

Men Reaching Men

The Ministry of Giving a Nudge

Unedited Transcript

Acts 1:8, 1 Peter 3:15

Patrick Morley

Good morning, men. Welcome to Man and the Mere Man's Bible Study. We're in the series Men Reaching Men. If you would, open in your Bibles to Acts chapter 1 verse 8. We have five area directors in town for boot camp, which is our final training before they go active. I'd just like to ask you area directors to please stand and remain standing.

Over here is Pete LoPresto from New York. By the way, area directors, I'm going to ask you when I introduce you to look back at the camera. We're not only going to introduce you to the men here but also to the men online and to the rest of the world. Pete LoPresto is from New York. His territory is basically from Elmira to Rochester, just west of Watkins Glenn, where I have the distinction of having had a crash during the practice at the top of the Rising Ss. Then, Wayne Morgret from Akron and Cincinnati. Cincinnati, Akron is his territory. Then, Mike Flinn, if you'd look at the camera and over there, Mike, right over there. Mike is from Peoria, Illinois. Jim Boetjer, right here, is from Northern California, just north of Sacramento all the way up to the state line. Mike Heller is from Tallahassee.

First of all, wonder if you would join me in welcoming these area directors to Orlando for their training. You may be seated. For those of you men online, just trying to give you a more visual image of what's happening here. If one of these men is in your territory, please be sure to connect with them.

We want to do a shout out today. This is a really cool shout out. "Dangerous Men for the Lord". That's the name of the group. I love this. From Lee's Summit Community Church in Lee Summit, Missouri. They're eight men from eight different churches getting together at a park on Thursdays at 7:00 AM. Their leader is Bill Reagan. Just remember we're looking for field staff in Lee Summit. I wonder if you'd join me in giving a rousing and a warm man in the mirror welcome to these men, these Dangerous Men for the Lord. One, two, three. Great. Glad to have you men with us.

The series is Men Reaching Men. The very long first big idea was that discipleship as one man caring enough about another man to help him build three things. What are they? Number one is a relationship with God. Number two is a world view that's biblical. Number three is a lifestyle worthy of our lord and savior Jesus. The goal of this series is to ... First of all, I want to give a nod to all of the men who already know all these things and are already doing all these things. Of course, this is a reminder and reminders are good. The encouragement that comes from seeing other brothers doing the same thing. The goal of this series is to give you the training, the tools, and the confidence, so that you can do those things, that you can care enough about one other man to help him either a relationship with God and/or world view that's biblical and/or a lifestyle worthy of Christ. That's what we're trying to accomplish here.

That first week, we talked about how one cup of coffee could change the world. Most of you raised your hands that you would like to start engaging a man by having a cup of coffee. We used cup of coffee as a metaphor. It could be anything. A couple of very interesting stories came in, emails came in, from guys, which I apparently have left at home which is fine, but I'll tell you what they said.

One man said that he did not raise his hand that week. He did not raise his hand because he was afraid that he wouldn't follow through and have time, wouldn't get it done. He didn't want to make a commitment between himself and the Lord to do that, but, as he said, God had other plans. The Lord brought a man to mind that he works with. He approached him about getting together. They did. As it turns out, they both have blended families and they both have, our man has a wife who's a teacher, and then apparently this man has a girlfriend who's also a teacher. He found that they had quite a bit in common. As it turned out, because our man is a little further down life's path and has more experience in fatherhood and marriage and so forth, he was able to be of enough benefit that this man has asked him, "Could we meet again in two weeks?" Is that a great story? That's a great story.

Another one of our men didn't have coffee but because he said at 7:00 PM at night it's a little late for coffee but after one of his Bible studies he invited two of the men out to his truck for a tailgate talk. These two men, two young men, are both wrestling with whether or not to believe in Christianity or Islam. They're trying to make that decision. He was able to get, instead of in a group context where you really don't have the opportunity to get personal, you can get pretty personal if it's a small group. But here, there's an inverse relationship. The smaller the group, the deeper you can go. With the two of them, he was able to be of great assistance to them. He had such a good experience he said he's going to start making Wednesday night tailgate talk night. Isn't that great? This is just awesome these stories that are taking place.

