries**

Welcome back to my third video in my series, "Mobilize Your Men to Meet Pressing Needs in Your Church." This video is on "The Men's Team Ministry Model."

I've talked about the three types of pressing needs in the local church in our first video. In the second video I talked about the three unique qualities of Christ's love and how those qualities apply to widows and single moms.

Now what I want to do is give you a practical way for men to express that love with the following men's team ministry model.

This is not inspired. There's nothing in the Word of God that says you must do men's ministry this way. It just works. In our culture, which is very different from biblical culture, we have a very isolationist, very individualistic culture. Most people now live alone. They don't know their neighbors. They don't see people on a regular basis. We see fellow believers at church but we don't see them anywhere else. Therefore, what we're doing is compensating for various deficiencies in our culture with men's team ministry.

Let's review the simple elements of the men's team ministry model.

#### **Three Hours, One Saturday a Month**

The first one is three hours, one Saturday morning a month. Why three hours? Why one Saturday morning a month?

Time is extremely valuable in our culture, especially with men. Men do not like it when we waste their time in men's ministry. Whenever we have a meeting with men, we need to be accomplishing several things at once. We need to be extremely efficient with their time.

That's what we're doing with this ministry. We're giving men spiritual input. We're building friendships with other men. They're having a great time of service with a widow, widower, or single parent. They're having a public testimony on the block. All kinds of things are happening at once during the three hours they'll be meeting and serving.

Another reason we ask for only three hours once a month is because we know that many men have young children at home. They need to get home by 10:15, 10:30 am, so their children don't feel like their dad's been gone all day.

We also don't want to exhaust our men. We want our men leaving at 10 am refreshed and blessed and excited about coming back.

Have you ever been to a church work day that went all day and it was totally exhausting? Then you're driving home and you think about how tired you are and then realize that you have to mow your own lawn.

We don't want that. We don't want to exhaust our men. We want to refresh our men. We want our men leaving thinking about how fast time went and how enjoyable it was. We want them feeling excitement about being a part of this ministry. That's the kind of reaction we want from our men.

Even though it's only a three hour commitment, it is amazing what men can accomplish during those three hours.

### **Teams of Four**

The second element is teams of four. There are several reasons why we use teams in general and there are some specific reasons why we use teams of four.

First, we're planning for attrition. We know that over the years men are going to move away, be called to other ministries, even die. We want the ministry to continue even in their absence. A team can function with three men, even with just two men for a while. And this gives whoever is leading the ministry a cushion of time to find other people to plug into those vacant spots.

Another reason why we use teams of four is because we know that on any given service day, about 25% of your men are not going to be able to show up. They may be out on vacation, they may be sick. Their kid has a soccer game they need to go to. We want men to know that, if they need to, they can miss every now and then. We don't want men to feel like this ministry is a ball and chain around their foot. They know there are three other guys who are going to fill in the gap when they're gone and so they don't have to worry every single time they can't make it.

But we do want men to take the ministry seriously. We don't want men to just miss because they were sleeping in. That normally takes care of itself because on Sunday, the guys see each other and ask where they were on Saturday. So that normally is a problem that just takes care of itself.

Then there are reasons that we use teams in general. We want to spread the load. Caring for a widow or single mom can be a daunting task. We don't want this burden to fall just on the shoulders of one man. We want to spread the load.

Another reason why we use teams is because we want men building relationships with other men. Many men in our culture do not have friends. This ministry is an excellent way for them to begin building friendships with other men.

Accountability is another reason why we use teams. We do not want men going alone to a care receiver's home. We want this to be a relational ministry between a care receiver and her *team*, not a care receiver and an individual man. We want men going as part of a team to serve their care receiver.

I've been doing this for many years. Because of this policy that I encourage churches to have, I don't know of a single instance where this has been a problem. We just want to be wise in how we execute this ministry and make sure that we're covering all our bases. It's not just for the protection of our care receivers, it's also for the protection of the care givers. Men can be accused of things that they didn't do. If there are other men present, then that's going to negate that.

### **Teams Permanently Assigned to Care Receivers**

The third element of the model is the teams are permanently assigned to a widow, widower, or single person. This is the commitment part. This is where you begin to develop the relationships. The teams don't just go once to a care receiver and do a project. Instead they're returning again and again, every month, to the same person and demonstrating commitment, demonstrating faithfulness, and building relationships. That's where the real ministry comes in, not just a physical level, with the projects, but on a spiritual and emotional level with those widows and single moms.

