

*Defining Moments*  
**Volume 69—Calling Seekers to Commitment**

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HOW IS YOUR HEART FOR LOST PEOPLE? When you fast, and pray, and pour yourself into preparing an event, and then only half as many people as you had hoped actually attend, it is easy for your heart to break.

Yet it is God's desire that His Church persevere and proactively guide lost people in their spiritual journeys to a place where they commit their lives to Jesus Christ. Since the Day of Pentecost the Church has passionately tried, used, and sometimes even abused an array of approaches to achieve that end.

The following paragraphs explore some important considerations when calling seekers to cross the line of faith.

### **DANGEROUS MESSAGE, SAFE PLACE**

Do not mistake a seeker-friendly service for a safe place to hear safe music and a safe message so everyone stays safe. Rather, seeker-friendly means a non-annoying environment where believers can bring their seeking friends to hear the dangerous, potentially life-changing message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

That message challenges seekers to acknowledge and confront the dark side of human nature, take responsibility for their rebelliousness before God, depend upon the merits of another to do for them what we cannot do for ourselves, and surrender their lives to the leadership of Jesus Christ.

Remember: these are very upsetting concepts to people who hear them for the first time.

### **CULTURALLY RELEVANT, DOCTRINALLY PURE**

*Seekers are wide open to theological truth when they see where it fits into the complexities and challenges of their every day lives.*

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Do not make people leap over huge cultural chasms. Rather, take theological truth over that chasm to seekers. Apply it in their world and use language and concepts that they will understand.

Lead with an issue that every seeker faces, create tension, and then present a theological remedy or prophetic word. This approach has ramifications for the selection of music, teaching topics and styles, and for the use of drama and the arts.

The ultimate truth that we hope to communicate is that each person needs desperately to be in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ—and they need to take action towards that end. Culturally relevant simply means that *people get it!*

### **CREATE SPACE**

Given the pace of this world, once seekers step outside the doors of the church, most have little time to process issues raised during the service. Therefore, it is extremely valuable to intersperse times of reflection within the service itself.

Invest time helping people become not just hearers of the Word, but also reflectors upon the Word. Although people may feel a little awkward at first, you may be surprised to learn how open they are to the experiences that can occur when such space is created.

### **DRAW IN THE NET**

#### **Pray for the Right Balance**

Every church has to sort out—under the direction of the Holy Spirit—which services and events should be pre-evangelistic, evangelistic, or primarily for believers. A difficult but worthy goal is to make sure that all sub-ministries of your church pray through their evangelistic strategies.

#### **Prepare the Body**

Once you get a clear word from the Holy Spirit and program accordingly, it is vital that you communicate those evangelistic plans to the congregation.

You can help your congregation prepare for evangelistic events by offering special teaching on how to build relationships with people far from God and how to share a verbal witness, and by praying as a body before outreach events.

#### **Honor the Process**

Lost people need freedom to investigate the Gospel message. They need appropriate time to process information before making what will ultimately be the most important decision of their lives. If we push them too hard during that process, we can do more harm than good.

#### **A Variety of Methods**

There are a variety of methods that can be used at the end of a sermon to invite people to respond to the Gospel message. Consider the following:

- Distribute a response card for people to fill out.
- Suggest they talk to the people who brought them.
- Ask people to stay seated as you verbally walk them through how to make a decision for Jesus Christ.
- Ask those who are ready to give their lives to Jesus Christ to raise their hands.
- Ask them to stand right where they are and give public witness to their decision.

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Have your options ready, and then check to see how the Spirit's moving before deciding how to proceed.



You have the incredible privilege of being used by God to deliver the greatest news this world has ever known! Prayerfully reflect on the following questions:

- What might God want to do in your community through you and your church?
- Have you chosen to prioritize evangelism as the focus of your leadership efforts?
- Given how our society is changing, do you need to change some of your methods to better present contemporary culture with biblical truth?"
- On a practical level, are you prepared to call seekers to a commitment?

Keep sowing seed. It is heartbreaking when that seed falls on hard-packed soil, or when it takes root...and then gets choked out by weeds. But what happens to that seed is God's business; our business is to keep sowing—for the glory of Jesus Christ!

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