What I want us to do, it's going to be a seven week series and this is the fourth. In three week's time, we're going to do something a little different. We're going to have an open mic on Friday morning. There will be no message per say. Well, there will be many messages, I should say, but you'll be giving them. What I want you to be doing is to be thinking about taking one to two minutes just so you can benchmark John Anderson's video from last week or two weeks ago or whenever it was. It was last week. That was about a minute and a half. The story I just told about the young men trying to choose between Islam and Christianity, that's a minute or less. The other story, about a minute and fifteen seconds. That can kind of give you an idea. Keep them short, but some of you may just not want to get up here behind a microphone and tell your story, look into the eyeballs of all these people.

In the meantime, after each of the messages for this week, next week, and the following week, the next three weeks, what we're going to do is we're going to have Michael Lenahan, our videographer, to set up out in the hallway here and you can go out and record your story, what happened when you had a cup of coffee, what happened when you took a guy to a ballgame, what happened when you helped the guy set up for a garage sale, what happened when you gave a guy a book, what happened when you invited a man to the Bible study. Whatever it is that you have done to reach out with an intention spiritual friendship to a man. Isn't that a great idea? All right. Just out of curiosity, how many of you guys think you will want be participating in that on the seventh week? Raise your hands. That's not a commitment, but just raise your hands to give me an idea. Okay. Now, I have the task of trying to persuade many more of you to do it. Maybe it wasn't such a good idea. I thought it was a great idea and I hope you will too. I hope you'll take advantage of this and tell your stories.

Then, last week we took a hand count and found that 57 men so far had had the cup of coffee or done the equivalent. Then, Brett came and talked to us about this idea of intentional spiritual friendships, building intentional spiritual friendships. He told the great story about inviting a coworker to give him a ride home because his car was in the shop. For two weeks, he did that. By doing that everyday, they had enough of these contacts so eventually the man began to open up and Brett talked about them sitting in the driveway and the man sobbing as he was telling his story. Something of course he wouldn't have done unless there had been this intentional spiritual friendship to develop. Brett told us we could pray for a man, more ideas, we could serve a man, or we could give a man a book. We gave you the opportunity to take a book. More than 100 books went out of here that morning. So far, last week 26 men approximately said that they had already had the opportunity to give that book away.

Now, just a time out. God is not on our seven week time clock. He's on his own time clock. All right. You see. This is not something that we orchestrate, that we manufacture, that we make happen each week. This is something that God is doing. God may be equipping, training, tooling, giving you the confidence in this seven week series for some guy that you're going to meet a year from now, you see. It may be for a guy you met a year ago and you're still trying to figure out, "What do I do with this guy?" Just remember, we're not on a timetable here, but what we want to do is we want to give you, again, the training, the tools, and the confidence so you can care enough about one other guy to help him become what God wants him to become. Okay.

Then, David came and he talked a little about managing expectations. Why do we have to worry about managing expectations? Well, there's an extra element in this. We are engaged in the spiritual enterprise and therefore we also have a spiritual warfare, we have an additional layer of opposition when we're trying to connect with men. The idea of just managing expectations. Then, David came up with a wonderful illustration about being a fireman. A fireman is rushing into the building to save people who are in danger. Firemen are not standing outside the building, "Oh, please come out. As soon as they come out, then I'll help them." No, he said, "We're to go." That brings us then to today.

What I want us to do today is just show you how you can help a man get across the finish line. We've been talking about all of these things. Today I want to focus on this concept of the ministry of giving a nudge. The ministry of giving a nudge. In this area of intentional spiritual relationships, this is the first step, building this friendship, this intentional spiritual friendship. Acts chapter 1 verse 8 says, "When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will receive power and you will be my witnesses." Basically here, there, and everywhere, Judea, Samaria, uttermost parts of the world. Here, there, and everywhere. Instead of exegeting that passage, I just simply want to say to you that this is the mission that Jesus, one of articulating the mission that Jesus has for us. This power ... Who's power is this? Is this like you work your muscles and therefore you have a bigger muscle, therefore you're stronger and you have more power? Absolutely not. This is not God making you powerful. This is God giving the power that he has to work through you to be a vessel. That's one of my prayers every day. Father, I come to meet with you. Jesus, I come to meet with you. Holy Spirit, I come to meet with you. You're a much loved vessel. We're vessels. We're to be vessels through whom the power, the dunamis, the dynamite of God can flow.

