

ABSTRACT

Involving Men in the Church

by

Dennis Edward Yocum

There are nearly two women involved to every man in North American churches. Historical study shows this pattern began around the time of the American Revolution. This dissertation examines the causes and provides strategies to reverse this trend.

Literature reviewed to gain insights includes men's studies, baby boomer, and church growth studies. Promise Keepers developed during the time frame of this dissertation, and it was also reviewed.

Research testing the strategies was conducted in a mid-Atlantic, suburban United Methodist Church of 1,000 members. Over a six-month period, programs targeting men were carried out to involve and assimilate them. After the test period eighteen men new to the congregation were interviewed using a semi-structured protocol to determine the influence of the special men's programming.

Research results verified that men are attracted in statistically large numbers to men's activities which are active rather than passive. Instead of sitting and listening, men prefer to be involved in activity such as hands-on mission projects or recreational ministry.

Implications of the research findings are reviewed.
Suggestions are offered to help congregations more
effectively attract and assimilate men.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

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With appreciation to Carol, my wife,
who gave her time
to free me for this project.

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

In an article titled "The Vanishing Men in the United Methodist Church," Circuit Rider, September, 1988, church consultant Lyle Schaller reported that the participation of men has steadily dropped in the United Methodist Church. In 1952 the ratio of women to men in the Methodist Church was only slightly less than the nation's population of 53 percent women and 47 percent men. By 1988 the typical United Methodist congregation had changed to 60 percent women and 40 percent men, approaching two women for every one man. What brought about this change? How can it be corrected?

The Problem and Its Context

I have served on the pastoral staff at Calvary United Methodist Church, Mount Airy, Maryland, since 1986. Church records show that in 1968 Calvary's membership was 621 with 54 percent women and 46 percent men. Our June 1991 membership was 896 with 57 percent women and 43 percent men. At Calvary Church over the past twenty eight years, the proportion of men to women has declined by 3 percent. Further examination reveals a more serious concern. Of the 896 members in 1991, 434 or 48 percent are classified as actively involved. Of those members actively involved, 64 percent are women and only 36 percent are men. At Calvary Church there are nearly two women involved for every one

man. This is similar to what Schaller reports as a national average. In the fall of 1992, worship attendance was 36 percent men, adult Sunday school enrollment was 41 percent men, and 42 percent of the leaders/committee members were men. Why do men participate at a substantially lower rate than women? How can more men be attracted to Christ and the church?

Statement of Purpose

The ministry project developed, implemented, and evaluated a program to involve and assimilate men in Calvary United Methodist Church. It focused on adult males age eighteen and up. The principal group reached are men who already had some connection to Calvary Church. These men are members or constituents who were not regular participants, although other family members may have been actively involved. Men who were new attenders were also targeted to assimilate them so they did not become inactive.

Research Questions

Question #1: What attitudes and activities in the church and surrounding culture push men away from the church?

When considering why men have not been attracted to the Christian church, a series of questions arise. Are men inherently less religious with a lesser need than women for religion? Is there a cultural bias which defines Christianity and the church as feminine? Is religion

understood by men as "women's work?" Does the message, organization, and/or program of the church appeal more to the feminine than the masculine? Is Jesus perceived as more feminine than masculine? The review of the literature examined these factors to determine which are valid and affected the participation of men in the church. Insights gleaned were incorporated in the program to involve men.

Question #2: What attracts men to the church?

A supposition tested in this study is one which underlies much church growth thought: If men's needs are discovered and met, they will respond to Christ and the church. Church growth author and practitioner Robert Schuller suggests if we "find a need and fill it," people will beat a path to the church door. The project attempted to validate this by discovering men's needs, trying to fill them, and observing if they came.

Methodology

Literature reviewed in search of pertinent insights for involving men are men's studies, baby boomer literature, and church growth literature.

Men's studies are emerging in parallel with women's studies. For the most part the men's movement has been developing outside the church until the birth of Promise Keepers in 1990. What is being learned about men culturally, physically, psychologically, socially and in

other ways can help develop church programming targeted to men.

An extremely large block of adult men fall into the baby boomer age range--those born between January 1, 1946, and December 31, 1964. This literature was reviewed and insights applied to attracting and involving men.

The church growth movement, fathered by Donald McGavran, contains many insights on how to attract and assimilate men. Lyle Schaller, George Hunter and others were examined. Schaller originally alerted me to the declining participation rate of men. He gives reasons for this decline as well as suggestions for intervention.

Research was conducted at Calvary United Methodist Church and in the surrounding ministry area to discover who are the men in the congregation and in the community, and what are their needs. In connection with a strategic plan previously developed at Calvary, a demographic package prepared by Church Information and Development Systems (CIDS) is available. It provides extensive data about the 25,000 people who reside within five miles of the church building. A survey of adult attitudes was also purchased from CIDS and modified by Calvary's Strategic Planning Committee. It was distributed by mail in June 1991, to 900 adult males and females stimulating 210 responses. This data is available and was reviewed to give a profile of adult males connected to Calvary Church.

After reviewing the results of the research of the literature and a determination of the needs of men at Calvary and in the Mount Airy community, a strategy for involving men was designed. This included a series of events and programs prepared with the consultation of a half-dozen key male leaders who comprise the Executive Council of the United Methodist Men at Calvary.

The strategy implementation phase lasted six months. After this period the program was evaluated to see how effectively it involved men. Men who became active in the church during the test period were interviewed to determine to what extent the program influenced them. A semi-structured interview was pretested and used.

Variables

The independent variable of this study is the program to attract and involve men in the life of Calvary Church. The dependent variable is the participation of men in Calvary Church. Other independent variables not part of this study influenced men over the six months of the study.

These variables included such things as their changing personal, religious, or family needs. A personal crisis developing; other church programming influencing them; or something unrelated to the church may have been a pivotal influence. The interviews attempted to label other influences and determine to what extent the independent

variable played a part in their decision to be involved at Calvary Church.

Delimitations and Generalizability
of the Study

Because many diverse factors influence people's involvement in church, it is presumptuous to assume that a series of programs targeted to men will be crucial. Many other things are more important and are prerequisites for men to be receptive to Christ and the ministry of the church. On the other hand, it is reasonable to presume that if specific programs are available for men, and if the welcome mat is put out for them, some men will respond. This study seeks to verify a general outline of areas that interest and attract men which should be considered by any church seeking to involve them.

This evaluative study is among white middle class males whose ancestry is primarily European. They reside in a small Maryland town which has become a fringe suburb of Washington and Baltimore. Results may not apply equally to men of other cultures, nor to all the sub-cultures in North America. The majority of men in this study are aged thirty five to fifty five. Younger men and older men may have different needs and a different impression of the church and would require a strategy tailored to their perspective. The theological outlook of men may also influence their view of the church. For instance, there is higher participation by

men in congregations whose theology dictates that only men are to be in positions of leadership in the church. For such churches the results of this study may not fully apply.

Calvary Church is a large membership, multi-staffed church with specialized ministry to many targeted groups. Small membership churches do not have the people to support the specialization nor the staff to organize and maintain the ministries. Beyond having a men's fellowship group, or a men's Sunday school class, there may be little other programming targeted to men. In utilizing the results of this study some allowances must be made for congregational size.

Despite differences of congregational size, theology, culture, and age of the men, the results of this study will still be instructive to other churches. It is anticipated that the principles and strategies will be adaptable to other churches who seek to attract and involve men. They should also be valuable to help involve teen age boys in the church.

Chapter Overview

Chapter 2 provides a review of pertinent literature for this study. It begins with a historical overview of the participation of men in the church. Then it examines men's studies, baby boomer literature, and church growth literature to discover the uniqueness of men. The chapter

concludes by addressing why men are not involved and changes which could be made to attract them.

Chapter 3 provides the detailed design of the study conducted at Calvary United Methodist Church, including the rationale for the strategy which was selected and implemented.

Chapter 4 reviews the results of the strategy to involve men at Calvary Church. It describes what worked, what did not work, and possible reasons for the outcome.

Chapter 5 summarizes the lessons learned from the study and their implications for Calvary Church and other churches concerned to involve more men in the family of faith.

The Appendix summarizes the data collected for this report.

The Bibliography concludes the dissertation.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Historical Background

Low levels of participation by men is not new in the North American Church. Its roots go back to the late eighteenth century. Men dominated religion in colonial America. They not only led the colonial church, they were its most numerous church members.¹

The Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century brought change to society and the church. Fewer men worked at home in a cottage industry or on the farm. Many left for the factory early in the morning and returned home at night.

This new pattern changed the patriarchal family. Because of the absence of the father, women took on a new role and were now responsible for rearing and training both boys and girls. Previously men concentrated on the rearing and training of boys and women taught the girls. Women now assumed much of the moral and religious instruction for both boys and girls. Increasingly, religion and the church became a female-populated institution. As fewer fathers and other male role models were involved in the church, many teen age boys did not participate when they grew to be men.

The American Revolution elevated the importance of politics. In the male-dominated culture of the new nation,

¹ Peter N. Stearns, Be a Man! Males in Modern Society (New York: Holmes and Meir, 1990), 32.

economics and politics took center stage pushing religion to the side. Historian Barbara Welter writes;

In the period following the American Revolution, political and economic activities were critically important and therefore more "masculine," that is, more competitive, more aggressive, more responsive to shows of force and strength. Religion, along with the family and popular taste, was not very important, and so became the property of the ladies. Thus it entered a process of change whereby it became more domesticated, more emotional, more soft and accommodating--in a word, more "feminine."...In the nineteenth century the skyscraper would replace the steeple as a symbol of the American dream, and the ministers of God fought against this displacement. Politics captured the zeal and the time once reserved to religion, and the pulpits thundered against those men who mistakenly served power itself and not the Source of Power....Increasingly, in a political world, women and the church stood out as anti-political forces, as they did in an increasingly materialistic society, dominated by a new species, Economic Man.²

By the early 1800s, women outnumbered men in the church by a two-to-one margin in some denominations and communities.³ In Baltimore by 1830 over 70 percent of the

² Barbara Welter, "The Feminization of American Religion: 1800-1860," Clio's Consciousness Raised, New Perspectives on the History of Women, eds. Mary S. Hartman and Lois Banner (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), 138-39.

³ Mark C. Carnes, Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1989), 77.

church members were women.⁴ Although the hierarchy of ministers, theologians, and prominent lay leaders in local churches remained male, women took leadership in most of the other areas of the church. The Sunday school, missions, and other programs depended upon women volunteers.

Given the attendance patterns, the alliance of women and male clergy was a natural progression. To meet the needs of the dominant female worship audience, the message of the church was framed to appeal more to women and their religious sensibilities. The harsh judgmentalism of Calvinism prominent in the eighteenth century gave way to the human capacity to influence the prospects for salvation found in Arminianism. As the religious views of human nature became less harsh, they meshed nicely with the hopes and political philosophies of people like Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. William McLoughlin wrote that by the middle of the nineteenth century, Arminian evangelicalism had become the "national religion" of America.⁵ In the church of the nineteenth century, there developed an emphasis upon those virtues of God commonly associated with femininity--nurture, love, forgiveness, mercy, and grace. Facing their own masculine identity crisis, young men whose

⁴ Ibid., 194, n48.

⁵ William McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham (New York: Ronald Pres Co., 195?), 65-66, cited by Carnes, p.195, n.57.

upbringing had been dominated by women shied away from the church, perpetuating the low participation rate of men.

Sex roles were also more rigidly defined in the eighteenth than in the seventeenth century. As family farms gave way to commercial farming and household manufacturing to factory production, middle-class women no longer played a major role in producing consumer goods. Men concentrated on generating wealth which created the economic and political institutions of the culture. Meanwhile women raised children, cultivating the moral and religious values necessary to maintain the new economic and political order.

With the advent of industrialization, appearance and dress became less unisex.⁶ For males the skirt was now confined to infancy. The decline of the wig emphasized different hair styles for adult men and women. There was also a growing female concern for slenderness which accented the different builds of men and women.

Barbara Welter suggests that "domesticating" the West was one of the most important religious, cultural, and political events of the first half of the eighteenth century. Both Protestants and Catholics considered it their special duty to bring God and women westward as soon as possible. Law, order, and consumers were enhanced by the

⁶ Peter N. Stearns, Be a Man! Males in Modern Society (New York: Holmes and Meir, 1990), 52-53.

presence of churches and women.⁷ Women were assigned and performed the civilizing role in the culture.

The change in family structure affected the religious life of men, suggests Mark Carnes.

The history of fatherhood is in its early stages, and few generalizations about the role of fathers in Colonial America can be proposed with any conviction. Yet there is considerable evidence that, for much of their lives, boys in the Colonial period lived under the palpable influence and control of their fathers; this was much less true of fathers and sons in the nineteenth century....The Colonial father stood firmly at the center of a "well-ordered" Puritan domicile. Every day he was expected to lead the family in prayer, scriptural study, and the singing of psalms.⁸

The pattern of decreasing men's participation in the church which began with the Industrial Revolution continued throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the present.

In 1885, Washington Gladden's book, The Young Men and The Churches: Why Some of Them Are Outside, and Why They Ought to Come In, expresses concern for men not being in the church.⁹ In 1930, C. Luther Fry wrote, "...48% of the men are church members, contrasted with 63% of the women. This striking difference bears out the contention that churches

⁷ Welter, op. cit., 143.

⁸ Carnes, op. cit., 107-08.

⁹ Washington Gladden, The Young Men and the Churches: Why Some of Them Are Outside, and Why They Ought to Come In (Boston: Congregational Sunday School and Publishing Society, 1885)

have a decidedly greater hold upon women than upon men."¹⁰

The cultural changes which took place following the American Revolution greatly affected men and the church. The male and female rolls which were defined--women responsible for leadership in the home, family, and religion and men responsible for community, political, and economic leadership--still prevail today.

Men's Studies

Men's studies has developed over the past twenty years as a corollary to an "older sister," women's studies. As an academic interdisciplinary field, men's studies draw upon the social and behavioral sciences as well as the humanities, natural science, and biological science. Their primary focus is to study men and masculinity.

Although the women's movement has produced a women's theology, the men's movement has not produced a male theology. Feminists have claimed, rightly so, that traditional theology is male theology; hence, little need exists for a new male theology.

For the most part, the men's movement has developed outside the church. However, numerous authors addressing a Christian audience have written extensively on the topic of masculinity. Their perspectives, along with the more secular academic world of men's studies, can yield useful

¹⁰ C. Luther Fry, The U.S. Looks at Its Churches (New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1930), 11.

insights on ways to involve men in the church.

One of the first challenges in studying men is defining masculinity. Historically, gender distinctions were formed by designating traits as masculine or feminine. A spirited debate continues as to whether or not these sex-role identity qualities are genetically or culturally determined.

Traditionally, men and women embody traits considered normal to each sex. Although some overlap exists, many traits are believed to be unique or at least more dominant in one sex than the other. In this schema a man's sex-role identity is measured by how closely he matches the traits of masculinity defined as the desirable norm. If a person scores high on the masculine scale, by definition that person would score low on the feminine scale.

A more recent addition to the traditional linear sex-role inventory paradigm is the perspective that men and women have androgynous traits. From this perspective masculinity and femininity are no longer seen as opposites on two ends of a pole. Instead they are viewed as independent so that masculinity is one psychological dimension ranging from high to low, and femininity another dimension also ranging from high to low. By separating the two a person can be scored on both masculinity and femininity. Those who score high on both masculinity and femininity are then labeled androgynous, and those who score low on both scales are labeled undifferentiated.

Psychologist Joseph Pleck, who chronicles the history of sex role identity in The Myth of Masculinity, makes the following observation:

Androgyny, however, has proved to be an important transitional concept to a whole new way of viewing sex roles that has emerged both in the social sciences and in society. Instead of seeing traditional sex roles as desirable and their internalization via sex role identity as the goal of psychological development, this new interpretation views these roles as limiting and constricting.¹¹

Pleck suggests that a radical change in the way we conceptualize sex roles is emerging. He sees both masculinity and femininity as relational and socially constructed. This change makes sex roles less static than they have been in the past and more able to conform to the way they actually are and have been in the lives of real people. It frees men from the pressure of aspiring to be perceived as strongly masculine while denying the existence of their feminine side. It permits a man or woman to be androgynous and feel good about it.

In an attempt to provide some order in the chaos of contemporary masculine sex-role norms, Pleck gives two categories which he calls traditional and modern. These two are in tension with the modern, generally displacing the traditional.

¹¹ Joseph H. Pleck, The Myth of Masculinity (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1981), 8-9.

In the traditional male role, masculinity is validated ultimately by individual physical strength and aggression. Men are generally expected not to be emotionally sensitive to others or emotionally expressive or self-revealing, particularly of feelings of vulnerability or weakness. Paradoxically, anger and certain other impulsive emotional expressions, particularly toward other males, are expected or tolerated....The traditional male prefers the company of men to the company of women and experiences other men as the primary validators of his masculinity. Though bonds of friendship among men are not necessarily emotionally intimate, they are often strong. In the traditional male role in marital and other relationships, women are seen as necessary for sex and for bearing children, but these relationships are not expected to be emotionally intimate or romantic, and often seem only pragmatic arrangements of convenience. The traditional male expects women to acknowledge and defer to his authority. There is also strong adherence to a sexual double standard that views sexual freedom as appropriate for men but not women. Further, men often view women in terms of the madonna-whore complex, in which some women are categorized as morally superior, and other women morally inferior to men.¹²

What Pleck labels the modern sex-role norm is characterized by the following:

...masculinity is validated by economic achievement and organizational or bureaucratic power. Interpersonal skills and intelligence are esteemed insofar as they lead to these goals. Emotionally, the modern male role strongly values the capacity for

¹² Ibid., 140-41.

emotional sensitivity and self-expression in romantic relationships with women. It holds, however, that these emotional behaviors should occur only with women. Overall, maintenance of emotional control is a crucial role requirement. Anger and other traditional male impulsive emotional behavior are thus discouraged. ...The modern male prefers the company of women. Women rather than other men, are experienced as the primary validators of masculinity. Men's relationships with women are now expected to be intimate and romantic. ...the marital relationship has evolved from "institution" to "companionship." Men now see heterosexual relationships as the only legitimate source of the emotional support they need. Women now soothe men's wounds and replenish their emotional reserves rather than defer to their authority in the family. Though it still persists, the sexual double standard is less marked. Masculinity is now proved less by many sexual conquests than by truly satisfying one woman's sexual needs. Men's emotional relationships with other men have become weaker and less emotionally important though a high level of competence in conducting work relationships is expected...It is now men's relationships with other men--rather than with women--that seem to be only arrangements of convenience.¹³

Pleck's distinction between the traditional and the modern male sex-role norm parallels a distinction between working-class and middle-class culture. Generally the working class aligns with the traditional, and the middle-class with the modern sex role. Pleck sees sex roles as relational and socially constructed, and he believes the

¹³ Ibid.

roles will continue to evolve and adapt in the coming years.

It is likely that the modern role will continue to displace the current traditional role. A new role may emerge which will create a new modern role.

After centuries of male patriarchy, there have been two major seasons of change in Western gender patterns in the past two hundred years. The first came with the Industrial Revolution. The second is taking place in the twentieth century. For men the more wrenching change took place with the Industrial Revolution. It required men to make the more radical role model shift with women adjusting and adapting to the male change. The current change now under way requires the more radical shift to be made by women with men adapting to women's new role.

Beginning before the turn of this century, Pleck detects a shift from external to internal social control of sex roles.¹⁴ In the previous century sex roles were validated and supported by segregation of the sexes in most social settings. For example the women were in the home, at the church, or shopping while the men were at work, the saloon, lodge, union meeting, or political rally. At the beginning of the twentieth century this segregation, which provided an external validation of a person's sex role, began to break down. All-male colleges and honorary

¹⁴ Ibid., 158-59.

fraternities became coeducational. The all-male saloon gave way to the singles bar. The military integrated and women moved into both blue-collar and management positions in the work place.