We had a breakfast one time and we asked the care receivers to stand up and share. We had three individual care receivers stand up and say they used to be depressed. But since their team had been serving them, they weren't depressed anymore. The team, then, by building that relationship and returning again and again, is able to establish some significant ministry in the life of that widow or single mom.

### **Each Team Has a Team Caller**

Each team has a team caller. This is the person who organizes the projects and makes sure things get done on the team. They call the care receiver and tell him or her that they're coming the following Saturday and ask what they would like them to do. Then he calls or emails his men and explains the projects they're going to do and what they need to bring.

My church has sixteen teams and I oversee that ministry as a volunteer. If I personally were responsible for sixteen projects every month, I would have a fulltime job. But because each team is responsible for their own projects, and specifically, each team caller, then that's makes it very simple for whoever is heading up this ministry.

### **Devotional Hour**

When the service day arrives, the teams meet at the church. I encourage teams to start their prayer and bible study time at 7 am. For some people, that's a little early. I'm an early morning person. But all the teams meet at the church at 7 am for prayer and bible study. This is the time for teaching and reinforcing what the Word of God has to say about widows and single moms. One pastor told me once, "I never realized how much material is in the Bible about widows and orphans and single moms and fatherless children."

Ministry to widows and single moms is not a side topic in the Bible. This is a major issue in the Word of God, and it should be a major issue with the church as well. We want to teach our men the Word of God. We want to spend some time in prayer. We want to spend some time in discussion. And then we also want to spend some time in last minute planning.

For example, let's say one team has only one guy show up and another team has four guys show up. Then you just borrow a guy. Or one team has an electrical project and another team has an electrician on it, so

you borrow the electrician. This makes it very easy to make last minute changes and adjustments to the ministry.

For this reason, it really doesn't matter who is on what team because you're going to be able to shift people around on a one-time basis during this bible study hour. Thus, I would encourage you not to obsess about team membership. Just pretty much randomly let the guys form their own teams.

### **Teams Split Up and Serve for Two Hours**

Then from 8 to 10 am, the teams break up, go out to their individual homes and do whatever needs to be done around the home of their care receiver. You might think two hours are not enough. But the team is made up of four men. That means they are providing eight man-hours of labor. It's amazing what four men can do in two hours. That's ninety-six hours of time per year, or the equivalent of one person working full-time for two and a half weeks in that home. Most homes can be very well maintained with four men working for two hours on a Saturday morning.

Then at the end of the ten o'clock hour, the teams meet with their care receiver and close in prayer. I encourage teams to go out to the front lawn and pray there for the block. Pray for widows and single moms up and down the street. Remember that those neighbors are watching. Maybe not the first or second month, but six months or a year later they begin to realize that you're showing up every month. They get to know you. They get to know what you're doing and it provides a very natural testimony for your care receiver. She can explain to her neighbors who you are, where you're from and why you're doing what you're doing. It's very easy for your care receiver to share the love of Christ with her neighbors because of the testimony of your team.

### **Teams Return to Same Care Receiver**

Then each month, the teams return to the same person for years long service.

Okay, that's the model. This is not rocket science. This ministry is extremely simple by design. The reason why is because we want it to last for decades. The more complexity you add to the model, the less likely it is for it to last long because it becomes more difficult to implement and maintain. So we've made it extremely easy. After a month or two, your men get it and it becomes like clockwork. Men love predictability. They love knowing the care receiver, the home, the projects ahead of time. And it gets done.

Because of this, men get very passionate about this ministry. It's biblical, it expresses the love of Christ, it's effective, and it's enjoyable.

The church, then, is meeting the needs of its widows and single parents – that second category of pressing needs that we saw on that diagram in the first video. As the church becomes effective in meeting the needs of its widows and single parents – the long term needs – what happens is the church becomes prepared and spiritually ready to address the other two types of needs: the emergency special project requests and the catastrophic long term needs.

Let's talk about these other two types of pressing needs.

## **Meeting Emergency Special Project Requests**

What I suggest the church do about emergency special project requests is ask your church to be on call one team a month to address whatever genuine emergency needs arise at the church. Remember, it's very important for whoever is receiving these calls to be trained in distinguishing between real pressing needs and non-pressing needs. They need to have some backbone to be able to explain that meeting non-pressing needs isn't what the church does and then refer out.