2 Corinthians 12:9. Jesus says when Paul's pleading about taking away his thorn of the flesh. Jesus says, "Paul, Paul, Paul. It's not going to happen. My grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in your weakness." Paul goes on and says, "Therefore, I will be content in weaknesses, insults, hardships, difficulties, persecutions for when I am weak then I am strong. Therefore, I will boast about my weaknesses." You feel weak? You feel timid? You don't want do this? Great. Great. That means that God's power can flow through you. The worst thing you can do is have so much confidence you walk

into one of these situations you think you know exactly what to do and how to fix the guy. Don't go there. Go to the Holy Spirit. Trust your weakness. Present yourself. Let the power of the Holy Spirit work in and through you.

Then, if you would, just turn to 1 Peter chapter 3 verse 15. 1 Peter chapter 3 verse 15. This is the famous text that apologists use. "But in your hearts, honor Christ is holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. Yet do it in gentleness and respect." By now, I hope you're starting to get a different kind of a picture, a different kind of perspective, a fresh perspective about how we can go about reaching other men. It's basically about doing the same things we're going to be doing all day every day anyway but with a view that along the way we're going to make some intentional spiritual friendships with men. Very simple paradigm. A shift from the paradigm of getting men into structured groups, which are not bad, but simply getting men into structured groups and then filling them with all the right information, just thinking if we bombard them with enough information then they're going to be okay. As I said in the first message, if that would work, it would have already worked. Everybody would be a disciple because we have bombarded everybody already. There's something else that needs to take place. It's this idea of doing it in relationships.

First thing up then is ... And we do this, why? Because you desperately want men to have what men desperately want: meaning and purpose in their lives. We know that that's found in a relationship with Jesus and relationships with other men as well. How do we do all this? The first thing we do is we just be a friend. We just intentionally be a spiritual friend to these men. I raised my hand also on that first week. I've had a few experiences but one ...

A couple days after that I was at the gym and a man that I have been just talking to for about a year, kind of listening to his colorful vocabulary, he looked a little down so I said, "Hey, what's up?" He had given his heart to a woman and this woman had broken up with him and she had kept one of his cars and turned out that she's done to this a number of other men as well. In fact, he had to sue her, is suing her, to get back his vehicle, which is in his name but he's having to sue to get the vehicle back from her. He found out that when her lawyer, in fact her lawyer is a friend of his, he's the one who told him. I don't know if you're supposed to do that or not. Just ignore that on the video. Told him that when she went to pay her legal fee to defend against this suit, three men came to the law office to pay her legal fees claiming to be her boyfriend.

Yesterday I saw him again and I gave him a copy of a book yesterday. I just listened. As his friend, I had my cup of coffee. It wasn't a cup of coffee, it was in the gym. In between sets, just listen to him three or four times during the course of an hour. Yesterday I was with him again. I gave him a book and he told me that she's already posted on Facebook that she's in another relationship. He's just devastated by this. He gave his heart to her. This is why we teach our children don't give your heart to another person because if you give your heart to another person, you break up and it's the same emotional reaction as a divorce. He's going through a divorce even though she was just a girlfriend. I think he also is a little ticked off just how betrayed this ... I called her a gray widow. Is that a real term? Not a black widow because she didn't kill him. Like a gray widow. She's like a gray widow or something. That's how we do it. Men are especially open to these conversations when they are in what? Crisis, pain, trouble. All right.