The shift from externally validated sex roles to internal, psychologically validated roles was especially evident in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. The Great Depression, which put the male breadwinner out of work, brought more than economic crisis to many men. The Depression era caused men to question their masculinity which could no longer be externally validated by their being economic providers.

World War II again provided men with an institutional male role to validate masculinity. American men lived and worked together, away from women, and emerged victorious over the enemy. Great was the shock for many men when they arrived home to find their wives and girlfriends in traditional male jobs in war industries. Having to live without men, many women developed a new-found psychological independence. As sex roles could no longer be easily validated by external behavior, a list of psychological traits and attitudes developed to define sex roles. Prior to this century little need existed for such lists.

In a critique of the sex-role paradigm, Michael Kimmel writes:

The sex role paradigm posits a historically invariant model, a kind of static sex role container into which all biological males and females are forced to fit. This process of fitting into preexisting roles is called "socialization."...Masculinity and femininity are relational constructs, the definition of either depends upon the definition of the other. Although "male" and "female" may have some universal characteristics (and even here the research on biological dimorphism suggests a certain fluidity), one cannot understand the social construction of either masculinity or femininity without reference to the other.¹⁵

Debate continues in academic circles in an attempt to discover a more helpful paradigm to better understand gender and gender differences. Much research is needed in this realm to more helpfully describe masculinity and femininity.

Although there are far more similarities, some differences separate the adult male and female. On the physical level are the obvious differences in sexual and reproductive organs, body shape, size and strength.

There are also some differences in the development of the brain in utero. Dr. Donald Joy reports that between the sixteenth and the twenty-sixth week of pregnancy, the brain of the male child is bombarded with the mother's

¹⁵ Michael S. Kimmel, Changing Men, (Newberry Park, California: Sage Publications, 1987), 12.

androgens.¹⁶ These chemicals are concentrated on the left hemisphere of the brain and the corpus collosum, the connecting link between the left and right hemispheres.

It is known that boys, as a group, develop language skills more slowly than girls and have more frequent speech problems. Language delay in boys is thought to be due to the chemicals which changed the left brain hemisphere, which houses the speech function.

In the preborn male some of the fibers of the brain's connecting link are destroyed as a result of this ten week chemical bath. The young male's ability to simultaneously mix and coordinate the use of both brain hemispheres is greatly diminished. This produces the "single minded" male who does not switch back and forth from the left to the right hemisphere as easily as the female. The difference in the brain's connecting link permits men to concentrate using the logical, analytical left hemisphere without being interrupted by the right brain which stores the feelings, emotions, and noumenal beliefs. Women, on the other hand, are more open to interruptions and are more whole-minded in their responses. Men are capable of high emotion (right

¹⁶ For a fuller explanation of the brain differences of the male and female see Donald Joy, Unfinished Business, (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1989), 25-30, and Donald Joy, Bonding, Relationships in the Image of God (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1985), 91-95.

brain function) but often find it more difficult than women to communicate that verbally (left brain function).

Another brain difference is that a lower rear lobe develops on the right hemisphere of the male. This brain tissue has been identified as the center from which males get their spatial orientation.¹⁷ This brain difference means that men and women image differently when it comes to space and geography. Males tend to have greater ability to develop eye-hand coordination which stems from their greater three-dimensional-perception ability. This same ability is what gives males an edge in math (geometry, calculus and other higher mathematics) which often requires three-dimensional perception.

Although the differences between male and female in these areas are real, they are small when compared to the similarities. An extensive 1974 study by Stanford researchers Dr. Carol N. Jacklin and Dr. Eleanor E. Macoby, titled The Psychology of Sex Differences, reviewed over 2,000 books and articles dealing with sex differences in motivation, social behavior, and intellectual ability. These researchers concluded that the sexes do not differ in (1) sociability, (2) self-esteem, (3) motivation to achieve, (4) facility at rote learning, (5) analytic mindedness, (6) susceptibility to environmental influences, or (7) responses

¹⁷ Donald Joy, Unfinished Business, 28.

to auditory/visual stimuli.¹⁸ They concluded that any differences between men and women in these areas are not biological in nature but are created by culture.

Another common issue among North American men is isolation and loneliness. When compared to women, men have fewer close friends with whom they share on a deep level. Even when men are frequently together, their social interaction begins and remains at a superficial level. Conversations about sports, politics or the weather dominate, and deeper conversation which might nourish the human spirit is avoided. Many men have had so little experience with intimate friendship that they do not know how to cultivate it. The role model of the strong, independent male who does not need friends for support is a powerful influence. This stereotype is deeply ingrained in most men. They find it hard to accept their need for the fellowship of other people.

Men typically feel an aversion to emotional expression which feeds their loneliness and isolation. From an early age boys receive the cultural message that it is not appropriate for them to display much emotion because they risk being labeled "sissy" or "cry baby." The cultural message sent is, "To be a man you must conceal your emotions."

¹⁸ David W. Smith, The Friendless American Male (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1983), 43.

For many men, touch beyond a handshake with other men is awkward. With the notable exception of sports, men do little touching of one another. David Smith writes:

Touching implies to many men sexual interest. The thought that someone could want to hug you as an expression of affection or friendship without sexual overtones is hard to believe. Some men become irritated or, more likely, embarrassed if they are hugged by a friend. Perhaps men shun physical expressions of feelings with men because of the unconscious fear of latent homosexual tendencies.¹⁹

Michael McGill makes a similar observation.

The prohibition against touch is one of the most prevalent taboos in male behavior. Men simply do not touch one another except in aggression or competition. Men rarely touch women except in sexual ways. These prohibitions are so persistent and powerful that anytime a man voluntarily violates them he may be said to be reaching out, trying to establish intimacy. Most men never make outreach disclosures in these taboo areas. They typically engage in any numbers of "testing" behaviors-- actions that might just as easily be taken as innocent, even accidental. An excellent example is the roughhousing that is a staple of father-son interaction.²⁰

For men, friends are for competing, joking, and talking about common interests. Typically, friends are not for help or solace in times of personal crisis. Men compartmentalize their friendships. They may have work friends, sports or recreation friends, church friends, neighbor friends, or others. With each set of friends a man will have a defined

¹⁹ Ibid., 15.

²⁰ Michael E. McGill, The McGill Report on Male Intimacy (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985), 201.

set of interactions and activities which are seldom mixed. From his extensive research in men's behavior patterns McGill notes:

Male friendships, which emerge cautiously over time in well defined circumstances, typically have no way to deal with out-of-context behavior or experiences, the very good times or the very bad times, or very personal disclosures. Men do not think of going to their friends in times of crisis, and if a man were so inclined, his disclosures would more than likely be rejected by his friends.²¹

Men often feel going to others in times of crisis signals weakness. Summarizing his observations, McGill writes:

All of what has been discovered about male friendships the caution, the circumstances, the constraints, the conflicts between competition and closeness--is aptly captured by Roger Nylander's statement that "we are all in it alone." It is both a description of how male friendships are and a prescription for how men feel that friendships ought to be. Men believe that they should be able to go it alone, independently, autonomously, without friends.²²

This male orientation toward friendship opposes the way women view friendship. Because of this difference many men cannot understand the time and attention which women give to their friends.

One type of male friendship which does often approach some degree of intimacy is the mentor relationship. Generally, this relationship is between a younger and an

²¹ Ibid., 166.

²² Ibid., 168.

older man. Or one is perceived as the novice and the other as established. Perhaps the age difference or the disparity in skill level removes the dimension of competition between the two, permitting more intimate sharing without fear of it being used against the other.²³ The mentor relationship is socially acceptable. It is okay for a man to have a coach, but a close, personal male friend may be questionable.

Why are men not more intimate, more loving, more sharing of themselves in relationships with both men and women? McGill believes the answer is clear.

The reason men are not more loving is that they want to retain power over themselves and attain power over others. The research data and interviews with relational others indicates that men make of themselves a mystery. Men withhold information about themselves, they mislead and even misrepresent themselves to others. It is now apparent that they promote this mystery in order to gain mastery. This mystery-mastery behavior, identified by sociologists some years ago, discourages the sharing of feelings, motives, and goals with others.²⁴

For a man to treat himself as a mystery protects him from learning about himself. Also, the man who does not disclose his values and feelings can never be held in judgment or seen to fail. McGill believes that the underlying issue for men is power, but no man can be truly powerful until he knows himself. Since no man can really know himself unless he discloses himself to others, intimacy

²³ Ibid., 183.

²⁴ Ibid., 232.

is a path to power. As men become aware of the potency of intimacy and self-disclosure, they will be more open to revealing their inner feelings and struggles. In these times of changing sex roles, it appears that men are becoming more aware of the tangible, personal benefits that come from sharing themselves in interpersonal relationships. This seems to be more evident in professional groups, church groups, hobby clubs, and one-on-one relationships with those closest to them.²⁵

If we believe that humankind has been created in the image of God, both male and female, and that their creation is good, then it is incumbent upon the church to help both men and women discover who they are in an age when gender roles are so much in flux. The question for the church is how to help men form and use their masculinity so it will enhance their discipleship and advance the Kingdom of God.

If men's studies tell us anything, they point out the need for the church to provide individual and group support for men. Some of this support may come in formally constituted small men's groups intended to address the needs of men--spiritual, social, vocational, in marriage and family, and/or other needs.

Many men may feel too threatened to enroll in this type of support group. Mentoring, more socially acceptable, is

²⁵ Ibid., 245.

less threatening. As new men in the church naturally look for role models, train would-be role models in the art of mentoring. Some formal mentoring relationships, where the two meet regularly, may emerge. Other mentoring may take place on a more casual basis at church or community gatherings. Opportunity exists for the enterprising congregation to respond to the emerging needs of men.

Christian Men's Movement

As the women's movement gained momentum in the 1970s, men in sympathy with women's goals searched for ways to be supportive. As sexism advanced by men is a major problem faced by women, then men in fact are in most need of change.

So the men's movement began as a consciousness-raising experience to help men see the need to change their way of relating to women. Describing the early men's movement from his personal experience, Jack Balswick writes:

As we began to deal with our own issues, we quickly found that we men were also held captive by the traditionally defined male role. We came to realize that the same traditional male values that had led to the oppression of women had also crippled us badly. We discovered that there was a personal cost to our quest to dominate and be in control. Having experienced the pressure to compete with others and to "win at all costs," we sought the virtue of softness and openness....Our goal was to create a new male, one that was more feminine than the macho one we had been raised to emulate.²⁶

²⁶ Jack Balswick, Men at the Crossroads (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 35-6.

Growing slowly in the 1970s, the movement organized on the national level in 1983 as the National Organization for Changing Men (NOCM). Although it did not capture the attention of the large majority of American men, it was most effective at reaching men in academic circles.

A new chapter in the men's movement began with the broadcast of Bill Moyers' PBS interview of Robert Bly in 1989 and the publication of Bly's book Iron John in 1990. Iron John was in the nonfiction top-ten bestseller list for thirty weeks. Sam Keen's Fire in the Belly: On Being a Man was a top seller in 1991. These books popularized the men's movement.

Seeking to develop the full range of masculinity, Bly drew images from mythology. He describes masculinity using the archetypes of king, warrior, magician, and lover.

Commenting on this methodology, Balswick writes:

Rightly understood, the king, warrior, magician and lover form a complementary whole. The four archetypes work to check and balance one another. A man who is controlled by one archetype to the exclusion of the others will lack wholeness and centeredness. The mature male lives with a strong king, warrior, magician and lover, each complementing the other. None of the archetypes works well alone...There is much that is commendable in this view of manhood. It has an intuitive appeal to me because it fits with what I experience. I might wish for a simpler model of masculinity, but my experience tells me that being a man is far from a simple matter. I find that life calls me to be strong, but not too strong; to be vulnerable, but not too vulnerable; to be emotional, but not so emotional that I lose my rational footing. Being a man is difficult because of all the seemingly contradictory

requirements life places upon us. By seeing myself as including a king, a warrior, a magician and a lover, I allow myself to move closer to the multidimensional person God created me to be.²⁷

An interesting question surfaces: What man in history emerges as the best example of the integrated whole? Jesus, whom the book of Hebrews identifies as prophet, priest and king would be a contender.

The extensive publicity that Bly and others gained generated considerable interest. With the consciousness level of men rising, the national publicity helped bring on the birth of what has become a growing Christian men's movement.

On March 20, 1990, University of Colorado head football coach Bill McCartney and Dr. Dave Wardell were on a three-hour car ride to a meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in Pueblo, Colorado, when the idea of filling a football stadium with Christian men emerged. Later that year they asked seventy friends to meet together to pray. The challenge to these men was would they commit to mutual discipleship, reaching out to others, and seeking God's favor for a national revival. What emerged was a commitment to pray, fast, and plan for a conference for the men of Colorado.

²⁷ Ibid., 48-49.

In July 1991, a year later, 4,200 men attended the first Promise Keepers conference. In 1992 there were 22,000 men, and in 1993 more than 50,000 men filled the Colorado University football stadium. From its beginnings in Colorado in 1994, Promise Keepers conferences spread to seven other cities with 278,600 attending. Twenty-two conferences were held in 1996 with 1,098,534 total attendance. By the end of 1996 the organization had 400 staff and a \$97 million budget. In the six years since it was founded, Promise Keepers has tapped a felt need among men and formed a formidable following.²⁸

The organization's mission statement is:

"Promise Keepers is a Christ-centered ministry dedicated to uniting men through vital relationships to become godly influences in their world."²⁹

The organization's statement of faith is conservative evangelical.

1. We believe that there is one God eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
2. We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man and that it is verbally inspired, authoritative, and without error in the original manuscripts.

²⁸ Statistical and official information about Promise Keepers obtained from the Promise Keepers official home page on World Wide Web, address <http://www.promisekeepers.org>, updated January 6, 1997.

²⁹ Ibid.

3. We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, death on the cross to provide for our redemption, bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, present ministry of intercession for us, and His return to earth in power and glory.

4. We believe in the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit, that He performs the miracle of the new birth in an unbeliever and indwells believers, enabling them to live a godly life.

5. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but because of sin, was alienated from God. Only through faith, trusting in Christ alone for salvation which was made possible by His death and resurrection, can that alienation be removed.³⁰

Promise Keepers does not have members or collect dues. Persons who desire to be Promise Keepers and fulfill the mission of the organization seek to live up to "The Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper."

1. A Promise Keeper is committed to honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and obedience to God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. A Promise Keeper is committed to pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.

3. A Promise Keeper is committed to practicing spiritual, moral, ethical, and sexual purity.

4. A Promise Keeper is committed to building strong marriages and families through love, protection and biblical values.

5. A Promise Keeper is committed to supporting the mission of his church by honoring and praying for his pastor, and by actively giving his time and resources.

³⁰ Ibid.

6. A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.

7. A Promise Keeper is committed to influencing his world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (see Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:19-20).

The two-day conferences are held in football stadiums and have the atmosphere of a pep rally. A dozen or more Christian leaders inspire the audience on topics related to marriage and the family and to the seven commitments. There are times of worship, testimony and commitment.

Participants are asked to embrace the seven promises, and most do at the mountaintop experience. Conference participants are encouraged to organize men's support groups for discipleship and Christian service. To support them in fulfilling the promises, a variety of resources are made available by Promise Keepers.

A concerted effort has been made to be racially and ethnically inclusive. Founder Bill McCartney champions this cause, for he believes strongly in racial reconciliation.

What will happen if Promise Keepers begin to reach out across racial and denominational lines? One strong possibility is the outbreak of revival in America. You see, I believe racism and denominational divisions have done more than just about anything to hamper the church's witness to the world. So many people of color...have been totally turned off to the God we proclaim by our obvious lack of love. Even nonbelieving white people know that Christians are supposed to love and that far too often we fail to do so. This is why I'm certain that revival can't take place until the church grows far more united in obedience to God's command. On the other hand,

I'm equally convinced that if we take this promise seriously and begin the process of reconciliation, incredible things are possible for the kingdom of God.³¹

From the beginning Promise Keepers has had its critics and been suspected of carrying a conservative political agenda. The organization denies any political aspirations, although Bill McCartney and many other conference speakers take strong public stands on issues. Many women have been cautious as well. They celebrate the work of Promise Keepers but wonder if it generates a subtle, unspoken promotion of male hierarchy in the church.

In a Christianity Today interview, Promise Keepers' president Randy Phillips said, "Christian men have finally come out of hibernation and are seeing their need to come together. I think it's time to acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is igniting a flame in the hearts of men all over the nation."³² If Promise Keepers, in communicating a holistic vision for men, can continue to encourage men to be servants at home, at church, and in the community, it will prove to be a powerful tool of God.

Theology of Masculinity

In answer to the question, "Who are we?" Christian

³¹ Bill McCartney, Contributing Author, Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1994), 160-61.

³² Edward Gilbreath, "Manhood's Great Awakening," Christianity Today, 6 Feb. 1995, 22.

thinkers consistently start with Genesis 1:27 (NRSV). "So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." Being created in the divine image is fundamental to Christian teaching. Christian thought does not understand "image" to mean an exact replica or duplication, but it does mean that we share some traits in common with God.

Paul Jewett suggests:

Man may be said uniquely to reflect God at the creaturely level in that he alone, being endowed by his Maker with the powers of rational transcendence and self-determining will, is related to God and his neighbor as a free and responsible subject.³³

To be in the image of God is to be male and female. There is no hierarchy or order suggested in the passage. Both male and female share alike in the divine attributes present in the imago Dei, and together they share and comprise the image of God. There is a primal fellowship of male and female present in creation.

In helping to understand Karl Barth, the first major theologian to elaborate on the view that Man in the image of God is Man as male and female, Jewett writes:

Barth holds to the dynamic view of the imago: Man's being is a being-in-fellowship. All creatures created prior to man exist, it is true, in an interrelatedness and dependency, but not in a genuine mutuality and reciprocity....But man exists in a relationship from the start....God is,

³³ Paul K, Jewett, Man as Male and Female (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing, 1975), 21.

in his own being, supremely free and in fellowship. Since God is no Deus solitarius (solitary God), but the Deus triunus (the triune God), i.e. God in relationship, there is no possibility that Man, who is in his likeness, should be homo solitarius (solitary Man).³⁴

The doctrine of the Trinity affirms that God in himself is a fellowship of three persons--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Yet, with the plurality of persons there is a unity of essence in the one God. As in God's own being there is fellowship, so by analogy--and only by analogy--is there fellowship in Man between male and female. Our human fellowship is a reflection of the divine fellowship.

Associated with masculinity is the trait of initiation and with femininity response. These are attributes of God expressed in the Trinity. Donald G. Bloesch writes:

The masculine symbolism for the divine in the Bible is not sufficient, however, without the corresponding feminine symbolism that completes the divine activity. The masculine refers to the movement of God going out of himself to other members of the Trinity and to the world. Here we see creativeness, initiative, and aggressiveness. The feminine refers to the movement of God returning to himself in the role of the Spirit embodied in the church. Here we see receptivity, openness, spontaneity, intuitiveness.³⁵

Bloesch goes on to suggest that the divine fatherhood includes divine motherhood. That is, God not only creates but also gives birth and nurtures as would a mother. This

³⁴ Ibid., 35.

³⁵ Donald G. Bloesch, The Battle for the Trinity (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Publications, 1985), 37.

motherly activity is seen in the church where children of faith are born and nurtured. The church could be understood as the historical embodiment of the Holy Spirit who brings people into a saving relationship with Christ and transform's them in the Father's image.³⁶

Following on the notion that the image of God expressed in the Trinity is both male and female, Leanne Payne writes:

Masculinity and femininity are attributes of God, and we, in His image, are most surely--in our spiritual, psychological, and physical beings--bipolar creatures. Our Creator, holding all that is true and real within Himself, reflects both the masculine and the feminine and so do we. The more nearly we function in His image, the more nearly we reflect the masculine and feminine in their proper balance--that is, in the differing degrees and aptitudes appropriate to our sexual identities as male and female.³⁷

Payne believes that the essence of masculinity is initiation and the essence of femininity is response.³⁸ Within the Trinity the Father is the initiator who creates and reaches out. The Holy Spirit acting through the church is the respondent. This simple insight into the nature of God has profound implications for the relationship between man and woman.