But for pressing needs, take your teams and ask them to be on call on a rotating basis, one team per month. If you have four teams in your church, then once every four months a team is going to be on call and they are the ones who address any incoming calls for emergency project requests.

## **Meeting Catastrophic Long Term Needs**

What about the catastrophic long term needs? The needs of your people who have gone through some tragic situation and now they have someone in their home who is completely dependent. How does your church respond to them?

By addressing the current needs of your widows and single parents that are ongoing in your church, your church has learned a couple of important lessons. First, it's learned to walk toward liability and not away from it. It's learned to seek out liability as an opportunity to practice their faith. Second, it's learned to trust God to help them meet those needs. Remember, 2 Corinthians 9:8, "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that at all times, in every way, you will have all that you need for every good work."

What about those examples I mentioned in the first video: Northwest Church in Corvallis, Oregon, where the youth pastor, Jack Glubrecht, fell and broke his neck, becoming a quadriplegic?

What their church did is raise funds to build a five bedroom parsonage so that he could move in along with his best friend and his best friend's wife. They take care of him in return for free housing. Jack volunteers in his wheelchair at the church. He does counseling, heads up the benevolence, does weddings and funerals.

One time I was speaking to a group of men. Afterwards, a guy came up to me and said, "I used to attend that church. In fact, I was on the board when that happened. I am so proud of how our church addressed that need. They did not abandon him."

What about that church in Avon, Connecticut: Valley Community Baptist Church? This is the church that had the woman with ten children who walked through the door, what did they do when she died?

At the time, the church had 100 men involved in men's team ministry, so they were ready. Ten families in that church each took in one of those children. The church literally became their family. Some of them adopted the children. Some took them in as foster children. This was several years ago, probably ten years or more, and those families have consistently provided for those children.

The children see their siblings at church every Sunday. The families also get together for birthdays and holidays. They also started a tuition fund for college. Again, I was in a small meeting with a couple pastors in a church in Houston. This was hundreds of miles away. One of the pastors said, "Someone else is going to be joining us, but he's running late. He's going to be about forty-five minutes late."

Sure enough, about forty-five minutes later the guy walked in. The pastor introduced him and said he was from Avon, Connecticut. Come to find out, he and his wife were one of the couples who took in one of those ten children! They raised the second oldest child and when he graduated from high school, he attended Wheaton College, got his degree in finance, and he now works in downtown Chicago in the financial district.

That's what happens when churches take seriously the pressing needs in their midst. They see God work. They see God provide for their needs and they become fruitful. They begin to see the amazing grace of God on their church.

### **Next Steps**

My prayer for you is that this time together has given you a vision for what can happen in your church. What I've done on this website is provide all the material you need to start a men's team ministry.

The next tab over on the membership site reads "Download Material." Click on that tab and you can download an orientation training DVD for your men that you can use to start this ministry. There's a workbook that you can download. You're welcome to download it and make as many copies as you'd like. There's also a devotional study guide. You can use it for your devotional time. All the information you need to start a men's team ministry is available on that download site.

If you would like to get in-depth help in starting a men's team ministry, the next tab is called "Starting a Men's Team Ministry in Your Church." It is a series of six videos that will walk you one month at a time through the steps of starting a men's team ministry in your church. I've attempted to leave no stone uncovered. It is very detailed. Don't feel overwhelmed. Just take your time. You can even take longer. If you want to take it once every two months. But look at the material and it will help you visualize how you might be able to be used by God to start this ministry in your church.

I hope you go through it. I hope you successfully begin a men's team ministry to the widows and single parents in your church.

Then after you have started your men's team ministry, look at the other material on the website. We've got dozens of men's ministries listed on this website. For almost all of them, I personally know the leaders of these men's ministries and they are amazing men of God who are doing amazing works. Men's team ministry is only the beginning. This is only one aspect of men's ministry. Look at these other men's ministries and ask God how he might want you to expand your men's ministry to address other needs in the lives of your men.

Thank you very much. I want to remind you that I am available at any time to answer any questions you may have or hear any comments you want to make. You can email me at [herbreese@yahoo.com](mailto:herbreese@yahoo.com). You can text or call me at 303-880-8839.