Let's move on. Let me give you the **Big Idea** for the day. You can see it with these different stories that have already been told. **Just help a man go as far as he wants to go toward Jesus at that moment. Just help a man go however far he wants to go toward Jesus at that particular moment.** If you get pushed

back, by the way if you don't get pushed back ever then that means you're probably not pushing far enough, but as soon as you sense the resistance, back away. You've gone as far as you can go at that particular moment. That is the, it's not a curse, but it's a dilemma. It's the dilemma of the evangelist that you will never know if you have pushed too far until you've actually done it, you see. But at that moment, just back away and everything should be fine.

The next thing I want to do is I want to ... That's how you give a nudge. You just take a man as far as he wants to go at that particular moment. That's giving him a nudge. Now what do we do? We have a man who we've built this friendship with. He's ready to go. He's ready to go. How can you help him get across the finish line? If you would, take a look at this personal testimony worksheet. It's called "How to Prepare a Three Minute Elevator Testimony". I'd like to have everybody get one of these in your hands.

By the way, we should do another hand count. How many of you have so far been able to engage a man in any of these different ways that we've been talking about so far? If you would, just raise your hands. If you've been able to engage a man in any way like we've been talking about. This is awesome. Table leaders, would you get a count and then somebody, Jim. Jim, maybe you could go around and pick these up. Okay. Raise your hands. Leave them up. Leave them up. Table leaders, do a quick count. Do a quick count. Write your count on a sheet of paper. Tell Jim. Jim, why don't go around and get it and then we'll announce that.

Here's the worksheet. The first thing you need to be able to know to help a man get across the finish line is how to tell him your story. Three things usually happen when a man comes to faith in Jesus. First, he sees the life of Christ exemplified in a man who chose a personal interest in him. That's spiritual friendships. Second, he hears that man's personal faith story or testimony. This is a worksheet on how to put that together. Instead of having a separate set of questions this week, your three questions are before, how, and after. What I want you table leaders to do, if you will, is to just spend a little time on each of these sections and ask these questions. Just get that lubricated and so forth. I'm going to encourage you and many of you have already done this and I'm hoping many more of you will do this is to sit down maybe tomorrow morning on a Saturday morning or just sometime when you have a chance to maybe take an hour or two, I'd suggest a couple hours, and literally write this out so you will, as it says in 1 Peter 3:15, "Be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is in you." Do you see how this works?

A three minute testimony. It's about 150 words on what your life was like before Christ. What was your life before Christ? Empty, confused, lonely, disillusioned, futile, lacking significance, without purpose or meaning, successful but still not happy. As much as possible relate your story to what you know about his story. By the way, try to come up an actual practical example, not just concepts but also a story that gives an illustration of that. 150 words. That's about the normal talking rate per minute. Then 150 words on how you came to Christ. Then, what has happened since, after you came to Christ. What has Christ done in your life since then? Pick areas that have changed, which relate to his struggles if you can do that. Also, again, maybe give an illustration, give a story.

Here's the challenge. Down at the bottom, if you want to get serious about sharing Christ with men or even if you already are, don't shoot from the hip. Okay. Take a couple of hours, write out time practice, memorize your three minute elevator speech testimony, pick words that sparkle and emote.

Here's the big idea. We're just trying to help a man go as far as he wants to go toward Jesus at that moment. When he's ready to start moving across the finish line or score a touchdown, however you

want to say it, we need to be able to help him do that. One way we do that is by telling our faith story. The other way is by being able to show him how he can put his faith in Jesus too. This is where it gets tricky. If you would, on your tables, there are these *Becoming a Man Alive* booklets. Everybody, if you would, get one of these booklets. These are \$5 a piece, but today for you, it's going to be a gift. Actually, they're not \$5. How much are they? \$1, \$2, \$3. Something. A gift for each of you this morning. I encourage you to read it. Here's the main thing. You may but you may not be able to sit down with a man and actually explain the gospel to him. This is a tract. It's the four spiritual laws is a tract. This is a tract.