In evaluating the work of Karl Barth, Paul Jewett writes:

³⁶ Ibid., 38.

³⁷ Leanne Payne, Crisis in Masculinity (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1995), 86.

³⁸ Ibid., 87.

No one with a sense of theology can read Barth on the question of Man as male and female without admiration for his originality and his provocative insight into a subject too long in need of the grand treatment reserved to dogmatics. Barth has made it difficult for theology henceforth to treat the question of human sexuality as a footnote to the doctrine of Man. And this is a great service...Furthermore, by associating the male/female quality of human life with the discussion of the imago, Barth has placed it at the very center of the Christian doctrine of Man. Whether or not one finds his argument compelling in its unique aspects, one can see that it has the advantage of calling the church to frame a theology of Man which is also and at the same time a theology of woman, and there is, perhaps, no more urgent task before the church today.³⁹

In developing a theology of masculinity the images of masculine and feminine in the Trinity are both appealing and compelling. They are appealing because we move beyond the divisive hierarchy debate. They are compelling because of the power and clarity of the gender imagery in the Trinity.

A theology of masculinity grounded in Genesis 1:27, created in the image of God as male and female, establishes the theological bedrock. The Trinity helps define masculinity and femininity while providing a divine model for the relationship between the two. With these two underpinnings a theology of masculinity is developed which moves us beyond hierarchy and establishes a firm basis for the equality of male and female before God and in the human family.

³⁹ Jewett, op. cit., 43.

Within every healthy person there is both masculine and feminine. In the divine the masculine corresponds with creativeness, initiative, and aggressiveness and the feminine with receptivity, openness, spontaneity, and intuitiveness. Humankind needs a balance of both masculine and feminine. To some extent both are also needed within each individual. The natural inclination of the male is toward the masculine and the female toward the feminine. Effective programming for men will capitalize on men's inclination toward initiating, creating structures and order in the human environment.

Baby Boomers

Following World War II more babies were born in North America than ever before. Between January 1, 1946, and December 31, 1964, in the United States nearly 77 million babies were born. In the years 1954 through 1964, over four million babies were born each year. Those born in 1946 through 1964, known as the Baby Boom Generation, comprise approximately one-third of the population of the United States. Because they are such a big bulge in the total population, Landon Jones describes them as a pig in a python.⁴⁰ As this massive generation has moved through the

⁴⁰ Landon Y. Jones, Great Expectations, America and the Baby Boom Generation (New York: Ballantine Books, 1980),

years, it has changed our culture and will continue to redefine it just because of its sheer size.

In 1997 baby boomers are between the ages of thirty three and fifty one and are in positions of leadership in industry, government, education, the church, and other institutions. The most visible baby boomer in leadership is fifty-year-old Bill Clinton, President of the United States, a symbol of the mantle of leadership being passed to the older members of the baby boomer generation.

Like every generation before them, boomers have been shaped by historical events. Some of the more notable ones include television, prosperity and affluence following World War II, U.S. domination of world markets, President Kennedy's assassination, the Viet Nam War, wide opportunity for a college education, the threat of nuclear war, and the environmental movement. These and other factors led the boomer generation to feel that they are special, that they have a unique mission in life.

Baby boomers carry an outlook different from their parents on the function and effectiveness of institutions. Analyzing the difference Paul Light writes, "To the Depression generation, government meant the New Deal, the second World War, and the prosperity of the fifties; government was the solution. To the generation that came of

age in the sixties and seventies, government was the problem."⁴¹

Asked in 1985 by Gallup pollsters to rate a list of ten social and political institutions without reference to their current leadership, baby boomers were the least trusting of all the age groups toward eight of the ten; organized religion, the military, banks/banking, public schools, Congress, newspapers, big business, and organized labor.⁴² A 1985 Harris poll rated the leaders of fifteen institutions and the baby boomers were the least trusting toward eight of the fifteen; organized religion, the military, the press, TV news, major companies, the White House, Congress, and the executive branch.⁴³ Clearly, baby boomers trust religious institutions less than do their parents.

To date baby boomers are the most educated generation of any in American history. Almost 90 percent completed high school, and 22 percent graduated from college. By contrast only 6 percent of their grandparents completed college.⁴⁴

Despite their education, economic hardship has plagued many baby boomers. Much of this is due to the lack of real

⁴¹ Paul C. Light, Baby Boomers (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988), 161.

⁴² Ibid., 160-61.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 91.

income growth in the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1950s after inflation, income grew by 26 percent. In the 1960s it was still high at 18 percent. But in the 1970s income after inflation went down by 2 percent, and this same trend continued through the 1980s. Baby boomers are caught in this downturn. Unlike their parents, many boomer families have of necessity become two-income families. As boomers form such a large block of people in the labor force, job promotions have been slower coming, and competition is keen for them.

Baby boomer values shifted from the traditional ethic of self-denial to one of self-fulfillment. Historically, Americans have worked hard. But instead of receiving the rewards of their efforts immediately, they were content to defer them to the future for the sake of the family and its future needs. They have also worked hard to obtain respectability in the community.⁴⁵ But a large contingent of baby boomers have exchanged traditional self-denial for the ethic of self-fulfillment. For many baby boomers it is not enough that hard work now is a means to a future end. Hard work must produce current benefit, too. "Life is not to be denied for the sake of family, career, country, or anything else; rather, these are to fit, if they can, into a

⁴⁵ Tex Sample, U.S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches, A Key to Reaching People in the '90s (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), 11-14.

self-fulfilling lifestyle."⁴⁶ This change, suggests Tex Sample, may be the most powerful change the boomers have brought to our national life. Out of about 77 million baby boomers, some 30 million of them are deeply committed to this new ethic of self-fulfillment.⁴⁷

To illustrate the difference in the two ethics, Sample gives an example of a baby boomer who told him this story.

When I was growing up, my father used to tell me what a great pension he had. He said, "We may not have everything we want now and may not be able to do all the things we'd like, but when I retire, we are going to be able to have and do all we've waited for." Well, he worked for that corporation for forty years, and when he retired he got the gold watch and, sure enough, a nice pension, but he died after the first six months. Now, there were medical reasons for why my father died, but those weren't the real reasons. My father died because he could not live without putting off life....That's just not going to happen to me. I intend to live."⁴⁸

The flip side of seeking self-fulfillment is to be self-centered and narcissistic. Social critic Christopher Lasch in The Culture of Narcissism, suggests many boomers do have a narcissistic preoccupation with self.⁴⁹

Baby boomers are the generation most characterized by the ethic of self-fulfillment and are identified as its primary carriers. It is also the case that young adults in

⁴⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Christopher Lasch, The Culture of Narcissism, 21.

their twenties, thirties, and forties are the people missing from mainline churches. Tex Sample believes:

...the basic reason for the decline of the mainline denominations is that this generation, alienated from major institutions in the society, simply dropped out of the church. The fact is that the more strongly one holds to an ethic of self-fulfillment, the less likely one is to belong to the church. The result is that churches are filled primarily with people committed to a self-denial ethic, which poses a direct challenge of how a church of self-denial people can attract self-fulfillment Baby Boomers.⁵⁰

Sample goes on to say that mainline churches have lost the baby boomers of the cultural left and cultural middle in massive numbers. However, conservative churches have seen no interruption in the flow of new members because the culturally right baby boomers, for the most part, have retained the self-denial ethic of their parents.⁵¹

Researcher Daniel Yankelovich notes an absence of community for many boomers. "A hunger for deeper personal relationships shows up in our research findings as a major concern. Over 70% of this age group realize that they have many acquaintances but few close friends--and they experience this as a serious void in their lives." The absence of community not only produces loneliness, a common problem, but it also brings on a deeper distress. "The absence of community," suggests Yankelovich, "is experienced

⁵⁰ Sample, op. cit., 17.

⁵¹ Ibid., 19.

as an aching loss, a void, a sense of homelessness. The symptoms are feelings of isolation, falseness, instability, and impoverishment of spirit."⁵² This feeling of loneliness is accented as many boomers live apart from immediate or extended family. Even where distance is not a factor, lifestyle changes weaken relationships with relatives. The amount of time spent with them is considerably less than in earlier eras. For the enterprising church great opportunity exists to reach boomers by providing much needed community.

Summarizing the work of Daniel Yankelovich,⁵³ Sample sees two new directions for baby boomers which are significant for the church. The first of these is the search by baby boomers for deeper and more lasting relationships.

The stress on self-fulfillment with its "do your own thing" character in the 60s became "I have a duty to myself" in the 70s, but both had the same stultifying and truncating effect. Both led inevitably to loneliness and to the shrinkage of the self. One baby boomer said it well. "I have just spent too much of my life enjoying all the sights and sounds I could, but I'm thirty-eight years old and I've never found the person I want to spend my life with. I doubt that I've got the kind of deep friendships I can count on. I've just decided I don't want to grow old and be lonely." This is increasingly the testimony of the generation. But let it be clear: They want life to be valuable and worthwhile, and they want

⁵² Quoted in "The Win Arn Growth Report" No. 31, published by Church Growth, Monrovia, CA.

⁵³ Daniel Yankelovich, New Rules: Searching for Self-Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down (New York: Random House, 1981).

it to be emotionally rich and expressive. Moreover, the more education they have, the more individualistic they will tend to be. In the midst of this, however, they know vividly now that the intrinsic value of life and its emotionally expressive possibilities will not happen apart from deep and lasting relationships.⁵⁴

Another significant trend Sample identifies is that baby boomers want to give themselves to something important, something that counts. They want to advance society as well as the self. Boomers are realizing that self-fulfillment requires commitment. Baby boomers, less self-absorbed, are prepared to commit themselves to realistic, necessary tasks amid the toughening economic climate of the past twenty years.⁵⁵

Time demands for baby boomers are often high. A Harris survey found that the average work week has grown six hours since 1973, from forty-one to nearly forty-seven. This does not include the increasing number of hours it takes to commute to work on overcrowded highways in many big cities across the country.⁵⁶ Two wage earners in a family means less time caring for home and children, or participation in community activities. Many baby boomers are now entering a period of caring for aging parents. As longevity has

⁵⁴ Sample, op. cit., 20.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Craig Kennet Miller, Baby Boomer Spirituality, Ten Essential Values of a Generation (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1992), 18-19.

increased and is expected to increase even more, so will the demands on adult children.

Many baby boomers find themselves caught in a web of time demands--work, home, children, parents, friends, relatives, and community activities. Those churches who seek the participation of baby boomers must be certain that it is worth their time or they will not continue to participate. High quality programming is essential for attracting and holding the baby boomer. Time is as important as money for many boomers.

As a summary of the application of these insights about baby boomers, pastor and author Bill Easum gives a laundry list of tips for a church seeking to reach them.⁵⁷ Included on his list is that boomers, although not "joiners," have a deep desire to belong. They need to feel connected to the whole. The congregation which addresses this need can reap a harvest of baby boomers. Men especially need to be connected with other men to form lasting relationships. The friendless American male is an accurate image which the church can address and draw many men into commitment to the Lord.

To reach boomers, notes Easum, there is a great need for family ministries. As many of these folks are in the child rearing years, they place a high priority on meeting

⁵⁷ William Easum, How to Reach Baby Boomers (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 42-45.

the needs of their children. They expect quality child care and youth programming. Athletics and recreational programs are a regular part of life for both boomers and their children.

As the church better understands the differences between generations, it can more accurately provide programming which will meet the felt needs of target audiences. This includes not only boomers but other generations of both men and women.

Church Growth

Church growth authors have a passion for research. They look at a large sample of churches seeking to glean common characteristics of growing congregations, assuming that if these growth principles are reproducible in other churches, they will grow, too.

The father of church growth is Donald McGavran, India missionary, teacher, and author. After thirty years of work and research on the mission field, McGavran shared his conclusions in his 1955 work, The Bridges of God. In 1970, McGavran published Understanding Church Growth, which he revised in 1980.

Church growth writers are eclectic, drawing on a wide range of disciplines to inform their conclusions. In addition to field research, the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, psychology, marketing and communication theory, as well as biblical studies are used in church

growth. The central objective of church growth is to fulfill the Great Commission and make disciples.

This section includes a selection of Christian writers and researchers who contribute to make to the task of involving men in the church. Many of them, but not all, see themselves fitting under the banner of church growth.

A major church growth strategy is utilizing the "bridges of God." This term comes from the writings of McGavran and his extensive research. He concluded that churches grow when the active church members reach across their existing social networks and win some of these people for Christ and His church. This social network typically includes family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and business associates, people with whom the Christian disciple already has some influence. McGavran writes:

Of all the factors which influence church growth, none is more immediately available to all Christians than to evangelize the natural fringes of the existing church. This is where most growth occurs. These are the nearest fields white to harvest. These are the people who already have some knowledge of Christ and the Christian life. Evangelizing each network of social connection out to its fringes is always sound procedure.⁵⁸

Research conducted by the Institute of American Church Growth of Pasadena, California, supports McGavran's

⁵⁸ Donald A. McGavran, Understanding Church Growth, Revised Edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing, 1980), 410.

conclusion.⁵⁹ They asked over 14,000 lay people across the United States from a wide variety of denominations the question: "What or who was responsible for your coming to Christ and your church?" One of the following responses was generally given:

Special need.....	1-2%
Walk-in.....	2-3%
Pastor.....	5-6%
Visitation.....	1-2%
Sunday school.....	4-5%
Evangelistic crusade..	1/2 of 1%
Church program.....	2-3%
Friend/Relative.....	75-90%

The research concludes that the majority of people in the North American Church can trace their roots directly to the influence of a friend or relative.

In developing a strategy to involve men in the church, it is important to utilize the "bridges of God." From a prospect list of men to be reached, identify their friends, neighbors, or relatives who are already active church members. Enlist these active persons to contact and invite their inactive friends and relatives. When preparing the

⁵⁹ Win Arn and Charles Arn, The Master's Plan for Making Disciples (Pasadena, California: Church Growth Press, 1982), 43.

prospect list, include the unchurched friends and relatives of active church men.

Multiplication of groups and ports of entry is another major growth strategy discovered by church growth researchers. Writing about new groups as ports of entry, George Hunter says:

One of the cardinal principles of the church growth movement prescribes church growth through the multiplication of units. Extensive research shows that, on balance, new units are more reproductive, ie., produce more new disciples than older churches do. New Sunday school classes are more reproductive than old Sunday school classes; new groups more than old groups; new choirs more than old choirs.⁶⁰

Hunter believes that multiplication of cells is a better strategy than division of existing cells. He believes dividing an existing group is less effective than starting a completely new group. He writes:

I champion the basic strategy of the multiplication of cells, but I doubt that it can usually be done best by cellular division. I know of exceedingly few cases where that has happened, except as a result of a shootout where one group leaves in anger and starts another, or where it was the contract and understanding of the cell members all along that they would one day divide. For most existing single-cell churches, and for long-existing cells within larger churches, it would be inordinately painful for them to break up their family-like group, and they would wisely resist this policy....Even if you did succeed in dividing their one cell in two, and later those two into four, you would still discover some unanticipated difficulties in attracting and keeping new people. Why? Because

⁶⁰ George G. Hunter, Finding the Way Forward (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1980), 41.

each "new" cell is not really a new cell at all, but a colony of an old cell, already having a history, established agenda, tradition, ways of doing things...But new members would still feel like homesteaders, trying to break in and be accepted on the turf of the pioneers who came before and who have already written the first chapters of the local history...The way to enable very significant church growth is by multiplying units, not through cellular division, but through cellular reproduction.⁶¹

Dr. Hunter's point is well taken. If more men are to be involved in the life of the church, then more new groups specifically targeting men must be started. They should include a variety of opportunities which match the felt needs of men. Such things as men's Sunday school classes, fellowship groups, choirs, recreational and sports groups, hobby groups, mission work teams, church maintenance groups, usher clubs, parking lot attendants, sound booth/audio visual groups, and others are possibilities depending on the size of the congregation and the interest of men. One reason fewer men participate in the church than women is that there are not sufficient roles, tasks, or groups in the church involving men.

A key to attracting men to the life of the church is that activities must be need driven. For many years Robert Schuller has taught we must "find a need and fill it." Another way to put it is "scratch where it itches."

⁶¹ Donald McGavran and George G. Hunter, Church Growth, Strategies That Work (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 90-91.

Especially with baby boomers who have less discretionary time than adults a generation ago, it is important to engage men at a point of felt need. Otherwise they will vote with their feet, opting to invest their time in other things. The church is competing for the hearts of men and must work with the ground rules established by men not involved in the church. If their needs are ignored men will not be attracted to the church.

With so many different types of people representing a wide array of needs, how can a church respond to all of them? Are there categories of people on whom the church should concentrate its efforts? Donald McGavran's work provides helpful guidance.

Another major church growth principle which emerged from McGavran's work is there are seasons in people's lives when they are more receptive to the gospel. From his studies of the world-wide mission field, McGavran writes:

The receptivity or responsiveness of individuals waxes and wanes. No person is equally ready at all times to follow "the way." The young person reared in a Christian home is usually more ready to accept Jesus Christ at twelve than at twenty. The skeptic is often more willing to become a disciple after serious illness or loss than he was before....Peoples and societies also vary in responsiveness. Whole segments of mankind resist the Gospel for periods--often very long periods--and then ripen to the good news.⁶²

⁶² McGavran, op.cit., 245-46.

George Hunter describes discovering receptive people as the grand strategy for church growth.

Church growth's greatest contribution to this generation's world evangelization will be its stress upon receptivity. The church is called to discover, reach, and disciple receptive people-- i.e., people who are now ready and open to really consider the Christian possibility for their lives. Because of extensive historical and cultural research, much more is now known about what causes receptivity in people and how receptive people can be identified than has ever been known before. Congregations and denominations will find, in the principles and strategies of receptivity, a gold mine of possibilities.⁶³

As a general rule there are predictable indicators of receptivity present in residents of North America. When these indicators appear there is generally a level of receptivity to the Christian message.

George Hunter lists some of the more common indicators.⁶⁴ At the top of the list are people who visit and join a church. This may be apparent, but many congregations seem not to perceive these folks as receptive. Often visitors to worship are not contacted by the church. If they are contacted they are not asked to join, and new members are frequently not asked to be involved in the ministries and programs of the church. As worship visitors and new members clearly demonstrate receptivity to Christ

⁶³ George G. Hunter III, The Contagious Congregation, Frontiers in Evangelism and Church Growth (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), 104.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 117-28.

and the church, it is important to involve them in the church at these times. Their window of receptivity may only be open for a short period, and then they may lapse back into the ranks of the resistant. Church consultant Lyle Schaller writes that "adult new members who do not become part of a group, accept a leadership role, or become involved in a task during their first year tend to become inactive."⁶⁵ A clearly thought out strategy of contacting, inviting, and assimilating these folks is needed to claim them for Christ and the church.

Hunter includes on his list of "receptivity indicators," people who have recently lost faith in any religion or ideology. Many "isms" capture people for a time, but then they become disillusioned and disinterested. The church should watch for people who are "between idols." These folks are frequently a receptive field of harvest for the church.

People of the same cultural sub group as the current membership, and those of the same sub group who are visiting a church are likely to demonstrate some receptivity. Most folks prefer not to cross over cultural barriers to become Christians. They are more comfortable with those they perceive to be like themselves. Hence, they are more likely to hear and respond to the gospel when they do not have to

⁶⁵ Lyle Schaller, Assimilating New Members (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), 77.

cross-language, ethnic, economic, or cultural barriers.

Although this hesitancy to cross cultural barriers may make many in the church uncomfortable--because Christ came to bring us together--it is, nonetheless, a social reality. A congregation cannot with any theological integrity avoid and exclude persons from its fellowship. Yet it does have a responsibility to concentrate its outreach efforts on those who are most likely to be receptive to its message. The issue here is to balance stewardship of resources with the need to reach out to all peoples. Tension exists between the pragmatic and the ideal.

