



## **Starting a Men's Team Ministry to the Widowed and Single Parents**

### **Part II: Planning Your Men's Team Ministry**

#### **(Video Transcription)**

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Hi, I'm Herb Reese with New Commandment Men's Ministries. Welcome to the second video in our series on "Starting a Men's Team Ministry to the Widowed and Single Parents." This video is entitled "Planning Your Men's Team Ministry."

I want to start by thanking you for being willing to step out, maybe pushing the limits of your comfort zone, to encourage your church to do men's team ministry to the widowed and single parents. I know that this isn't easy for a lot of guys. But it's very critical. God is using you to be an advocate for people in need in your church so that eventually your church can say, "There is not a needy person among us."

God is going to bless you. Not only is God going to bless you, he's going to bless the widowed and single parents in your church, as well as the men in your church, your entire church and your community as a whole because of the work that you are doing starting this ministry. So thank you.

By now you should have the approval of your pastor and/or appropriate staff person to go ahead and start this ministry. If you haven't received approval, please go back, review the first video, set up an appointment with the leadership in your church and make sure you have a green light from them before you do anything else.

In this video we want to cover basic planning for your men's team ministry. We're going to talk about establishing a leadership team, developing policy, as well as setting dates for your men's team ministry.

#### **Decide on a Leadership Team**

Let's talk about a leadership team for your ministry.

We want to keep everything as simple as possible in your men's team ministry. The reason for that is because we're looking for a ministry that is going to last for years and even decades. A ministry that is complex and difficult to maintain is not going to last that long. We have purposefully designed this ministry to be simple and easy so that it can and does last for years and decades. We have churches now that have been doing men's team ministry for over ten years.

When it comes to leadership, we also want to make sure that our leadership structure is simple and easy to maintain as well.

On the other hand, we want to encourage you to consider multiple leaders in your leadership structure. The reason for that is, just like a team, you need to account for the fact that some will be moving away, or pass away, or whatever the case may be. If you only have one leader in your leadership team, then your men's team ministry may not survive the transition.

Those are the two things we want to consider when we think about leadership in our men's team ministry, and that is simplicity but also multiplicity.

There are five types of leadership that you can have for your men's team ministry. Let's review these quickly.

Many churches have their pastor run their men's team ministry. Pastors may feel comfortable doing this. They love doing the devotional time, they love working with their men, they love spending time with their men, so this is perfectly appropriate for any church to do.

On the other hand, your pastor may want you to work with him, so a second model is a layman working with the pastor. This works well. Sometimes the pastor oversees the devotional time and the layman oversees the organizational aspects of the ministry. This can work very well, too. It also provides for the eventuality of a pastor leaving the church and going to another pastorate. In that case, the layman can take over and make sure the men's team ministry makes that transition to a new pastorate.

A third model is where you, the layman, lead the ministry alone. This can work. It requires that you lead both the devotional time as well as oversee the organizational aspects of the ministry, such as make sure everyone's notified when they're going to be meeting, etc. It can be done. The only problem is that if something happens to you, if you move away, get into poor health, then the men's team ministry is in trouble. I encourage you to consider having multiple leaders in your leadership structure.

A fourth model is where you and another layperson lead the ministry. In this model what you have to do is define your roles: who is going to lead the devotional time, who is going to be the organizational guy. Make sure that you have these roles defined. Sometimes you can rotate responsibilities, especially when it comes the devotional time. Or you can have other guys in the ministry leading the devotionals.

Whatever the case may be, this way you have more than one guy and you can survive a transition. That's critical, because if you do not have that planned for, eventually your men's team ministry is going to come to an end.

A fifth model is a committee of men. I'm not real thrilled about this type of model. The reason why is because it adds a lot of complexity to your men's team ministry. They say a camel is a horse put together by a committee. Unless your church knows how to do committees well, I would encourage you to try to avoid this. But if you feel comfortable with having three or four or five guys on a committee doing different responsibilities, then go ahead and try it.

But whatever you do, make sure that the roles are defined in the committee and that everyone is on board, knows what the ministry is all about, knows why you're doing this ministry, knows the biblical basis for this ministry, and they are equally committed to the ministry as you are.

Your next step after getting church approval, then, is to sit down with your pastor and decide what kind of leadership model you're going to use for your men's team ministry. Then you need to recruit members for your model.