Somewhere in here is a prayer, which I can't seem to find right now, on page 42. Turn to page 42 and let's just read this together. It says this: "Lord, Jesus, I need you. Thank you for wanting me to experience the father's love and acceptance." By the way, some of you might want to pray this as an affirmation or a reaffirmation of your faith even as we're doing it now. "Lord, Jesus, I need you. Thank you for wanting me to experience the father's love and acceptance. Thank you that I am valuable just the way I am. Thank you for loving me so much that you sacrificed your life for my sins. By faith, I receive you into my life as savior and lord. Thank you for forgiving my sins, for which I am truly sorry. Thank you for the gift of eternal life. Thank you for making alive in you. Let me find rest for my soul. Change me into the man you created me to be. Amen."

You could either, after you've given your testimony and talked about the gospel, if you're able to do that, you could open to this page and read that prayer out loud. Ask the man, "Does this prayer express the desire of your heart and where you are today?" If he says yes, you say, "Well, if you'd like to, why don't we just pray this together out loud? You can receive Jesus in your life right now. Why don't I maybe read it out loud a phrase at a time and you repeat after me? Would that feel comfortable to you?" "Yes, that would." "All right. Lord, Jesus, I need you." Then he says, "Lord, Jesus, I need you." You read through the prayer. You would be helping the man enter into his eternal destiny to live with God forever or you can just give it to him. Say, "Here, read this because I'm a chicken." Or "I don't have enough experience yet to feel confident helping you to become the Christian that I know you want to be. If you'll just read this booklet, it will tell you everything you need to know and how to do it."

Also on your tables, final resource, third resource for the day. If everybody could get one of these Reach Three cards. This is another way you can build intentional spiritual friendships. It's the Reach Three Challenge. The idea is very simple. Write down the names of three men that you are not sure whether or not they're believers but that you are drawn to. It could be family members, neighbors, coworkers, whatever. Right down the three names and then just simply make the commitment to begin praying for those guys. It's so interesting. When you do pray for anything over and over and over again, it's more and more and more on your mind. Then all these other things that we're talking about can be released more effectively. Those are the three resources.

I'm just so glad the big idea here. **Just help a man go as far as he wants to go toward Jesus at that moment.** I'm just so glad for the five men, plus my praying wife, that did this for me. I can't imagine ... Actually, I can imagine where I would be because I have a family member who's where I would be if those five men had not come into my life. I remember the preacher was one of them. He wasn't eloquent but he understood the gospel and he would just simply present the gospel. His name is Hugh Lake. Then, was a Methodist church here in town. Then, HO and Bob, they're the ones that took me for the cup of coffee. They began to just ask me questions to get to know me. Then, Dan, we ended up in Sunday school class. That was the first time I had ever experienced a conviction of sin. I felt sorry really for anything I had ever done. It all came at once. Let me tell you. Boy, was that a day. Then, Jim, who

after I received Jesus, invited Patsy and me to become part of their couples Bible study. Jim, he saw something in me that I didn't know was there. He spoke words of encouragement and gave me a vision for my life, a vision for biblical manhood. It just kind of unchained something inside me. I've never been the same.

There are thousands and tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands and millions and hundreds of millions of men in this world who are longing, right now who are desperate, whether they can articulate it or not for a man to care enough about them to help them just go as far as he wants to go toward Jesus. We are those men. We are those men.

Jim, do you have a number? 32 hands. Well, that's less than we had last week. That doesn't work at all for me. Is it 32 additional? How many of you have done anything at all in reaching out to another guy? Raise your hand. Raise them up and I'm just going to go around and count them myself because I don't trust Jim anymore. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, I do trust you, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49. Is that up or not? 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 2, 3, 4, 65, 67, 8, 9, 10, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76. Touch down! 76 guys. Did I miss anybody? 76 men. This is awesome. Can you imagine how happy the wives and the children of those men are going to be for decades to come. Let's pray in Jesus' name.

Our father, our dearest father, thank you so much for what you're doing right here and we know it's happening online so we know it's happening all across the country, even the world. There are all of these new spiritual intentional friendships that are being developed. Oh, father we pray that you would bring a harvest. Let it be harvest time. We ask this in your loving name, Jesus. Amen.