Another of Dr. Hunter's guidelines for attracting receptive people is to identify those with needs who can be addressed by existing church ministries. If their needs cannot be met by current programs, begin new ministries that target those needs. Examples include support groups for bereavement or divorce, ministries to young parents in such areas as financial management or parenting, recreational and sports programs, or counseling ministries. A variation of this idea especially for men is to convene interest/hobby areas such as jogging, computers, photography, gardening, or wood working. Organize these interest areas not only for the personal benefit, spiritual growth, and fellowship of the participants, but use their skills for the benefit of the congregation and its mission ministries.

In helping to identify needs of persons living in areas of the church's ministry, the work of Holmes and Rahe at the University of Washington School of Medicine can be helpful.⁶⁶ Their research identifies transition events which create stress. Death of a spouse was discovered to be the most stress-producing event for an adult. It was labeled 100, and all other stressful transition events were ranked in relation to death of a spouse. (See Appendix for the complete scale.) The top ten stressors of the forty-one are death of a spouse, divorce, marital separation, jail term, death of close family member, personal injury or illness, marriage, fired from work, marital reconciliation, and retirement. Others of note are pregnancy, birth of a child, child leaving home, spouse starts work, trouble with boss, and moving. Near the bottom of the list but still of consequence are Easter season, vacation, and Christmas season. Commenting on the value of this scale, Win and Charles Arn write: "Being aware of these periods of transition in our non-Christian friends, and responding by showing them the caring love of Christ and the church, can be an important step in seeing them become new Christian disciples."⁶⁷

⁶⁶ T.H. Holmes and R.H. Rahe, "The Social Readjustment Rating Scale," Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 11:213-218, 1967, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle.

⁶⁷ Win Arn and Charles Arn, The Master's Plan for

Men and women church members experience these kinds of events, too. Responding to their needs results in drawing them closer to Christ and closer to the church. Men especially often have inadequate support networks providing opportunity for ministry to men at such points. The aggressive, caring church will reach out with help and support.

Receptivity to the gospel is found when the church ministers at a point of personal need or weakness. It is also found as the church provides opportunity for people to minister using their strengths. For those whose physical needs are met, who feel secure and enjoy a positive self-identity, the opportunity to participate in the church's mission to help others is often appealing. It provides opportunity for such persons to self-actualize. Many men become involved in the church not because they have a strong need to receive but because they feel a need to give.⁶⁸ Engaging men in the mission ministry of the church can tap their need to give as well as their desire to do things with their hands.

In a wide ranging survey, United Methodist researcher Warren Hartman interviewed persons who had recently dropped

Making Disciples (Pasadena: Church Growth Press, 1982), 90.

⁶⁸ For a fuller explanation see Hunter, Contagious Congregation, section on the inductive-mission model of Christian witness, p.45-51.

out of the church. He found that the majority of people left because they did not feel needed, wanted, or loved.⁶⁹ Persons relatively secure in their self-identity and without pressing personal needs require opportunities to serve. As their need to be needed is engaged they will respond. If they do not give of themselves they become good candidates for dropout.

Lyle Schaller, a church consultant for over thirty years, has done extensive field research into the effective functioning of local churches. From this research Schaller provides a list of a dozen characteristics of effective men's ministries.⁷⁰ The vital men's organizations he encounters display eight or ten of these characteristics. In abbreviated form his list follows:

1. Most strong men's groups have a central purpose of mission and/or service. Vital groups are rarely built around entertainment, fellowship, or nostalgia.

2. The healthiest organizations for men usually include one or two effective leaders who work hard at this job, take it seriously, and are convinced of the value of a separate men's organization.

⁶⁹ Warren Hartman, Membership trends: A Study of Growth and Decline in the United Methodist Church (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1976).

⁷⁰ Lyle Schaller, Assimilating New Members (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), 104-06.

3. The pastor believes in the concept, is supportive, and usually attends every meeting of the group. This is as important for the female pastor as it is for the male.

4. The group usually has at least one annual project which requires people to work with their hands. This may be a mission project, a church maintenance project, or a fund raising project. It will require more hands than are available in the existing men's organization and becomes an easy port of entry for newcomers to the group.

5. In one form or another there is a strong emphasis on meeting the spiritual needs of the men.

6. There is one social event annually to which wives and sweethearts are invited.

7. The value and legitimacy of the group is recognized by its being listed as one of the official organizations of the church.

8. On a regional or state level there is an annual inspirational event for men sponsored by the denomination. The central thrust of this event is the spiritual growth of the participants.

9. At least one person in the regional judicatory of the denomination has the portfolio for men's work and is a proponent of strong and vital men's fellowships.

10. If the men's group is involved in recreation or sports, it is more likely to do this as an outreach project for others than for the members themselves.

11. The vital men's group almost always has its own treasury and is able to respond to specific needs without going through the official machinery of the church.

12. The men's group eats together at least eight times a year.

Schaller's observations are useful for the nuts and bolts of ministry with men in a local church. Commenting on the communication style that speaks to men, he observes that in churches which have a high percentage of men participating, there is a strong emphasis on visual, "right-brained" communication in the preaching and teaching ministries.⁷¹ This correlates with the tendency of men to prefer to express their commitment by working with their hands rather than use left-brain verbal skills.

Men will respond as the church engages them at points of felt need. This includes providing personal and spiritual growth, supportive fellowship and caring, recreational activities, and opportunities for service that will engage their need to be wanted and loved.

Are Men Religious ?

With nearly a 200-year history of men participating in the North American church at substantially lower levels than women, the question arises: Do men have fewer religious

⁷¹ Lyle Schaller, It's a Different World (Nashville: Abingdon, 1987), 62.

needs than women? If not fewer, do they have different needs?

One response to this question is to look for substitutes for the church which men have used to meet their religious needs. History reveals that at the same time men's participation in the church dropped, other quasi-religious men's groups arose. During the 1800s, male secret fraternal organizations developed and flourished. Although organized as fraternal organizations, they evidence a clear religious tone. Freemasonry, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Improved Order of Red Men and many other lesser known groups emerged in part to bridge the religious gap no longer filled by the church.

The oldest and largest of these organizations, the Masons, began in the early 1700s in London.⁷² Founded as a stone masons' trade guild, the Masons became a club for merchants, tradesmen, and a few noblemen. In the 1730s and 1740s, a few Masonic lodges were established in coastal towns of North America. From this beachhead Freemasonry spread to an estimated 100,000 members in the 1820s. Although ritual had been part of the lodge ever since Masonry was imported from England, the colonists considered the induction degrees of secondary importance. Some members paid little attention to the ceremonies used to induct new

⁷² Carnes, op. cit., 22-29, for a history of the rise of secret fraternal organizations in the United States.

members. From the 1700s into the early 1820s the Masonic lodge functioned primarily as an eating and drinking club.

Between 1800-1820 there was increased interest in the ritual of Freemasonry. At the same time men's participation in the church dropped. Men who supported the newly revised Masonic rituals often found themselves at odds with those who wanted to spend the evening gathered around the punch bowl. But with the influx of new members--predominately middle class merchants, lawyers, prosperous farmers, and independent tradesmen--came demands for sobriety, self-restraint, and more intense ritual.

Tensions among Masons and criticism of their quasi-religious ritual by many ministers came to a head in an incident in western New York in 1826. A disgruntled ex-Freemason, William Morgan, announced his intention to publish the secret rituals. Morgan was abducted by several Masons, imprisoned on charges of petty theft, coaxed from his jail cell into a carriage and disappeared never to be seen again. Later evidence was produced that Masons had drowned him in Lake Niagara. Twenty-six Masons were indicted, but only four were convicted and sentenced to jail terms of from several months to two years. Many of the jurors and prosecutors were Masons, as was then-governor DeWitt Clinton, the New York State Grand Master. Some citizens felt justice had been subverted. This incident fueled critics who organized the Anti-Masonic political

party. Masonic membership declined from an estimated 100,000 in the mid 1820s to 40,000 in the 1830s.⁷³ Many ex-Freemasons flocked to the Odd Fellows or the Red Men, transforming them into middle-class organizations devoted to ritual.

The Odd Fellows started in the late 1800s in Great Britain among working-class people. Formed to help people cope with the Industrial Revolution and the English Poor Laws, members in need could freely appeal to the "brothers" for aid. The order also guaranteed members a decent burial. The first American lodge was established in 1819 in Baltimore. Much like the Masons, they gathered in taverns to drink beer and sing songs. With Freemasonry declining in the 1830s due to controversy and scandal, the Odd Fellows flourished. Like the Masons, ritual became paramount in the Odd Fellows.

By the mid 1800s the fraternal movement was purged of alcohol and infused with strong religious ritual. Most of the meeting time was consumed with acting out the ritual leaving little or no time for fun.

The rituals utilized biblical images, characters, and language as well as myth and material from other sources. Fraternal groups offered religious instruction but did not consider themselves to be a church. Fraternal leaders

⁷³ Ibid., 24-25.

conceded that their ceremonies were of a religious character. The most prominent author of Masonic ritual, Albert Pike, insisted, "Every Masonic Lodge is a temple of religion, and its teachings are instruction in religion."⁷⁴ In an article in the October, 1878 "Voice of Masonry," Masons were reminded not to say they belonged to "the Masonic Church."⁷⁵ In November, 1891, the "Voice of Masonry" wrote "Masonry is a religion, a handmaiden of Christianity, if you will, but still a religion."⁷⁶

Many ministers were numbered among the ranks of secret fraternal organizations often serving as high priests, prophets, and chaplains. Figures for New York State in 1891 show a large proportion of ordained clergy belonging to the Free Masons. These included approximately 26 percent of the Universalist, 22 percent of the Episcopalian, 18 percent of the Methodist, 15 percent of the Baptist, 13 percent of the Lutheran, 7 percent of the Presbyterian, and 6 percent of the Congregational ministers.⁷⁷

Examining the theology of fraternal groups such as the Masons and others, Mark Carnes suggests:

But even as officials voiced the customary
pieties, their rituals suppressed mention of

⁷⁴ Ibid., 75.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 76.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 61.

Christ, delineated in grotesque detail the consequences of death, and evoked an awesome and mysterious Deity. Most important, they served as a means of personal transformation in which the rites of the lodge supplanted the mediation of Christ....The theological tension between liberal Protestantism and fraternal ritual is all the more remarkable since the latter were often written by liberal ministers....Members were perhaps unaware of the theological implications of their rituals; surely, few recognized that the theology they received in the lodge was antithetical to that which they witnessed in church. That liberal ministers were equally unmindful seems doubtful.⁷⁸

Between 1850-1900, membership in men's secret fraternal organizations grew dramatically. By 1900 there were more male fraternal organizations than churches in U.S. cities. An estimated one in four men belonged to a secret fraternal group. Membership remained high until the Great Depression brought on hard times. Many of the smaller orders passed out of existence entirely in the 1930s. Freemasonry and Odd Fellowship survived but lost a combined total of five million members.

Although many men in the nineteenth century were not involved in the church, they joined secret orders which addressed at least some of the religious needs of the participants. For some men they substituted for the church; for others they became a supplement or even an arm of the church.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 61.

Even though many were absent from the church, no convincing historical evidence suggests American men are inherently less religious than women. Questions about the meaning of life--who are we? why are we here? and others--are asked by both men and women. Fraternal organizations are a reminder of the religious nature of men. If middle-class men built new temples and viewed God in alternate ways in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, it is because for many of them existing Christianity was deficient or incomplete, not because men and women face substantially different religious needs.

The Feminine Image of the Church

A concern identified by several authors is the feminine image of the church. This image has become a barrier to be crossed by men outside and inside the church. It inhibits their participation keeping them outside or on the fringe of the church.

Male clergy also have a feminine image in the public conscience. Minister and Professor of Pastoral Theology and Psychology, James Dittes, characterizes the clergy as "a wimpy, powerless profession in the eyes of many."⁷⁹

Pastor and author Gordon Dalby suggests "The Western Church, for its part, offers little help. If it has not become secularized it has surely become feminized...and

⁷⁹ James E. Dittes, The Male Predicament, On Being a Man Today (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), xi.

thus, in either case, incapable of ministering to this profound need among men."⁸⁰

After interviewing fifty-four men in five states, both churched and unchurched, Pastor Woody Davis writes:

If there is one over-riding impression of Christianity held by men, it is that it is "unmanly." This is expressed in different ways. One says, "That stuff's for women and kids." Another says, "All the Christians I know are wimps." Another says, "They can't make it, so they hide behind God." When asked why they felt that way, many of the men cited Jesus' admonition to "turn the other cheek." They had not perceived that to do so takes the greater strength and courage, probably because Christians have not helped them to.⁸¹

In pointed language Professor Don Joy describes the church:

It is clear why men have little to do with "silk and satin" churches today. They have to park their masculinity at the door, and nothing "violent" has been announced or grasped in many congregations for generations. And when a man has a clear built in altimeter which gives him a reading on truth and justice, you can understand why he cannot tolerate a wishy-washy religious environment. Is there no truth to stick by? Is any road as good as another to find your way to heaven? To hell? If so then most men will say, "Forget it!" And they'll go fishing.⁸²

The strong sense of justice in men to which Joy refers was the discovery of Lawrence Kohlberg through his work at

⁸⁰ Gordon Dalby, Healing the Masculine Soul (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1988), 48.

⁸¹ Woody L. Davis, "Men and the Church: What Keeps Them Out and What Brings Them In," Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education, vol. 3 (1987-1988): 50.

⁸² Donald Joy, Unfinished Business (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1989), 173.

the Center for the Study of Moral Development at Harvard University. Paralleling the work of Jean Piaget in Switzerland, Kohlberg concluded that justice is at the core of human character, and it is universal across cultures.⁸³ Justice begins in early childhood with concern for the self and is expressed in a cry for fairness. In later childhood and into maturity the fairness rule is applied to other people.

While Piaget and Kohlberg worked almost exclusively with boys, Carol Gilligan worked with girls. As a student of Kohlberg and then as a Harvard faculty member, she worked to determine if justice is also at the core of women's moral judgments. She concludes that for women the basis for moral judgment is not justice but it is "attachment."⁸⁴

Nancy Chodorow's work provides a framework for interpreting Gilligan and others. Chodorow concludes:

Growing girls come to define and experience themselves as continuous with others; their experience of self contains more flexible or permeable ego boundaries. Boys come to define themselves as more separate and distinct, with a greater sense of rigid ego boundaries and differentiation. The basic feminine sense of self is connected to the world, the basic masculine sense of self is separate.⁸⁵

⁸³ Ibid., 61.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ James B. Nelson, The Intimate Connection, Male Sexuality, Masculine Spirituality (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988), 39, quoting Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 170.

Commenting on Gilligan's findings, Joy writes:

Women become seriously involved in moral decisions. Their gift of feeling and reaching out to others is so enormous that they are unable to stand outside of a problem. Instead, they must solve problems while remaining intimately connected to all of the participants. Gilligan found the moral development of girls and women to parallel the unfolding justice structure in the classical research on boys and men, but female judgments are profoundly more subjective and complex than the calculating objective decisions of men. This gift of attachment is an important balance to the more objective sense of justice which is required for minimum law and order in any human community.⁸⁶

From his own work with men Joy observes:

But for some reason men seem to be endowed with a sense of fairness and justice existing apart from feelings or careful prediction of the consequences. Males are likely to act reflexively to "make things right"; perhaps it is their brawn. More likely it is rooted in their brain organization, which more clearly separates logic from feelings. So objectivity in justice comes naturally for males.⁸⁷

If men must "park their masculinity at the church door" before entering, it would seem to be a major reason why more of them are not involved in the life of the church.

It is understandable why women and many thoughtful men are suspicious of labeling masculinity as a virtue. Consider the violence that men do to women and children within the family, the domination and patriarchy directed toward them, all justified because "God created men to

⁸⁶ Joy, op.cit., 61.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 46.

rule." Consider the violent crimes in Western culture perpetrated predominately by teen-age and young adult males. If this is the principal expression of masculinity in our culture, where is its virtue? If men are inherently violent then perhaps we must remove their masculinity and make them more feminine.

Male violence, though, is far more cultural than innate, writes James Nelson:

There is no persuasive scientific evidence to date that can explain the preponderance of male violence in terms of biological predisposition. There are some data, though inconclusive at present, suggesting that hormonal differences might make for a modest difference in aggressiveness. But the major factor is clearly social influences. Violence is very largely a learned behavior. For one thing, it is learned by men as a way of proving their masculinity. Most crimes in the United States are committed by males between the ages of thirteen and twenty-four, a time when such proof seems important.⁸⁸

Critiquing the poverty of the rites of passage to manhood in North America, Gordon Dalby writes:

What does my culture offer as validation of manhood? The driver's license at sixteen; and freedom at eighteen to join the Army, attend pornographic movies, and to buy cigarettes and beer. The message is clear: becoming a man means operating a powerful machine, killing other men, masturbating, destroying your lungs, and getting drunk. We are lost males, all of us: cast adrift from the community of men, cut off from our masculine heritage--abandoned to machines, organizations, fantasies, drugs.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Nelson, op. cit., 69.

⁸⁹ Dalby, op. cit., 52.

In the light of the destructiveness of machismo in our culture, some propose that we move toward an androgenous model of sexuality. That is, instead of having separate masculine and feminine archetypes we should champion human traits applicable to both male and female.

In Mark Gerzon's A Choice of Heroes⁹⁰, the author finds five masculine images lodged deep within us. These images once seemed useful but have become destructive and need to be replaced, according to Gerzon.

1) The Frontiersman is a quick-fisted male loner after the pattern of Daniel Boone or Davy Crockett whose enemies are untamed nature, the outlaw, and the "savage Indian." In his place Gerzon recommends the Healer, a man with a different view of himself who is aware of the need to heal the environment.

2) The Soldier is the strong, courageous defender. He represses his feelings and emotions to be ready for necessary violence. An alternate is the Mediator whose goal is that adversaries coexist peacefully and cooperate if possible.

3) The Breadwinner is the family head and responsible for its economic health. This image typically includes an absent father and a nurturing mother. His ethic is work and

⁹⁰ Nelson, op. cit., 85-86, summary of Mark Gerzon, A Choice of Heroes: The Changing Faces of American Manhood (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1982).

success measured by his paycheck. An alternate is the Companion who does not win the bread and share it with the others, but the bread is made and eaten together. Life is shared.

4) The Expert is the man who possesses knowledge. Because knowledge is power he is in control. The replacement image is the Colleague who respects competence and expertise but knows its greater value is in sharing. He champions shared power and leadership.

5) The Lord is the creator of heaven and earth, and every man is flattered to be created in His image. As God is male, the male is god. The new replacement image is the Nurturer. This man does not lord it over others but joins them in mutual empowerment.

The old archetypes were for men only, but the new ones transcend the traditional male and female boundaries. Both sexes can embrace them. Masculinity and femininity converge in a new humanity.

Commenting on Gerzon's proposals, Nelson writes:

I find Gerzon's analysis helpful and constructive. Significantly, he has taken the feminist critique of distorted masculinism seriously, and his alternate images are desperately needed. Yet, as he says in conclusion, these emerging masculinities--Healer, Mediator, Companion, Colleague, Nurturer--have a striking similarity....In other words, while there are distinctive and identifiable traits connected with false or distorted masculinism, there is nothing distinctive about man's experience as a man that provides a grounding for a constructive male identity (or, presumably, about a woman's

experience as woman for hers)...However, other men who are equally serious about naming and realizing new nonpatriarchal identities are not so sure. I am one of them. Is there not something good, important, and distinctive about the experience of maleness itself? Something that can produce an energy which is not oppressive but rather creative and life-giving--and recognizably male? A "deep masculine" that men can find in themselves and justly celebrate?⁹¹

Instead of sending the message that masculinity is undesirable and even sinful, another approach, with Nelson's concern for the distinctive contribution of masculinity considered, is for the church to actively seek to redeem masculinity for Kingdom purposes.