### **Develop Your Men's Team Ministry Policy Statement**

Then, after you've established your leadership, the next step is to work on policy. There's a tendency here to get very detailed and lengthy, trying to cover every possible contingency. I want to encourage you again to keep it simple. The reason why is because if you don't, then you're going to wind up with a document that someone is going to type up and put away in a drawer and forget. If you keep it simple and review it with your men on a regular basis, then they're going to be able to remember it when they're out on the field. So make sure that you're keeping your policy statements simple.

New Commandment Men's Ministries makes recommendations for policy. It is up to the church to decide what specific policy you are going to have. I do strongly recommend that every church require at least two men on a team at a care receiver's home. Or another way to put it is, no man goes alone to a care receiver's home. They always go as part of a team. This is critical. We've seen God use this policy to protect this ministry. Because of this policy, we haven't seen any problems with men's team ministry in the area of sexual immorality or any kind of harm coming to a care receiver, or care giver for that matter. Have at least that as a policy for your men's team ministry. But you need to sit down with your church leadership and go over these policy suggestions, review them, review them also with your church insurance agent. Let him know exactly what you're doing and why you're doing it. Then get official approval from your church leadership for your policy.

Then, once you have your policy established, be sure that you review your policy with your men when you're training them, both in your initial orientation and then also with new men later on. By doing this you protect your men, you protect your care receivers, you protect your church, you protect your church's reputation.

### **Set Your Schedule for Implementing Your Men's Team Ministry**

You've established your team, you've developed your policy. Now you need to set a schedule for implementation of your men's team ministry. Three important dates to keep in mind. The first one is the date of your orientation. The second date is the date of your first service day, normally a month after your orientation. The third date is when you're going to start doing your promotional time. Let's talk about these three dates.

Allow at least two months between when you establish your leadership team and when you have your orientation. That gives you time to plan and time to do your promotion. I believe the best times to do your initial orientation are early fall and early spring. That way people are coming off of summer or coming off of the holidays, they're just now getting re-involved and reconnected in church, they're thinking about what types of things they want to be doing in church. You can hook into and capture that momentum and funnel it into your men's team ministry by doing your orientation during one of those times.

I suggest holding your orientation on the same Saturday of the month and at the same time on that Saturday as you are planning on holding your service days. For example, if you are planning on holding your service day on the second Saturday of the month, then hold your orientation on the second Saturday of the month. If you are planning on starting your service day at 7 am, then start your orientation at 7 am.

The reason for this is you want guys who can make the service days. If they can't make the orientation on a specific Saturday of the month, then they're probably not going to be able to make the service days.

Then make sure your orientation does not conflict with other major church events. If you have a huge church picnic planned, or a mission trip, or whatever, check your church calendar before you schedule your orientation because you do not want any major conflicts going on in the church so that your men can't make the orientation.

Schedule your first service day for a month after your orientation. The reason why you need to do this ahead of time is because when you do your orientation, at the end of the orientation, you want to announce to your men when they're going to meet again for the first service day. You're going to have your men all excited and they're going to be all organized and ready to go. If you don't have the next date when they're going to meet, you're going to lose your momentum. Capitalize on that momentum so that when they leave the orientation they know exactly what they're going to be doing, when they're going to be doing it, and where they're going to be doing it.

Next, schedule the start of your promotional campaign one month before your orientation. You've got your orientation date, your service date, which is one month after your orientation, and then your promotional campaign begins one month before your orientation. This gives you four weeks to promote the ministry in your church, which is critical. You need to have a lot of time to make sure this ministry gets into the brains of your men.

I recommend that if possible that churches do their service days on the second Saturday of the month. The reason why is because the second Saturday avoids a lot of holidays. During the summer you've got Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup> and Labor Day, and these are holidays that are either at the very end of the month or at the very beginning of the month. Then at the end of the year you've got Thanksgiving and Christmas at the end of the month and New Years Day at the beginning of the month. The Super Bowl is also at the end of the month. By holding your men's team ministry on the second Saturday of the month, when you come to these holidays, you don't have to go to all the trouble of changing the schedule. You miss almost all holidays. I've seen this work very well.

We've talked about establishing your leadership team, writing your policy and setting dates. Here's your checklist:

- ✓ Confirm that you have approval for the ministry from your church.
- ✓ Decide on the type of leadership team that you will have.
- ✓ Recruit your leadership team and define their roles.
- ✓ Develop your policy, get input and approval from your church leadership.
- ✓ Set the dates for your orientation meeting, first service day, and start of promotional campaign.