

# Is Your Ministry Giving Men What They Want?

by PATRICK MORLEY

**W**e have a saying at Man in the Mirror: "Give men what they need in the context of what they want." Men do what they want—so our task is to figure out what that is, and then show them how the gospel meets their desire.

What men want can be summarized in three categories that define the essence of manhood.

**1) A CAUSE—** Men want something they can give themselves to that will make a difference. A man's greatest felt need is his need to be significant—to find meaning and purpose in life, to make a contribution, to discover what he was created by God to do.

**What you can do:** Pastors, this is a layup. If we simply and concretely show men how they can find purpose and meaning in the gospel, most will respond. Men love a challenge. Use ideas like these to inspire your men:

Tell them, "Until you find a cause worth dying for, you will not have a cause worth living for." It's better to die for a worthy cause than live for no reason.

Quote President Woodrow Wilson, who said, "I would rather fail in a cause

that will ultimately succeed than succeed in a cause that will ultimately fail."

You don't have to say it will be easy. Jesus called forth men's greatest efforts not by a promise of great rewards, but great obstacles.



**2) A COMPANION—** Men want someone to share life with. This is the need for relationships, love, wife, family, friends, community, and

acceptance. Most men look for this in a woman. Marriage is the highest order of human relationship, and there isn't even

a close second.

**What you can do:** Help men value and nurture their relationships in the following ways:

Tell your men, "The party will be over soon. There'll only be two rocking chairs sitting side by side. Doesn't it make sense to invest today in the woman who will be sitting next to you then?"

Teach your men that no amount of success at work will ever be adequate to compensate for failure at home.

Disciple your men to prove their love by the way they spend their time. Relationships create responsibilities, and the chief responsibility of relationships is

time. Challenge your men to give time to those to whom time is due.

**3) A CONVICTION—** Men want belief in a system that explains why life is so difficult. Christianity is a belief system that perfectly explains why life is so hard and what to do about it. The problem, however, is that every other system—philosophy, worldview, religion—also promises the same thing. And the good ones actually work, sometimes for as long as 40 years. But all systems other than Christianity eventually fail because they rest on foundations that aren't true.

**What you can do:** Help men embrace their Christian conviction and become disciples. Here are the key ideas.

Lead men to biblical solutions for futility, sin, and despair, and help them find peace, hope, and victory by surrendering to Christ.

Exhort your men not to give the best years of their lives to a lie. And accept

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that advice yourself by living a surrendered life.

Train and disciple your men to understand how what they want fits into the larger picture of what God is doing in the world.

A man will feel most alive, most useful, and most significant when he's doing what he was created to do. Unless he's disciplined to want what he needs, he'll settle for lesser things—mere wants, futilities that God has ordained to disappoint. ☪



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is adapted from his new book *Pastoring Men: What Works, What Doesn't, and Why It Matters Now More Than Ever* (Moody). Used by permission.