Gordon Dalby echoes this theme as he writes:

The work of God among men today--and so, the work of the Church--is not to feminize our masculinity, but to redeem it, not to make men more like women, but to make us more authentic men. Certainly, authentic masculinity includes such "feminine" components as tenderness and nurturing care. But a man cannot duly embrace his "feminine side" without first being grounded firmly in his masculine foundation. Without that, tenderness and nurturing care in the man too easily become fearful accommodation to the other person, and abandonment of his manly courage and strength.⁹²

If masculinity is to be redeemed, the church will have to provide positive role models with which boys and men can readily identify. The place to begin is with Jesus and other men in the Bible. The image of Jesus as "meek and mild" must be replaced by images more palatable to most men.

⁹¹ Nelson, op. cit., 86.

⁹² Dalby, op. cit., 181.

In his 1924 book, The Man Nobody Knows,⁹³ Bruce Barton presents a different image of Jesus that appeals to males. Because Barton had been unable to identify with the image of Jesus he had been taught as a child, the book was written to help other boys and men appreciate the masculine Jesus. Although dated by the examples cited, it does present a side of Jesus which is much needed in our time.

Barton depicts Jesus as a physically strong outdoorsman and carpenter, as a popular dinner guest, and as a successful charismatic leader who took twelve men from the bottom ranks of business and forged them into the leadership of an organization which conquered the world. He lifts up Jesus' patience, courage, physical strength, self-control, nerves of steel, determination, resolve, keen mind and sense of justice. When these are placed alongside His tenderness toward people, especially children, and His compassion and gentleness, we see a well-rounded, complete personality.

In an attempt to connect twentieth-century businessmen with Jesus, Barton suggests that applying Jesus' teaching is good business management. For example, Jesus taught and practiced in His own life that "The greatest among you will be your servant." (Matthew 23:11) In an age when serving the customer is paramount to the success of an organization, the servant-leadership style of Jesus is an excellent model for

⁹³ Bruce Barton, The Man Nobody Knows, A Discovery of the Real Man Jesus (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1924).

most any manager. If this were true when Barton wrote in 1924, it is even more true today with "total quality management" the dominant model in the nineties.

Barton applies the teaching of Jesus to life and summarizes Jesus' business philosophy:

1. Whoever will be great must render great service.
2. Whoever will find himself at the top must be willing to lose himself at the bottom.
3. The big rewards come to those who travel the second, undemanded mile.⁹⁴

However, there is a need for some caution. To follow Jesus as a way to become rich is to misunderstand the gospel. Following in the footsteps of Jesus in this life leads to the cross and not a pot of gold. On the other hand, if Jesus' teachings are true, then positive benefits can be derived from applying them in the marketplace or any other arena. Offering a masculine Jesus who can help them live out their professional lives is very important if men are to be involved in the church. The church must do a more effective job of teaching the complete Jesus so that males can emulate the best of masculinity found in Christ. Without a complete picture, many men and boys mistake Jesus' determination and courage for weakness.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 177.

Intentional Ministries to Men

To overcome the feminine image of the church held by many men and to reverse the trend of few men participating in the church requires intentional ministries for men and a strategy which specifically targets men. Contributing to the low number of men is the reduced number of roles for men in many churches. As leadership positions have opened to women--such as trustees, finance committee members, ushers, etc.--a need arises to create other roles to involve displaced men.

In many churches fewer attractive entry points open for men. If churches become intentional about involving men, as they are with children and youth, they will need to develop programs and projects which address male needs. Lyle Schaller observes that "most United Methodist congregations offer more attractive and better organized entry points for women to become actively involved in the life of that worshiping community than are provided for men. Examples include the Sunday school, the United Methodist Women, the committee structure, and the ministry of music." ⁹⁵

After thirty years visiting congregations of a wide range of denominations, Schaller has observed traits of those churches which are reaching men. One trait often

⁹⁵ Lyle Schaller, "The Vanishing Men in the United Methodist Church," Circuit Rider, September 1988, 4.

present concerns the intentional ministries to men. He writes:

The church offers men a variety of opportunities to feel needed, to meet and make new friends, to express their creativity through nonverbal skills, to be appreciated, and to express their commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. These may range from maintaining and driving the church bus, to managing athletic teams, to joining monthly work crews, to helping to pioneer a new mission, to accepting responsibility for the Sunday morning radio broadcast, to participating in mission work-camp experiences, to preparing and serving breakfast every Sunday morning, to putting a new roof on the building, to ushering, to participating in a strong fellowship of mutually supportive men.⁹⁶

Providing opportunity for hands-on activities is an important key to involving men.

Pastors can also encourage the participation of men through their preaching style. Schaller observes that churches with a high percentage of men attending worship have sermons that are highly visual with few abstract concepts.⁹⁷ Life centered preaching seems to appeal to men.

The pastor's leadership style can also have a bearing on the participation of men. The nondirective leadership approach has less appeal to men than women. In Schaller's observation the pastor who is willing to accept the initiating leadership role will attract more men.⁹⁸ The

⁹⁶ Ibid., 5.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

larger the size of the congregation, the more important this leadership style is in attracting men, suggests Schaller.

After interviewing fifty-four men in nine congregations from five states, all of whom had come to faith and church membership within the past two years, Woody Davis observed that the character of the pastor had a bearing on attracting and holding these men.⁹⁹ The men frequently referred to the pastor as a man they respected and often admired. The pastor was characterized as a man of courage and conviction. Some men mentioned having disagreed with their pastor on an issue. One man said:

We've been on different sides of the fence several times. Every time he's stuck to his guns and I respect him for that. But I respect him even more 'cause he's never treated me different because I disagreed with him, and when the board didn't vote his way he didn't hold it against them.¹⁰⁰

From his interviews Davis concluded:

In every case the pastor was seen as a "man's man," in direct contrast to the popular image characterized by James Dittes as a "wimpy, powerless profession in the eyes of many"...The consistency with which the men mentioned the pastor and referred to their relationship with him indicates that the type of pastor at a given church will influence greatly its ability to reach men.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Davis, op. cit., 53.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 53-54.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

In this evaluative study Calvary United Methodist Church developed and implemented a strategy to attract and assimilate men. The implementation phase lasted six months, seeking to establish a correlation between programming targeted to meet the needs of men and their assimilation into the church. The hypothesis tested is if a church meets the needs of men, they will respond. The research question is "What programs will attract men?"

Calvary Church routinely keeps weekly worship attendance records on all attenders--members, non-members, and visitors. These records determine the attendance patterns of men. At the conclusion of the test period men who become active were interviewed to get feedback on what attracted and activated them. A semi-structured interview format was used. The questions were pretested among a group of active, assimilated new members to establish validity. At the conclusion of the test period a different group of people who became active in the previous six months were interviewed using the same questions. The interviews revealed what brought these men to Calvary Church and how men's programming at the church affected their assimilation.

Data from the interviews was qualitative and was analyzed using content analysis methodology. No quantitative data emerged from the structured interviews.

The program to attract men was be planned and implemented with the aid of the United Methodist Men in consultation with the Council on Ministries. I took the lead in this process to assure that insights from the research of the literature were used. Selecting the program and an getting an adequate response from men was important to the success of this study.

The principal population for the program were men who had recently established some connection to Calvary. Men who were new members as well as those who just started attending but were not yet members were specifically targeted to assimilate them into the life of Calvary. Although not the primary focus, inactive men members were also part of the population targeted for this study.

Demographic data on the people surrounding Calvary Church came from a report prepared for the church in November 1990, by Church Information and Development Systems (CIDS). Although six years old, the data is still relevant for developing a profile of men in the area and men who are part of the church. This extensive packet of information describes the residents of the Mount Airy region at intervals of one, three, and five miles from the church.

Data on the men of Calvary Church was extracted from a congregational survey administered in June, 1991. The data gathering survey was purchased from CIDS and extensively modified by Calvary's Strategic Planning Committee. The

results of the survey were included in the Strategic Profile written and assembled by Mrs. Gail Costello, head of the Council on Ministries at Calvary Church.

The time frame for this study was January 1996, through June 1996, a somewhat arbitrary time frame as much preliminary work preceded it for over five years. Additional men's programming and the task of involving men will continue long after the test period, but it is believed that this time frame was sufficient to indicate the effectiveness of the strategies. A barrage of activities targeting men was initiated and evaluated in this time frame. According to the literature, men generally gravitate to hands-on activities, so there was a concentration of these kinds of events over the six months.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Profile of Calvary Church

Calvary United Methodist Church is a growing 1,000 member church on Main Street in Mount Airy, Maryland, a town of nearly 5,000. It is located thirty three miles north of downtown Washington, thirty two miles west of downtown Baltimore, and fifteen miles east of Frederick, Maryland, a town of about 55,000. Once a farming community, Mount Airy is the village center for the 25,000 people who live within five miles of the church. For the past fifteen years the community growth rate has been 15 to 20 percent each five years. That growth rate is projected for at least the next ten years.

Founded in 1888 as Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church, the congregation built its first building in 1891. The original wood frame structure was razed and the current stone building built in 1916. Following the denominational merger of 1939 forming the Methodist Church, Calvary Methodist Episcopal and Trinity Southern Methodist Episcopal down the street merged in 1940 and used Calvary's larger building. Membership growth in the 1950s led to construction of an educational wing in 1959.

Average attendance peaked in 1965 at 310 in Sunday school and 220 in worship. While the membership grew steadily from 606 members in 1965 to 904 in 1982, average

Sunday school attendance dwindled to a low of 97 while worship attendance plateaued at around 200. Growth in the area in the early 1980s brought new families with young children to Calvary, and both Sunday school and worship attendance began to grow. In 1986 a second worship service was added. Then in 1993 came a third worship service and a second Sunday school. For the first six months of 1996, the Sunday school averaged 191 and worship 443 in attendance.

My wife, Carol, and I were appointed to Calvary in 1986. For the first eight years here, she was the full-time senior pastor, and I was the congregation's first half-time associate. In September, 1994, we switched roles. She now occupies the half-time associate position and I have become the full-time senior pastor. Since coming on the staff in 1986, my program responsibilities have included men's ministry. In 1988 a full-time Director of Program was hired whose principal responsibilities are education and youth ministries. In 1995, a half-time Member and Visitor Coordinator was hired. This person is responsible for evangelism, follow-up of visitors, and assimilation of new people.

A casual observation at Calvary would indicate there are probably more women than men participating. Data confirms this suspicion. In June 1991, 43 percent of the total members were men and 57 percent were women, but only 36 percent of the active members are men. Active is defined

as participation in any way over the past six months. A survey of Sunday morning worship attendance confirmed the low participation rate of men. Of those over eighteen years old in worship in November and December 1992, only 36 percent were men. The November 1995 rate was improved to 41 percent adult men and 59 percent adult women.

Other measures of participation at Calvary are similar to the 43/57 membership ratio. Although 53 percent of the elected leadership in 1993 were men, when the appointed committee members (69 people) were added to the elected positions (104 people), the percentage drops to 42 percent men in leadership positions. Adult Sunday school enrollment in 1993 was 140 people with 41 percent men.

Although it has improved some in the past four years, low male participation is also evident in Youth Ministries.

In 1992 the UMYF, grade six through twelve had forty eight youth enrolled, 33 percent boys and 67 percent girls. In 1996 the numbers are sixty six youth with 41 percent boys and 59 percent girls. The youth choir of nearly thirty had only one boy in 1992, and the youth bell choir was all girls. In 1996 there are now seven boys and thirty two girls in the youth choir and still no boys in the youth hand bell choir.

In the United States the population breakdown is 47 percent male and 53 percent female. This difference is primarily because women live six years longer than men on

the average. In the Mount Airy region--within five miles of Calvary--the breakdown is nearly equal, 49.75 percent male and 50.25 percent female. At Calvary it would be expected that there would be a few more adult women than men, but demographics alone cannot account for the 43/57 ratio, a fourteen point spread. Nor can demographics fully account for the 41/59 worship attendance ratio, an eighteen point spread.

Who Are the Men at Calvary?

In the spring of 1990, a Strategic Planning Task Force was appointed by the administrative board. In August 1992, the task force published a strategic profile of Calvary United Methodist Church and the surrounding community.

To provide accurate data of the community for the strategic profile, a comprehensive demographic package was purchased in the fall of 1990, from Church Information and Development Services (CIDS), Costa Mesa, California. This package provided information on residents within a one-three-five-mile radius of the church.

The task force also purchased from CIDS a congregational survey and modified it extensively. A sample questionnaire is included in the Appendix. Questions in the anonymous survey covered seven areas: 1) personal background, 2) church participation and relationships, 3) personal beliefs, 4) social and political attitudes, 5) spiritual life, 6) life satisfaction and concerns, and 7)

programming at Calvary. The survey was sent to all the adult church members and spouses in May 1991. By the end of August, 215 surveys had been returned and computerized. This was a 24 percent response rate, not as high as the task force had hoped but certainly a reasonable sample. Of the 215 respondents 39 percent were male and 61 percent female.

From the demographic package and congregational survey, a profile of the men of Calvary and those of the surrounding area emerges. In the surrounding community, an area within five miles of the church, 80 percent of all households are occupied by married couples, while at Calvary 84 percent of the survey respondents are married. Eighty four percent of the community live in owner occupied dwellings, while in the congregation 91 percent of the respondents do. Members of the congregation are a little more likely to be married homeowners than are the adults in the community.

The median age of the community for those age twenty and over is thirty eight years. The median age of those men and women who took the congregational survey is forty three aged twenty and above. The adults in the church who completed the survey are approximately five years older than the median for adults in the community. The assumption is that the test sample represents the whole congregation. Given the wide distribution of the survey and the diversity of responses received, this is a reasonable assumption for purposes of this profile.

Family income levels of the congregation are in the same range as the general community. Survey respondents had a median family income in 1990-91 of \$50,000, while the community had a \$54,800 median family income. The difference in levels was primarily because there were 7 percent more people in the community who had family incomes of \$75,000 and above than in the congregational survey. The survey indicated more women in the community are employed full and part-time than among the congregational respondents. This could account for the higher family incomes.

The average commuting time one way to work in the community is thirty five minutes with 17 percent having an hour or more one way trip to work. Data on the congregation is not available, but it would likely be similar to the larger community. Many church members are on the road by 6:00 A.M. and do not regularly arrive home until 7 P.M.

The educational level of the congregation is high. In the church 76 percent of the respondents had at least some college, and 53 percent had degrees. Outdated data for the community from the 1980 census shows 33.3 percent of those age twenty five and above had at least some college. Certainly percentages for the community have risen substantially since 1980, although they are not as high as those of the congregation.

As was expected from other observations, the congregational survey showed that inside the church men are less involved than women. Of the 215 respondents, 78 percent of the men and 85 percent of the women are church members. The other persons are spouses and adult family of church members. Worship attendance is at least once per month for 81 percent for all those surveyed with 65 percent who attend weekly. However, only 78 percent of the men attend monthly compared to 83 percent of the women. And 59 percent of the men attend weekly compared to 70 percent of the women.

Perhaps the biggest surprise from the survey was that 42 percent of the respondents said they spend one hour or less per month in church activities outside of worship. These activities include meetings, special events, choirs, Bible study, preparation, travel time, etc. This trend was further supported by responses to the question concerning committee and/or leadership positions in the church. Fifty five percent said they were not involved in any committee or leadership position in the church. The most common explanation given by 28 percent of those responding was that they "did not have enough time" to participate. Many men and women at Calvary are involved in no other church activities beyond worship.

The adult men and women who are part of Calvary Church are similar to those of the larger community. Other than

the congregational median age being about five years older, no major differences surface when the congregational data is compared with the CIDS community demographic study.

Men's Ministry at Calvary

Men's ministry at Calvary has centered on the United Methodist Men (UMM). For over thirty years there has been a denominationally chartered men's organization at the church. The UMM primary gathering has been for a regular, usually monthly, 8:00 A.M. Sunday morning breakfast. While I have been at Calvary, attendance has varied from year to year from an average high of thirty five to a low of fifteen. Principal activities other than the fellowship breakfasts have been sponsoring a Boy Scout troop, raising funds for specific mission projects, helping to purchase equipment needed around the church, and taking leadership for a spring and fall work day at the church.

With a president, vice-president, and treasurer, the UMM organization has been structured to function as a small group. In a couple of peak years when the president put in a lot of time and effort beyond the call of duty, about fifty men participated. In 1991, an insightful UMM president saw the problem and expanded the leadership base to share the leadership load. An executive council was formed to plan and carry out the leadership function for the UMM. This model functioned very well the first year but was less successful in 1992 and 1993 as there was no elected

president of the UMM. I filled some of that role as the staff representative.

In the summer of 1993, the executive council surveyed the men who had been participating in the monthly breakfasts to determine their interests. Thirty one men responded to the survey and expressed preferences for events in four categories: sports/recreation, mission/work projects, fellowship/social activities, and personal growth/discipleship events. These four categories were selected as there was known interest, or the council felt that Calvary should be offering events for men in these areas. A council member became vice-president for three of the areas--sports/recreation, mission/work projects, and fellowship/social activities. I became personal growth/discipleship coordinator.

Designing the Program

Men's programming is an ongoing process at Calvary. Most years there are at least a few events which target men. Between January and June 1996, considerably more opportunity for men became available.

For several years interest grew in athletic activities for adult men. After trying unsuccessfully the previous two years to gain admittance to an area church softball league, we decided to organize a new league. With the help of two other area churches, a coed softball league was launched. Calvary fielded three teams. Five other churches each

provided a team to complete the eight-team league. The new league reserved a good community field for Sunday afternoon during April, May, and June. Each team played every week during the ten-week season. Thirty two men and eighteen women participated on the three Calvary Church teams.

In October 1995, a group of men, mostly in their early thirties, began playing basketball on Tuesday and Thursday evenings after 9:00 P.M. in the church's small basement gymnasium. The facility is not large enough to accommodate ten men on the court at one time; however, it was discovered that "three on three" made for a fast moving and competitive game. The men recruited other men to come, to work out on the five station exercise machine, and take turns playing their quick tempo brand of basketball. Twenty men regularly participated from October through May plus a few younger men when home from college. During the summer months they switched to a larger outdoor court.

Opportunity for personal and spiritual growth was made available to men by hosting a "Dad the Family Shepherd" video conference at Calvary Church February 2-3, 1996. The Friday-evening all-day-Saturday event received high marks from the fifteen men from Calvary who participated in the conference designed to help men become better husbands and fathers.

As a follow-up to the "Dad the Family Shepherd" conference, a Saturday morning breakfast Bible study was

launched in February 1996. Eight men have met regularly two times per month. Several men from the breakfast group provided leadership to start a Covenant Disciple group which began meeting weekly in May, 1996, on Thursday evening for one hour with eight men participating. Neither of these two groups has attracted men who were not already active in the church, although all but two of the participants are new to the church within the last three years. All the men are in their thirties or forties.

Calvary Church has carried a separate missions budget for over ten years. Part of it funds volunteers in mission.

These projects include local and distant work projects. During the first half of 1996, eighteen men worked on three local work projects. Christmas in April, a one-day work project repairing homes of people unable to maintain their property, involved over twenty five youth and adults of whom eight were adult men. The Potato Project, a food distribution ministry of potatoes gleaned from the Maine potato fields, involved six men. Habitat for Humanity is active in our area, and five men from Calvary helped build a home in nearby Frederick, Maryland.

Activities unplanned or unanticipated before the test period began included two men who attended a Promise Keepers rally in Washington, DC. in May, 1996. Twelve men with beards portraying the disciples took part in the Maundy

Thursday worship experience. Six men enrolled in one of the Church's Disciple Bible Study classes.

Evaluation of the Program

Over the six months the planned activities to involve men were carried out about as expected. Attendance at the "Dad the Family Shepherd" video conference was less than anticipated. Fifteen attended, although we hoped for twenty five. But fifty two men participated in basketball and softball, higher than expected.

Publicity for most events was adequate. No attempt was made to saturate the congregation with publicity but to utilize the normal channels used to promote the other ministries of the church, including signs and posters, newsletter articles, worship bulletin announcements and inserts, special announcements in worship, and some selected personal invitations.

Some events had key men who invited others to take part, as was the case with basketball, mission work projects, and the men's support group. When possible it is advisable that one or more persons take leadership to own the project or event and personally invite others. This is often the key to insure the success of an activity involving men.

One hundred fifteen men participated in the planned events. Because some men participated in several events, seventy six different men took part. These seventy six

represent about 20 percent of the male members of the church who reside in the immediate area.

Results of the Interviews

A series of interview questions were prepared as a structured interview. A list of the questions are included in the Appendix. At the beginning of the test period four men were interviewed to validate the questions. All of these men joined Calvary one to two years prior, and all are actively involved in the life of the church.

At the conclusion of the six-month test period ending June 30, 1996, a list of men who had become active was compiled. These men did not attend worship in late 1995, prior to the test period. On the list were fourteen men who had joined Calvary during the six-month test, two men who joined in the six months prior to the test who took part in men's activities during the test period, and two men who are not members but took part in men's events. All these eighteen men interviewed were new to the church. None had been firmly assimilated into the church prior to the test period.

Each interview lasted from thirty minutes to an hour asking about the history of their involvement in other churches and their current involvement at Calvary Church. Additional information about the men such as age, worship attendance, and church participation was already available in the church office. The interviews were conducted to

determine the influence of men's ministry in their assimilation into Calvary Church. All but one of the interviews was conducted in the homes of the men.

The average age of those interviewed is thirty seven with two in their mid-twenties and the oldest aged fifty two. Seventeen of eighteen are married. Of those seventeen married, sixteen have school or pre-school children living at home, and one has grown children. The average age of thirty seven is one year less than the average age of thirty eight for adults living within five miles of the church. At Calvary Church the average age of all adult members is forty three.

In the community 80 percent of all households are married couples. In Calvary Church it is 84 percent. Of those interviewed 94 percent are married.

The men who were attracted and assimilated into Calvary Church during the test period are similar in age to the surrounding community although they are more likely to be married. These men are in their thirties and forties and have children living at home. Given the existing make-up of the church and the community, this profile of men new at the church is about what would be expected.

The religious background of the interviewees was strong. Eighty nine percent had attended a church during childhood. The denominational background varied including United Methodist, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist, and

Independent. After high school this dwindled to 29 percent participating with some regularity, but at a reduced level to earlier years. Marriage and children were the reasons which prompted them to seek the church. Receptivity to the church and its ministry improves at both of these transitions in life, and this group of men were no exception.

Several reasons that attracted the eighteen men to visit and return to Calvary Church were commonly mentioned. Cited by six men was the welcome, and friendly people they met when they visited. The church has a systematic program of lay visits, plus phone and mail contact to follow-up on all worship visitors for a period of at least six weeks after the initial visit. This program was developed and is managed by the church Member and Visitor Coordinator, a half-time position on the church staff. As the church works hard to be welcoming, it is not surprising that new people would recognize and appreciate the interest shown them.

Six men indicated they were attracted by the programs of the church. Three more listed the specific program of worship and music in worship. Nine of eighteen or 50 percent of the men were attracted by the church programming. In addition to worship and music in worship, several said the programs for their children or wives drew them to stay. None of the men specifically listed men's ministries as an

initial draw although twelve of eighteen had participated in a men's event.

Five men said friends at the church drew them. Three of these said they were invited by friends to attend and the other two saw people they knew when they attended the first time.

The size and visible location of the church building attracted two of the men. These persons were church shopping and identified Calvary as one of the places to visit. Two other men were attracted by the size of the congregation. They were searching for a large membership church, and Calvary fills that criterion, with lots of people and a diverse program.

Of the interviewees, 53 percent have low participation in the life of Calvary Church. (Low is defined as attends only worship at least one to two times per month.) Thirty five percent of the men have medium participation. (Defined as worship attendance and at least one other regular activity beyond worship.) Twelve Percent of the men have a high participation level. (Regular worship attendance, one other ongoing regular activity, a second regular activity, or leadership for a ministry or administrative area.) All married interviewees had wives who participate in the church. Their participation rate was higher than the men as the chart indicates.

Interviewee Participation Rates

	Men	Wives
Low	53%	38%
Medium	35%	50%
High	12%	12%

A total of 47 percent of the men and 62 percent of the women participate in the life of the church beyond worship attendance. This calculates to 55 percent of this adult group of men and their wives regularly involved beyond worship, exceeding the 42 percent of adult members across the church who were involved beyond worship according to the 1991 congregational survey.

A surprisingly high 67 percent of the men interviewed had participated in one or more men's activities over the six-month test period. Of those who attended a church prior to attending Calvary, only 50 percent could recall being part of men's activities. These numbers indicate that Calvary's ministries to men involved a higher percent of the new men than is the norm for other churches these men had previously attended.

During the interviews none of the men commented that the men's activities in which they had participated were instrumental in their decision to join or be active at Calvary. Without exception they had positive things to say about participation in men's activities, but they had other more significant reasons for staying at Calvary. One man

indicated that the "Dad the Family Shepherd" seminar led him to faith in Christ.

Suggestions from the interviewees for programs to attract men to the church were mixed. Many of the men had not considered what might be of interest to men. Others thought we should continue what Calvary has been doing. Those who did make suggestions listed the kinds of programs held during the six-month test period. Three men listed sports programs. Three listed work projects or things that make a difference in people's lives. Two suggested social things such as fishing on the Chesapeake Bay. Two suggested activities which involve other family members such as a son or wife. One man said spiritual things rather than social things interested him. The responses of the interviewees mirrored the four categories identified in 1993 by men involved in United Methodist Men activities: social activities, spiritual growth opportunities, sports/recreation events, and mission projects.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The six-month test period was designed to involve and assimilate new men into the church. It achieved the intended result. New men comprised nearly one-quarter of all the men who took part in the activities which were part of this study. Five months after the six-month test period, seventeen of eighteen new men interviewed, 94 percent, were present in worship at least two times per month. The eighteenth is sometimes present but not regularly. The program worked very well.

The event attracting the most new men was softball, with six of the eighteen new men interviewed participating. Mission and work projects had the second highest participation rate of those interviewed with five of eighteen involved. As was anticipated in the literature, hands-on activities attracted both new and regular attenders. It did not matter whether the men had a blue-collar or white-collar job. Both groups were more likely to have been involved in hands-on activities.

New men did not attend any small group spiritual growth events. These included the Saturday breakfast and Bible study, the Thursday evening men's support group, and the Disciple Bible Studies offered by the church. All of these activities meet either weekly, or twice per month as is the case for the Saturday breakfast. The time commitment and

the level of personal sharing is higher for these events. Maslow's hierarchy of developmental tasks may apply here. It suggests that until men feel assimilated and comfortable with the church, they are not as likely to take the next step and participate in events which make demands on their time requiring them to share more of their personal lives.

This conclusion is supported by the fact that three interviewees did attend the "Dad the Family Shepherd Seminar." Perhaps these men took part because it was not an open-ended time commitment but a one-time event, Friday evening and Saturday. Nor did it include much personal sharing which requires higher trust levels from the participants. New men also attended because it addressed a topic of personal interest; how to be a better husband and father.

A conclusion from the data is that men new to the church are more readily attracted by hands-on activities. Fully 50 percent of new men who began regular worship attendance at Calvary during the test period attended these kinds of events. Another 17 percent were involved in more sedentary events (studies, seminars, support groups) for a total of 67 percent of all new men involved in men's activities. Sixty seven percent is a high participation rate by the new men in the church. Clearly, the hands-on activities were the events of choice.

This study substantiates that men can be involved in the life of the church beyond worship attendance. Entry level events which attracted men in statistically significant numbers were sports activities, work projects, and volunteer in mission events. The common thread in these and other events which would appeal to men is they require men to do things. They are active not passive activities. Rather than sit and listen or dialogue, men would prefer to be involved in activity. Especially is this the case for entry level events for men in the church.

Another lesson learned from this study is that active events for men are necessary if men are to be retained beyond the entry level and initial assimilation. A significant number of men--approaching 20 percent of all adult males in the church, three-fourths of whom had been active members for two years and more--were involved in the men's events of this study.

If men are to be assimilated and retained as active church members, a significant component of ministry to and with men are active events. This is by no means the only component, but it is a necessary one. By intentionally designing a program rich in hands-on activities, a church which seeks to minister to men can significantly increase the likelihood of success.

In reviewing why the men in the study were attracted and returned to Calvary, not one of them included men's

ministry as a reason. The primary reasons given were a friendly welcome, quality worship, and programs for the family. It would seem men's ministry is not on the front burner for most men. It was not a primary initial attraction when selecting Calvary. It may be they were conditioned by previous church experience not to expect quality men's programming. However, if men are not engaged at a point of interest or need, a significant number of them will become inactive.

In large or small churches, members must be part of something else beyond worship to feel a sense of belonging. In larger churches the connection beyond worship does not happen spontaneously. It must be deliberately planned. Specific programs for men provide that connecting point. The church which intentionally and thoughtfully programs for men can reap a harvest for the Lord and help close the participation gap between men and women in the church. The men and their families will be blessed, the church enriched, and the cause of Christ advanced.

The challenge of involving men in the church is a worthy goal, but not an end in itself. It is a means to the end of making disciples. Activity for activity's sake is not what the Christian church is about in men's ministry or any other program area. The goal is to reach men for Christ. From the founding of the Christian church, this goal has not changed, but the methodology has. What worked

twenty years ago may not work today. New strategies must be pioneered.

An example of this is recreational ministry. A generation ago few churches sensed the need for outdoor playing fields and indoor recreational space. The market for recreational ministries seemed small. Today an increasing number of large, future oriented churches are constructing indoor and outdoor recreation centers to respond to the felt needs of members and those whom the church seeks to reach. Not only do these facilities support youth ministries but both adult men's and adult women's ministries. This study demonstrated the interest of men in such activities as basketball and softball. Although not part of this study, Calvary this year has had nearly 150 women participate in our week-day morning aerobics program. The need for physical activity among adults is there. Recreational ministry is an excellent port of entry into the life of a church, but the end goal is not to get folks in the door of the church or to produce great athletes or winning teams. It is to make disciples using recreation as a vehicle.

A theology of recreation recognizes that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, and we are responsible before God for good stewardship of our bodies. Exercise, to maintain good health, is only responsible stewardship. As we are integrated persons, a direct connection exists

between our physical and spiritual health. Therefore, for both good stewardship and spiritual health, recreational ministry is an appropriate activity for the church.

The justification for recreational ministry is strengthened by adult interest in sports activities, the fellowship it provides, and the port of entry it can be for new people into the church. Both women and men, but especially men, are receptive to recreational ministry.

In working with men it is especially important that the goals of sports activities are clearly stated and regularly reinforced. Otherwise the competitive nature of men will take over. If the central goal becomes winning, then good sportsmanship and Christian fellowship can easily evaporate.

In its recreational ministries the church must model and teach Christian character. Hard, aggressive play is not incompatible with sportsmanship. Playing to win is the way men play, and there is nothing wrong with that, provided the rules of good sportsmanship and Christian character are exhibited.

While this dissertation was being researched and the project designed and carried out, Promise Keepers was born.

It has grown into a formidable movement attracting large numbers of men. In the spring of 1996, two members of Calvary Church attended the Washington, D.C., Promise Keepers conference. In 1997 over twenty men signed up to attend the June conference. It seems apparent that Promise

Keepers has tapped into a need of many men. "The Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper" is a refreshing and challenging document. In a straightforward manner, it calls men to commitment to Jesus Christ and to integrity in every area of life. If the movement continues to grow it could help fill the vacuum in America's homes for male role models, faithful husbands and fathers, and trustworthy community leaders.

Promise Keepers may be the right idea at the right time. Certainly family life and personal responsibility have slipped tragically in recent decades, and Promise Keepers hits these issues head on. Most solutions to the dilemma of the family have been political, but Promise Keepers takes a moral and spiritual approach. It gets closer to the heart of the problem and can make real change in the home.

For the Promise Keepers movement to increase its impact on the main stream of American life, it must avoid a partisan political agenda. If it is able to stick to its mission statement--"Promise Keepers is a Christ-centered ministry dedicated to uniting men through vital relationships to become godly influences in their world."--the movement will continue to grow. If it can deliver on its racial-reconciliation pledge, its credibility will grow.

Promise Keepers plan a large event on October 4, 1997, in Washington D.C., called "Stand in the Gap: A Sacred

Assembly of Men." The event is described by Promise Keepers as a religious worship event for the Christian church; a gathering of Christian men from all races and ethnic ties; about personal repentance and corporate confession to God of sin; about direct reconciliation between races and denominations; without a political agenda. If this national event achieves its objectives, it could propel the Promise Keepers movement into national prominence and be widely used as an agent of renewal.

In developing an effective ministry to men in the local church, parachurch organizations such as Promise Keepers, Dad the Family Shepherd, and others are a valuable resource.

Such groups provide high quality training and inspiration.

Churches who utilize them can develop well trained, highly motivated leaders.

When I first conceived of studying men and their involvement in the church in 1988, no popular books on men's issues waited on the shelves of general or Christian book stores. With the publication of Robert Bly's Iron John in 1990, and Sam Keen's Fire in the Belly in 1991, men's books became best sellers. Now when I go into a general or Christian book store, I find as many books for men as for women. Books by Christian authors evident in stores in my area include Patrick Morley's The Man in the Mirror and The Seven Seasons of a Man's Life, Gordon Dalby's Healing the Masculine Soul, Jack Balswick's Men at the Crossroads.

Promise Keepers has published a series of books starting with The Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper which are widely read. This was not anticipated in 1988 and is a pleasant surprise.

Lyle Schaller in 1990 wrote a book titled 44 Ways to Revitalize the Women's Organization. In a 1991 telephone conversation with him, I asked if he planned to write a book about forty four ways to revitalize men's ministry, too. He replied that he did not see the need, for he had observed younger men in their twenties returning in large numbers to many conservative denominations and independent churches. He suspected men would return to the church in the years ahead. These men did not seem to have the same image of the church nor the personal inhibitions which has kept the generation ahead of them away.

Perhaps Schaller's suspicion is about to come true in many of America's churches. The opportunity is present and the resources exist for the enterprising congregation to reach out and enfold men in large numbers into the family of faith.

Congregational Survey

Yocum 111

Understanding Your Congregation

INSTRUCTIONS

You and your ideas are very important to us. The results of this survey will help us plan more effectively for the future taking into consideration your concerns and those of others in this church. If you are living with a spouse, we hope both of you can complete a survey. Please do not share a survey. Each person should fill out their own copy. Your responses are completely *anonymous*. Please do not sign your name. We appreciate your honesty in answering these questions. Try not to spend too much time on any one question.

Thank you!

Personal Background Information

1. What is the name of the local church for which you are filling out this survey?

CALVARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2. What is your age? _____ years old

3. Gender?

___ (a) Male

___ (b) Female

4. What is your marital status (check one):

___ (a) Single (never married)

___ (c) Remarried

___ (e) Widowed

___ (b) Married (first time)

___ (d) Separated

___ (f) Divorced

5. If married, does your spouse attend this church?

___ (a) Yes

___ (b) No

6. If married, is your spouse employed?

___ (a) Yes, full-time

___ (b) Yes, part-time

___ (c) No

7. If married, is your spouse also filling out this survey?

___ (a) Yes

___ (b) No

8. Do you have any children?

___ (a) Yes

___ (b) No

___ (c) Number of Children

9. How many children do you have living in your household in each of the following age groups? (Enter the number of children in each age category, where applicable.)

___ (a) 4 years and younger

___ (c) 10-14 years

___ (e) 20 years and older

___ (b) 5-9 years

___ (d) 15-19 years

10. What is your annual family income (check one)?

- ☐ (a) Less than \$7,500 ☐ (d) \$25,000 - 34,999 ☐ (g) \$75,000 - 99,999
☐ (b) \$ 7,500 - 14,999 ☐ (e) \$35,000 - 49,999 ☐ (h) More than \$100,000
☐ (c) \$15,000 - 24,999 ☐ (f) \$50,000 - 74,999

11. What is your current employment status (check one)?

- ☐ (a) Employed full time ☐ (d) Unemployed ☐ (g) Disabled
☐ (b) Employed part time ☐ (e) Retired
☐ (c) Full time "houseperson" ☐ (f) Student

INSTRUCTIONS: The next two questions ask for employment and education information for you as an individual and for your father and mother (even if they are not now living or working). Below each question is a shaded box which contains the answers you should choose from.

12. Type of employment (Enter a letter in each of the following blanks using the choices in the shaded box below. Leave blank where it does not apply):

A 12a. Yourself

___ 12b. Your father

___ 12c. Your mother

(a) Executive and managerial (Administrators, Executives, Managers, Directors, etc.)	(f) Service: Private household (House Cleaners, maids, etc.)	(k) Machine operator
(b) Professional specialty (Scientists, Doctors, Lawyers, Consultants, Teachers, Counselors, Writers, Artists, Accountants, etc.)	(g) Service: Protective (Police, Security, etc.)	(l) Transportation and material moving (Truck Driver, Bus Driver, etc.)
(c) Technical support (Health Technicians, Phone Technicians, Computers Systems, etc.)	(h) Service: Other (Health Care worker, Hairdresser, Child Care, etc.)	(m) Laborer (Construction, Freight Handler, Warehouse, etc.)
(d) Sales (Sales related occupations, etc.)	(i) Farming, forestry and fishing	(n) Homemaker
(e) Administrative support (Bookkeepers, Secretaries, Computer Operators, Misc. Admin. Support, etc.)	(j) Precision production and craft (Mechanic, Machinist, Repair, etc.)	(o) Other _____

13. Highest level of education completed (Enter a letter in the following blank using the choices in the shaded box below):

___ Yourself

(a) Elementary	(e) Some college	(i) College graduate (Doctorate)
(b) Junior High	(f) College graduate (Associate)	(j) Not sure
(c) Senior High	(g) College graduate (Bachelors)	
(d) Vocational school	(h) College graduate (Masters)	

14. Number of years you have lived within approximately 30 miles of this general area?
_____ years

15. In what type of residence do you presently live (check one)?

- ☐ (a) Single family dwelling (ie. an unattached house) ☐ (c) Apartment ☐ (e) Dormitory or other group quarters
☐ (b) Condominium ☐ (d) Mobile home or trailer ☐ (f) Other _____

16. Do you own your residence?

- ☐ (a) Yes ☐ (b) No

17. What is the Zip Code of your residence? _____

18. Do you plan to move out of this general area within the next three years?

- ☐ (a) Yes, definitely ☐ (c) Probably not ☐ (e) Not sure
☐ (b) Maybe ☐ (d) Definitely not

19. In how many community clubs or organizations (social, political, civic, service, recreational, etc.) do you hold membership?

- ☐ (a) None ☐ (c) Two ☐ (e) Four or more
☐ (b) One ☐ (d) Three

Church Participation and Relationships

1. Are you a member of this congregation?

- ☐ (a) Yes ☐ (b) No

2. If you are a member, how many years have you been a member? _____ years

3. How long have you been attending this congregation? _____ years

4. Approximately how many miles do you live from this church? _____ miles

5. How frequently do you attend church worship services or other activities (check one)?

- ☐ (a) Yearly ☐ (c) Quarterly ☐ (e) Weekly
☐ (b) Two or three times a year ☐ (d) Monthly ☐ (f) Two or more times per week

6. How many church committee and/or leadership positions (Eg. Christian education, budget, stewardship, Youth staff, etc.) do you hold?

- ☐ (a) None ☐ (c) Two ☐ (e) Four
☐ (b) One ☐ (d) Three ☐ (f) Five or more

7. Excluding Sunday morning worship, how many hours do you spend during the course of an average month in church activities (including time for meetings, special events, Bible studies, travel, preparation, etc.)?

- ☐ (a) 0 - 1 hours ☐ (c) 6 - 10 hours ☐ (e) 16 - 20 hours
☐ (b) 2 - 5 hours ☐ (d) 11 - 15 hours ☐ (f) 21 hours or more

8. If you are presently involved in the congregation, what would you say is the major reason? (Check one. If you are not involved, skip to the next question.)

- ☐ (a) Commitment to God ☐ (e) It relates to my spiritual gifts/interests/abilities ☐ (i) Remove guilt for my past
☐ (b) Concern for fruitfulness of church's ministry ☐ (f) A friend asked me to help out ☐ (j) It makes other members of my family happy
☐ (c) Someone asked me to serve ☐ (g) I was elected to a position ☐ (k) Other reason
☐ (d) No one else is willing to do it ☐ (h) I received training for this ministry

9. If you are *not* presently involved in the congregation, what would you say is the major reason? (Check one. If you are involved, skip to the next question.)
- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) No time available | <input type="checkbox"/> (d) No one has ever asked me | <input type="checkbox"/> (g) If I say "yes," it will require too much of me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) No ambition | <input type="checkbox"/> (e) There is little or no training provided | <input type="checkbox"/> (h) Health problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Nothing I see relates to my gifts/interest/abilities | <input type="checkbox"/> (f) Most opportunities are "busy work" | <input type="checkbox"/> (i) Other reason _____ |
10. Approximately how much does your family household contribute to this congregation per year (If single or widowed, you as an individual)?
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) Under \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> (e) \$1,000 - 1,499 | <input type="checkbox"/> (i) \$3,500 - 4,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) \$100 - 249 | <input type="checkbox"/> (f) \$1,500 - 1,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> (j) \$5,000 - 7,499 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (c) \$250 - 499 | <input type="checkbox"/> (g) \$2,000 - 2,499 | <input type="checkbox"/> (k) \$7,500 - 9,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (d) \$500 - 999 | <input type="checkbox"/> (h) \$2,500 - 3,499 | <input type="checkbox"/> (l) More than \$10,000 |
11. Suppose our congregation were extremely vulnerable because of financial problems. How much would you be willing to increase your giving over your current amount to the church in order to prevent this from happening?
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) None | <input type="checkbox"/> (c) 2 - 3% | <input type="checkbox"/> (e) 7 - 10% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) 1% | <input type="checkbox"/> (d) 4 - 6% | <input type="checkbox"/> (f) More than 10% |
12. How many persons have you invited to visit or join this congregation in the past year?
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) None | <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Two to Four |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) One | <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Five or more |
13. Think for a moment of your five closest friends (individuals or couples) with whom you have social and recreational life. Do not include close relatives. How many are members or a part of this congregation?
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) None | <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Two | <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Four |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) One | <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Three | <input type="checkbox"/> (f) Five or more |
14. The major reason why I began attending this congregation (check one):
- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) Grew up in this church | <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Printed advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> (i) One of the pastors/lay leaders invited me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) A relative brought me | <input type="checkbox"/> (f) Radio advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> (j) Letter of invitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Programs for my children or youth | <input type="checkbox"/> (g) Television advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> (k) Transferred from another congregation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (d) I came on my own | <input type="checkbox"/> (h) A friend invited me | <input type="checkbox"/> (l) Other _____ |
15. The major reason why I continue attending this congregation (check one):
- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) I enjoy the worship | <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Denominational affiliation | <input type="checkbox"/> (i) I have an opportunity to be involved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) The ministry of the pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> (f) It meets the needs of my family | <input type="checkbox"/> (j) Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (c) The ministry of someone in the church besides the pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> (g) A convenient location | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Most of my friends are in the church | <input type="checkbox"/> (h) I agree with its theology | |
16. The major reason I left my previous congregation was (check one):
- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) Moved | <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Split | <input type="checkbox"/> (g) Not friendly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Hurt | <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Size | <input type="checkbox"/> (h) Pastor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Theology | <input type="checkbox"/> (f) Programs/ministries | <input type="checkbox"/> (i) Other _____ |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> (j) Does not apply |

Personal Beliefs

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each statement. Then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by circling the number under the appropriate heading. Circle only one number for each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. God is actively involved in my personal life.	1	2	3	4	5
2. God seems to be involved more in the lives of others than in my own life.	1	2	3	4	5
3. God created this world but no longer intervenes in its events.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Although God has and can act in history and communicate with persons directly, it doesn't happen very often.	1	2	3	4	5
5. God is actively involved in the world including nations and their governments.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I do not believe there is a God.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The Bible has relevance for today.	1	2	3	4	5
8. While the Bible is a valuable book, it is not really God's inspired word.	1	2	3	4	5
9. It is difficult to know the real meaning of the Bible since no one knows for sure what the authors really said or meant.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Even if there are some errors in translations, I still believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, authoritative for faith and life.	1	2	3	4	5
11. In addition to being the inspired Word of God, authoritative for faith and life, I believe there were no errors in the original writings of biblical authors.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The concepts of sin and salvation really don't have much meaning to me personally.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I believe people are inherently sinful even though they may do good things.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I believe people are inherently good even though they may do bad things.	1	2	3	4	5
15. All people will eventually participate in God's salvation regardless of how they live their life and even if they do not believe in Jesus Christ.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Salvation is available for those who believe in Jesus Christ and ask for his forgiveness to be saved.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Salvation is more than belief and confession; it is evidenced by people who live a life of service to God and neighbor.	1	2	3	4	5

18. Which one of the following images of God affects you most (check one)?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (a) Judge | <input type="checkbox"/> (d) Friend | <input type="checkbox"/> (g) Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Redeemer | <input type="checkbox"/> (e) Liberator | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Loving Parent | <input type="checkbox"/> (f) Healer | |

19. Which one of the following images best describes the church for you (check one)?

- ☐ (a) Servant ☐ (d) Herald of the Good News ☐ (g) Other
☐ (b) Kingdom of God ☐ (e) Temple of God
☐ (c) Spiritual Society ☐ (f) People of God

Social and Political Attitudes

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each statement. Then indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree by circling the number under the appropriate heading. If you are not sure about a statement, circle the number 3. Circle only one number for each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree (not sure)	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I believe Calvary should be actively involved in social and political issues and campaigns.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I believe Calvary should be actively involved in the following:					
(a) combatting racism	1	2	3	4	5
(b) supporting pro-life issues	1	2	3	4	5
(c) supporting abortion rights issues	1	2	3	4	5
(d) combatting homelessness	1	2	3	4	5
(e) combatting hunger	1	2	3	4	5
(f) animal rights	1	2	3	4	5
(g) AIDS ministry	1	2	3	4	5
(h) homosexual rights	1	2	3	4	5
(i) child abuse/spouse abuse	1	2	3	4	5
(j) improving public education	1	2	3	4	5
(k) ecology issues	1	2	3	4	5

3. Should Calvary develop programming to address the following issues? Please limit your "Yes" selections to a maximum of five topics.

	Yes	No	Unsure
(a) Develop racial/ethnic educational and interaction programs	—	—	—
(b) Support a shelter for the homeless	—	—	—
(c) Support a facility for eldercare	—	—	—
(d) Counseling ministries	—	—	—
(e) Parenting classes	—	—	—
(f) Expand food distribution programs	—	—	—
(g) Single parent support	—	—	—
(h) Suicide prevention	—	—	—
(i) Support a rape crisis center	—	—	—
(j) Support a facility for "at risk" youth	—	—	—
(k) Support alcohol free/drug free teen activities	—	—	—
(l) Programs for persons with handicapping conditions	—	—	—
(m) Summer work camp (to assist low-income residents with home repairs)	—	—	—
(n) Literacy tutoring for children and/or adults	—	—	—
(o) Cancer support group	—	—	—
(p) Parent support group for parents with troubled teens or young adults	—	—	—
(q) Grief support group	—	—	—
(r) Program for children without a father or mother	—	—	—
(s) Program for abused children	—	—	—
(t) Other _____	—	—	—

4. Please use this space for any additional comments you might have regarding this section of the survey.

Spiritual Life

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each question and mark your answer by checking the line under the appropriate heading. Check only one answer per question.

	Yes	No	Not applicable/ don't know
1. Were you raised in a Christian family?	—	—	—
2. Do you take time to read the Bible each week?	—	—	—
3. Do you have friends in our church who provide prayer and support?	—	—	—
4. Do you have friends outside our church who provide prayer and support?	—	—	—
5. Do you have a marriage partner/family who provides prayer and support?	—	—	—
6. How close do you feel to God most of the time?			
— (a) Extremely close			— (e) Don't believe in God
— (b) Close			— (d) Very distant
— (c) Not very close			

Life's Satisfaction and Concerns

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each statement. Then indicate the extent to which you feel satisfied or dissatisfied by circling the number under the appropriate heading. Circle only one number per statement.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied (or not applicable)	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1. Relationship with God	1	2	3	4	5
2. My devotional life	1	2	3	4	5
3. My family life	1	2	3	4	5
4. My job/career	1	2	3	4	5
5. Personal relationships with friends in this congregation	1	2	3	4	5
6. Marriage relationship with spouse	1	2	3	4	5
7. Relationship with my children	1	2	3	4	5
8. Sharing my faith on job and/or in community	1	2	3	4	5
9. My actual ministry involvement in this congregation	1	2	3	4	5
10. My personal financial situation	1	2	3	4	5
11. My health	1	2	3	4	5
12. Caretaking on an elderly parent	1	2	3	4	5
13. Personal recreation	1	2	3	4	5

Programming at Calvary

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied (or not applicable)	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following programs at Calvary.					
(a) Worship (Sunday)	1	2	3	4	5
(b) Holy Communion and Healing Service	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Music programs (in general)	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Adult choirs (bell and vocal)	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Children's choirs	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Youth choirs (bell and vocal)	1	2	3	4	5
(g) UMYF	1	2	3	4	5
(h) Nursery	1	2	3	4	5
(i) United Methodist Women	1	2	3	4	5
(j) United Methodist Men	1	2	3	4	5
(k) Sunday School (ages 3-12)	1	2	3	4	5
(l) Sunday School (ages 13-18)	1	2	3	4	5
(m) Sunday School (adult)	1	2	3	4	5
(n) Vacation Bible School	1	2	3	4	5
(o) Bible study classes and groups	1	2	3	4	5
(p) Fellowship activities	1	2	3	4	5
(q) Membership orientation/confirmation training	1	2	3	4	5
(r) Missions program	1	2	3	4	5
(s) Spiritual growth opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
(t) Evangelism ministries	1	2	3	4	5
(u) Caring ministries (prayer chain, transportation needs to sick, meals for funerals)	1	2	3	4	5
(v) Recreational ministries	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you very much for completing this survey. We plan to tabulate the results during the next two months. The results should be available by mid September. Thank you again for helping us plan Calvary's future.

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

tion and Development Services, Inc.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
NEW MEN, CALVARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1. How did you feel about the Christian Church in general and Calvary in particular before you began to attend?
 - Church background as a child? As an adult?
 - Impressions/feelings about the Christian Church?
 - Preconceived image of Calvary before attending?
2. What was instrumental in your decision to attend (or not to attend) Calvary Church?
 - What attracted you--friend's invitation, personal need, programming, building, advertising, other?
 - What kept you coming--friendships, needs met, programming, involved in specific activities, other?
3. Did you participate in activities where mostly men were involved, and if so did these influence your decision to be active at Calvary?
4. How could the Christian Church, and Calvary in particular, attract more men to Christ and to the Church?
 - Have you been part of or know of other congregations with excellent ministry to men?
 - In your mind what are the characteristics of a great men's ministry?
 - What would you like to see for men at Calvary that we do not have?

**Interview Data Summary
New Men At Calvary**

Initials	Married	Children	Age	Years Lived Here	Attend Regularly As Child	Attend After High School
JB	Yes	Yes	40		Yes Presby	Not much
EB	Yes	Yes	35	6	Yes Presby	Not much
MB	Yes	Yes	43		Yes Presby	No
TB	Yes	Yes	32	3	No	No Started when married
RC	Yes	Yes	34	3	Yes Presby	Yes
FG	Yes	Yes	32	3	Yes R. C. School	No
CG	Yes	Yes	39	2	Yes In Military	No
SG	Yes	Yes	43	12	Yes	Yes
MH	Yes	No	27	2	Yes	Not Much
DJ	Yes	Yes	35	4	Yes Presby	No
FJ	Yes	No	34	3	Yes UMC	Yes
WM	Yes	Yes	52	1	Yes Baptist	Yes
ET	No	Not Applicable	25	1	Yes Small Independent	Yes
RT	Yes	Yes	47	16	Yes Catholic, Baptist	No
JK	Yes	Yes	47	11	Yes Catholic	No
MM	Yes	Yes	33	2	Yes	Not Much
WS	Yes	Yes	38	5	Yes	No
16 Married						
1 Single						
14 w/children				Average 37.7	16 Attended As Child	8 No
2 w/none				Average 4.9	1 did not	4 Not Much
1 Single				2 in 20's		5 Yes
				1 in 50's		

Interview Data Summary
New Men At Calvary

Initials	Men's Activity Jan-Jun	Member	Calvary Attraction
JB	DAD	No	Likes the people, worship and music
EB	Softball weekdays	Yes	Friendly people and children's programs
MB	Softball	Yes	Just came, friendly and welcoming
TB	None	Yes	Large size, worship
RC	None	Yes	Program, nearby, aerobics, friends here
FG	DAD	Yes	Friendly, church ministry, church shopped
CG	Softball & Habitat	No	Senior church support, wife, invited by friends
SG	Trustees	Yes	Turmoil other church, knew some members
MH	Softball, basketball	Yes	Building, education, multiple worship times
DJ	Bearded men, Christmas in April, Habitat	Yes	Visibility, location
FJ	Trustees	Yes	Church shopped, lots of program, down home feeling
WM	None	Yes	Welcoming, three services, worship not pretentious
ET	Sports, softball	Yes	Saw building, was looking for a church
RT	None	Yes	Turmoil other church, friends here, programs
JK	DAD	Yes	Friendly people, friends invited to come
MM	None	Yes	Good kids program
WS	Softball	Yes	Felt at home
12 Active		15 Members	None came because of mens activities
5 Not Active		2 Non-Members	

Interview Data Summary
New Men At Calvary

Initials	Spouse At Calvary	Her Involvement	His Involvement	Men's Activity Other Churches
JB	Yes	Moderate	Low	None
EB	Yes	Low	Moderate	None
MB	Yes	Moderate	Low	None
TB	Yes	Low	Low	None
RC	Yes	High	High	Moderate
FG	Yes	Low, worship	Low, worship	None
CG	Yes	Moderate	Low	None
SG	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate - Maintenance
MH	Yes	Low	Low	None
DJ	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	None formally, Volunteer Maintenance & Electrical
FJ	Yes	High	High	None formally, Volunteer Maintenance
WM	Yes	Moderate	Moderate - Usher	Moderate
ET	Not Married	Not Applicable	Moderate	None
RT	Yes	Moderate	Moderate - Teach	Moderate - Work Team, Missions
JK	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
MM	Yes	Low	Low	None
WS	Yes	Low	Low	None
All but one		6 Low	8 Low	12 None
		8 Moderate	7 Moderate	5 Moderate
		2 High	2 High	
		1 Not Applicable		



Why does Promise Keepers believe that small accountability groups are important for men?

In this age of individualism, men are finally beginning to realize the importance of having brothers who will support, encourage, and hold them accountable to a Christian model of manhood. The second promise of a promise keeper states: "A Promise Keeper is committed to pursue vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises."

The Bible clearly teaches that we are a body whose head is Jesus Christ. As a church we are completely dependent upon the grace of Jesus Christ. Through His grace, Christ sometimes chooses to work through our brothers and sisters to help us grow spiritually. The Bible tells us that we can mature in our faith through interaction with our brothers: As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another (Proverbs 27:17).

Promise Keepers believes that the small group provides men with the opportunity to bear one another's burdens: Carry each others burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2). In a small group, men are able to relate to each other on a personal level, supporting, encouraging and holding each other accountable. However, men's small groups are not the ultimate goal of Promise Keepers. The purpose of the small group, and indeed the purpose of Promise Keepers is to draw men closer in relationship to Jesus Christ. Promise Keepers stadium events are meant as a catalyst to motivate men to pursue spiritual growth. The critical event with which Promise Keepers is ultimately seeking is the individual man keeping his promises.

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How do I start a men's small group?

We at Promise Keepers are seeing a revival in the hearts of men around the world. As a result, we receive numerous inquiries such as yours asking for assistance in developing small groups which will help men grow to maturity in Christ.

In this age of individualism, men are finally beginning to realize the importance of having brothers who will support, encourage, and hold one another accountable to a Christian model of manhood. As one of our promises states: "A Promise Keeper is committed to pursue vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises."

In order to help men become the brothers Christ intended them to be, Promise Keepers is proud to offer *Brothers! Calling Men Into Vital Relationships* (\$5.00). To offer this resource to you, we called upon Mr. Geoff Gorsuch of the Navigators and Mr. Dan Schaffer of our Promise Keepers staff to consolidate their years of experience in men's ministry into this small, but very informative, book. Within these pages, therefore, you will find not only the inspiration but also the practical tools you will need to develop your own small group of *Brothers!*

Another tool available for small groups is *The Next Step Kit*, a multi-media package designed to introduce you to the dynamics of the small group. In *The Next Step* video, real people from diverse backgrounds demonstrate the different stages men go through in forming a biblically based small group, the steps involved in their growth and the values gained as they move toward genuine vital relationships. *The Next Step* audio cassette will remind you of your commitment to your small group and also allow you to share with others the importance of being a promise keeper.

The *Promise Builders Study Series* provides 45 weeks of study materials for small groups focusing on men's issues relevant to practical daily application. We have adapted this Bible study model in conjunction with the *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper* and to facilitate increasing participation by members of the group. You will find that these 45 weeks of study take you through not only the various promises, but also the relational progress of a small group — going from the acquaintance stage, to the encouragement stage, to the brother-to-brother stage.

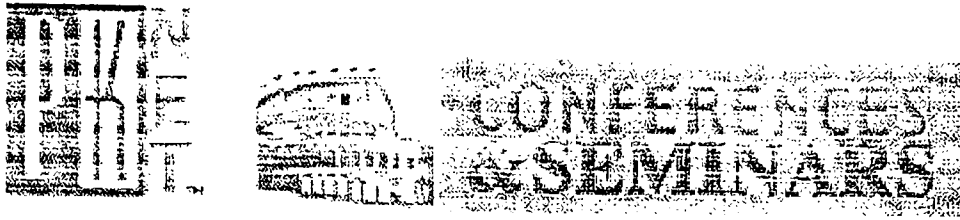
To order these items or any other resource that Promise Keepers offers, please call 1-800-456-7594.

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8. **How long is the event?**
Approximately six (6) hours -- from midday to sundown.
9. **Will there be meals at the event?**
No.
10. **Why is this call to men in particular?**
Promise Keepers' mission and calling is to unite men. We are calling men to come to the National Mall on behalf of their families, churches, and communities. We want the men to be able to give total focus to the day, a task made more challenging when family members are present and may require care and attention.
11. **With the 1997 conference season beginning in May, are men being asked to attend a stadium conference and "Stand in the Gap"?**
Yes. The stadium conferences (held May through October at 18 venues around the country) are vitally important and practical training and orientation meetings. Therefore, Promise Keepers recommends men plan to attend a nearby conference, then consider coming to the Sacred Assembly.
12. **How can a man attend?**
Promise Keepers has developed a "prep kit" information package including instructions for arriving in DC, a list of what to bring, great transportation ideas, event information, details on hotel and volunteer home accommodations, information about pre-assembly devotions, and a map. To obtain the "prep kit" information package "available after May 1, 1997", watch the web site for further details.
13. **How many volunteers are needed for the event and how can a man volunteer?**
Estimates range from 20,000 to 45,000 volunteers (both male and female) will be needed. To volunteer, complete our [online forms](#) or call the Volunteer Hotline at (800) 417-1878.
14. **Will there be a charge for attending this event?**
No. Those who wish to help cover the education and production costs associated with Stand in the Gap can mail their donation to:
- Promise Keepers
Stand in the Gap
P.O. Box 103001
Denver, CO 80250-3001**
- All gifts are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.
15. **How does "Stand in the Gap" compare with the Million Man March?**
There is no direct comparison with the 1995 gathering convened by Louis Farrakhan. "Stand in the Gap" is:
- ☐ a religious worship event for the Church of Jesus Christ;
 - ☐ a gathering of Christian men from all races and ethnicities;
 - ☐ free of an admission fee; no offering at the event will be received;
 - ☐ a demonstration of spiritual poverty and profound sorrow for personal and corporate sin;
 - ☐ about personal repentance and corporate confession to God through Jesus Christ, who alone can atone for sin;
 - ☐ about direct reconciliation between races and denominations;
 - ☐ a presentation from the Church to Almighty God, in the presence of the world's media;
 - ☐ without a political agenda.



"Stand in the Gap"

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the name of the event?

"Stand in the Gap: A Sacred Assembly of Men"

2. What is a Sacred Assembly?

Twelve instances are recorded in the Old Testament of times when Israel was called by God to gather for one or more days of prayer, fasting, confession and repentance of sin because the nation had wandered away spiritually and morally. Since the 1600's and through to this century in Europe and America, sacred assemblies have been called by churches and denominations in time of spiritual crisis.

3. Why is the event called "Stand in the Gap?"

The name is derived from Ezekiel 22:30: "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before Me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none."

4. What is the goal of "Stand in the Gap"?

To gather a diverse multitude of men in the name of Jesus Christ, to confess personal and collective sin so that we may present to the Lord, godly men on their knees in humility, then on their feet in unity, reconciled and poised for revival and spiritual awakening. PROMISE KEEPERS desires to see a revival of the Church of Jesus Christ in America. It is encouraged in this goal by scripture, particularly 2 Chronicles 7:14: "If my people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

5. Why is the event in Washington DC?

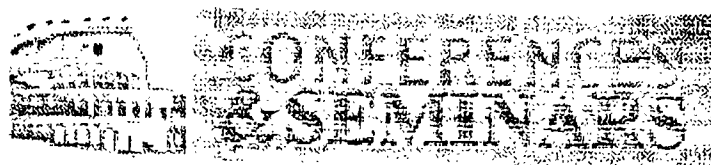
Washington is the emotional heart of America, the place where we celebrate our victories, mourn our departed heroes, protest our deepest concerns and debate our national future. It was set apart as the "District of Columbia" -- a piece of land for all people, not owned by any one state; a public capital designed for gatherings, marches, protests and celebrations. It is one of the few places in America with the public transportation, sanitation, safety and crowd control resources in place to handle a large gathering. Finally, it is the place where God has called the leadership of PROMISE KEEPERS to hold the event.

6. When will this sacred assembly held?

PROMISE KEEPERS has applied with the National Park Service to reserve the National Mall for one day, Saturday, October 4, 1997. Issuance of written permits will take place over the coming months. Please continue to pray.

7. Who are we calling?

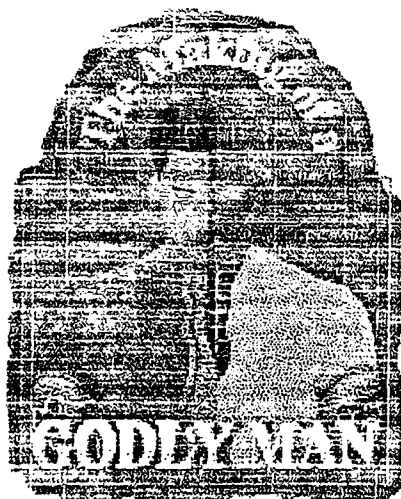
Every man in the United States of America who names Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.



1997 Conference Sites & Dates

<u>Detroit MI</u>	Silverdome	May 2-3	<u>Buffalo NY</u>	Rich Stadium	June 13-14
<u>Los Angeles CA</u>	Memorial Coliseum	May 2-3	<u>Washington D.C.</u>	RFK Stadium	June 13-14
<u>Cincinnati OH</u>	Cinergy Field	May 9-10	<u>Fresno CA</u>	Bulldog Stadium	June 27-28
<u>Houston TX</u>	Astrodome	May 16-17	<u>Miami FL</u>	Orange Bowl	June 27-28
<u>Tampa FL</u>	Houlihan Stadium	May 16-17	<u>St. Louis MO</u>	Trans World Dome	July 18-19
<u>Chicago IL</u>	Soldier Field	May 23-24	<u>Pittsburgh PA</u>	Three Rivers Stadium	July 25-26
<u>Seattle WA</u>	Kingdome	May 23-24	<u>Minneapolis MN</u>	Metrodome	Aug. 15-16
<u>Birmingham AL</u>	Legion Field	May 30-31	<u>Stand In The Gap</u>	Washington D.C.	Oct. 4
<u>Kansas City MO</u>	Arrowhead Stadium	May 30-31	<u>City of Irving TX</u>	Texas Stadium	Oct. 24-25
<u>Knoxville TN</u>	Neyland Stadium	June 6-7			

General Information



Dear Men,

The Lord is doing a new thing in our midst in 1997. He is taking us deeper--as a ministry and as individuals. As we grant the Holy Spirit access to every area of our lives, I believe He will guide us into uncharted waters. God is calling for our total commitment. If you have ever attended a Promise Keepers conference, you will experience...
(Full Letter from Bill McCartney)

Hear a "new" song for the 1997 conference season!

Stand in the Gap '96 Highlights

'97 Conferencias Changed Lives
(Español)

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Promise Keepers' Worship Songs and Sheet Music

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Encouragement

Do not be discouraged if there is little progress from your initial efforts. It often takes 3-5 years to develop an effective men's ministry. Key Men are consistently reporting that through prayer and by honoring church leadership, God is stirring the hearts of men. Be encouraged that you will see the results. God is changing men and raising up more leaders for your men's ministry.

Feel free to visit the Promise Keepers' National or state offices. Develop relationships with the Field Ministry Staff and Ambassadors. These people are committed to serving you. Come and see our growing number of resources and products that we believe will help provide effective tools for your ministry. Promise Keepers is your ministry.

Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other and the Lord listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored his name. (Malachi 3:16)

*Response form is not available at this time

[Information on Men's Ministry and Leadership Seminars.](#)

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and follow up each conference.

More information on how I can volunteer

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Reconciliation

Although the progression towards a vital men's ministry and a core group of committed men will take time, the Field Ministry of Promise Keepers is committed to bridging the gap between men of all ethnic and denominational backgrounds. To the extent that this represents the heart of God and the core values of Promise Keepers, you eventually should desire to develop relationships with other Key Men and men's ministries in your community. We encourage you to make this a long-term goal.

More information on reconciliation

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Important!

To validate your willingness to be a Key Man, it is necessary that 1) you sign the commitment on the response form* , 2) your pastor complete and sign his portion of the response form*, and 3) your pastor return the response form to Promise Keepers. This response form enables our Field Ministry Department to serve your men's ministry more effectively.

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Legal Policy and Procedures

Trademarks

The name and logo of Promise Keepers are registered trademarks. The logo of Promise Keepers cannot be used. We recommend naming your men's ministry after the desired mission of the group, such as Men of Integrity, Men on Target, etc. All business should be done in the name of your church or ministry, especially mailouts, promotion, or the collection of monies.

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Resource Reproductions

The audio and video resources that are provided by Promise Keepers should not be reproduced or copied for distribution, except where permission is specifically granted.

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Mailing Lists

We have numerous request for mailing lists for a specific geographic area and requests to assist certain promotions of church and community meetings. It is the policy of the Board of Directors of Promise Keepers to limit the use of the mailing lists. As much as we would like to assist your efforts in your community, we are unable to mail promotional flyers and brochures for local church and community meetings. Nor are we able to distribute lists of Promise Keepers' constituents. Thank you for your understanding.

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We call it a funnel because the process starts with a large entry point (large gatherings and special events) and narrows down to a place of bringing men into committed, supportive relationships with one another (small-group commitment). A non-threatening entry point is critical for outreach; yet, it is just as crucial to encourage, model, and provide a climate for small group structure.

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Special Events

Churches rally their men together around special events such as men's retreats, cookouts, and recreational activities. The purpose of these gatherings is primarily fellowship. Like the large gathering model, these events are effective, non-threatening entry points.

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Equipping Seminars

God calls all men to grow as leaders in some manner, and equipping seminars offer to them the opportunity to invest in their personal growth and leadership skills. Examples include seminars on marriage, fathering, representing Christ in the workplace, men's ministry leadership, community outreach, and how to disciple or mentor others.

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Congregational Gatherings

Some churches invite all of their men together on a regular basis for the purpose of fellowship and teaching. Ministries which effectively rally their men together with this approach are led by a staff pastor. These gatherings provide a good entry point for men on the periphery of church life or for non-Christians in the community. This group can be a good recruiting base for developing an effective men's ministry.

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Challenge/Requirements

The Key Man is to be a man who is growing in faith by disciplined study of God's Word, dependent upon the Lord to guide him -- a man of prayer! He is becoming a man of integrity who knows what God wants him to do. As a representative of Jesus Christ and his local church, the Key Man must be willing to grasp and to impart direction for the men of his church through the vehicles of prayer and teamwork with others. *A Key Man must recognize the need for supportive relationships and be willing to commit himself to other men for support, counsel, exhortation, and encouragement.*

It is critical to seek God's guidance, wisdom, and favor. Spend time in the Scriptures to search and discover God's directives for your ministry challenge. It is important to communicate with your pastor and to receive his support in men's ministry. All effective men's ministries should have the support of their pastor(s).

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Serving At The Conference Ministry

To the best of their ability, we require Key Men to both attend and work a limited number of hours at the regional conferences. This requirement is only for those Key Men who are located in the area of these gatherings. Prior to the conference, all Key Men who have pre-registered for a conference will be notified of any existing needs before, during, and after the conference. As long as the Lord continues to use the conference ministry as a means of changing men's hearts, it is important for the network of Promise Keepers Field Ministry to maintain an attitude of serving. With this servant heart, we will effectively set up, clean up,

requests, but motivates and informs them about a variety of pressing men's issues from a biblical perspective.

In addition to the booklets *Focusing Your Men's Ministry* and *Brothers! Calling Men Into Vital Relationships*, Promise Keepers offers additional books, study guides, and brochures.

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Key Man Hotline

Receive briefings (updated twice each month) from the National office by calling (303)456-7275. These recorded messages will keep you informed on issues that are relevant to your Key Man ministry.

Responsibility

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Starting a Men's Ministry or Serving an Existing Men's Ministry

(These are suggested progressive steps that can lead to an effective men's ministry.)

1. We acknowledge the authority of the pastor. Therefore, we request the pastor's signature on the Response Form* showing the pastor's recommendation and approval of the Key Man's connection with the men's ministry of his local church and his association with Promise Keepers.
2. All effective men's ministries have a core group of men who share a common desire to serve the men in their church and community. Find men within your church who have a similar heart and begin praying together. Laying a foundation of prayer allows God to build relationships, a lasting ministry, and develops a climate for discerning God's direction for a group of men.
3. Developing effective men's ministry requires patience and time. Plan on meeting as a core group for at least 3 months (on a weekly basis) in order to develop trusting relationships and a purposeful mission. This core group of men will function by teaching, organizing, and serving, and will become a model for what you eventually ask other men to replicate.
4. In cooperation with the church staff, develop a one or two-year strategy that includes programs, training, goals, etc.
5. Launch your men's ministry with an event, such as a weekend retreat or a cookout. Such events are non-threatening inroads for men who would otherwise not attend.
6. Effective men's ministries are built upon a small-group infrastructure, beginning with the core group's commitment to support, pray for, and encourage one another. Often, the men in the core group are potential small group leaders; and with proper training and the pastor's approval, they can eventually start a men's small group of their own.

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Focusing Your Men's Ministry

We are continually researching the progress of men's ministry. The following are examples or models that have been extracted from the Promise Keeper booklet *Focusing Your Men's Ministry*, which can help spark the creativity of the Key Man's efforts.

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The Funnel Model

National Conferences

Promise Keepers is committed to hosting regional men's conferences in the 1990's. These conferences are for the primary purpose of honoring Jesus Christ, acting as a catalyst to ignite, equip, and unify men of diverse racial and denominational backgrounds. They are designed to encourage life-changing decisions and to complement a church's ministry to men. Recruiting men to come to these gatherings is an excellent vehicle for building momentum in your church and for initiating or strengthening your men's ministry. The conferences can be used as a retreat for your men's ministry or as an evangelistic outreach in your community.

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Training for the Key Man

If the Key Man is going to become a successful catalyst in providing leadership for the men's ministry of his church, he must be trained. Enthusiasm and desire without knowledge and direction is chaos. Training will provide insights and discovery into the basic principles that guide all effective men's ministries and the pitfalls that hinder them. The primary goal of an effective men's ministry is to help men transfer biblical truth into action by providing the necessary and unique environments for them to grow, change, make commitments, and keep their promises. Areas of training include principles that define the unique male context, reconciliation, effective men's ministry, and vital small-group relationships. Because training for the Key Man is vital to the success of the Key Man's ministry, Promise Keepers is committed to providing these training opportunities in many sites across the United States. The Key Man is required to attend this training when it is offered in his area. Key Man training is available through Promise Keepers State and National offices.

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Leadership Seminars

In addition to the larger men's conferences, we organize Men's Ministry Leadership Seminars for the training of pastors, lay leaders, and men's small-group leaders for developing effective men's ministry. These seminars are primarily scheduled in regions that have been targeted as potential conference sites. We will notify Key Men about possible seminars in their area.

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Audio/Video Productions

Churches may choose to use audio or video tapes of Promise Keepers' events for personal study or for men's group programming. Some of the most gifted teachers and leaders in men's ministry address current issues relevant to men.

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Key Man Newsletter

The Key Man newsletter is published six times each year to provide Key Men and Ambassadors updates and helps for their ministries. Articles regarding Promise Keepers' mission and core values, encouragement, suggestions, and news on Promise Keepers' development are included. Important materials, resources, and training opportunities are highlighted.

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Men of Action Newsletter

This publication not only updates our constituents about upcoming gatherings, current needs, and prayer

- [Mailing Lists](#)
- [Promise Keepers' Worship Songs and Sheet Music](#)

Encouragement to the Key Man

- [Encouragement](#)

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Why Are Point Men Now Called Key Men?

As of January 1, approximately 10,000 Point Men nationwide will be known as "Key Men." The change was made for two reasons: both to honor and to avoid potential confusion with another national "Point Man" ministry to husbands and fathers, and to lend new emphasis to Promise Keepers' team-oriented approach to men's ministry. Key Men will continue to be leaders appointed by their pastor and charged with establishing men's ministry in their church; they will continue to facilitate an environment where men grow in their relationship to Christ and to one another, but now they will be part of a team of "key" players.

"It's not healthy when a ministry rises or falls on the basis of one man, or grinds to a halt when he's away on business," explains Ken Moldenhauer, Assistant Manager for the National Office of Key Man and Ambassador Ministries. "With the name change to Key Man, we're saying men's ministry is not one man, but team leadership. With several key men involved, the health and longevity of the group is enhanced."

Accompanying this change is a heightened challenge to more than 3,000 Ambassadors stationed across the country, whose charge will be to team with and equip Key Men to better serve the local church. "We want Ambassadors to be in close relationship with Key Men in developing men's ministry," explains Moldenhauer. "This partnering should provide for greater resources and encouragement for Key Men, especially those who find themselves involved for the first time."

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Field Ministry Strategy

We intend to consistently communicate with pastors and leaders in the local churches within a structure that encourages spiritual growth, continuity, and action among their men. In order to effectively serve, we have established a volunteer position known as the Key Man.

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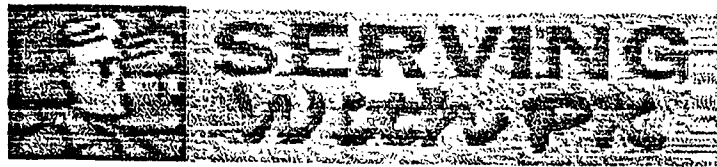
Position

The Key Man is, with the approval of his pastor, the critical link between the men's ministry of his church and Promise Keepers. He should be a lay leader or a staff pastor. He serves at the pleasure of his pastor and local church. The Key Man exists to voluntarily serve in two capacities within the Field Ministry.

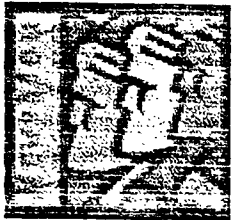
1. Under the direction and authority of his pastor, he accepts a vital leadership role to effectively initiate and/or offer direction, organization, and support to the men's ministry of his church.
2. He is a conduit for resources including materials, regional conferences, and training seminars provided by Promise Keepers and other contributing men's ministries.

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Resources Available to the Key Man



Using My Leadership Skills: The Key Man



Key Man Hotline: (303) 964-7590

- Why Are Point Men Now Called Key Men
- Field Ministry Strategy
- Position

Resources Available to the Key Man

- National Conferences
- Training for the Key Man
- Leadership Seminars
- Audio/Video Productions
- Key Man Newsletter
- Men of Action Newsletter
- Key Man Hotline

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- Focusing Your Men's Ministry
- The Funnel Model
- Special Events
- Equipping Seminars
- Congregational Gatherings
- Small Groups
- Challenge/Requirements
- Serving At The Conference Ministry
- Reconciliation
- Important

Legal Policy and Procedures

- Trademarks
- Resource Reproductions

1. A Promise Keeper is committed to honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and obedience to God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. A Promise Keeper is committed to pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.
3. A Promise Keeper is committed to practicing spiritual, moral, ethical, and sexual purity.
4. A Promise Keeper is committed to building strong marriages and families through love, protection and biblical values.
5. A Promise Keeper is committed to supporting the mission of his church by honoring and praying for his pastor, and by actively giving his time and resources.
6. A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.
7. A Promise Keeper is committed to influencing his world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (see Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission (see Matthew 28:19-20).

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STATEMENT ON *The Masculine Journey*

Several passages in *The Masculine Journey* by Robert Hicks (1993, NavPress) could be understood in more than one way. Some of the content of the book has unfortunately lent itself to a wide range of interpretations and responses involving theological issues which Promise Keepers does not feel called to resolve. These are controversies which neither Promise Keepers nor the author could have foreseen, and which have proven to be a distraction from the focus of our ministry. Therefore, Promise Keepers has discontinued marketing and distributing *The Masculine Journey*.

>>>> At the same time, we believe Mr. Hicks's core theology is consistent with orthodox evangelical Christianity, and that *The Masculine Journey* was a forthright attempt on his part to deal with male issues from a biblical context. The theological foundation for the ministry of Promise Keepers is found in our Statement of Faith. Our Mission Statement and "Seven Promises" serve as our guiding objectives. All three documents are attached. Other resources produced by Promise Keepers include Christian music cassettes and CD's, teaching video tapes, and books and Bible studies, including: *The Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper* (Focus on the Family Publishing, 1994), *The Power of a Promise Kept* (Focus on the Family, 1995), *Go the Distance* (Focus on the Family, 1996), *Strategies for a Successful Marriage* by E. Glenn Wagner, Ph.D. (NavPress, 1994), *What God Does When Men Pray* by William Peel (NavPress, 1993), *Daily Disciplines for the Christian Man* by Dr. Bob Beltz (NavPress, 1993), and others. It is our hope and prayer that Promise Keepers resources will continue to help men become promise keepers in the context of their local church.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe that there is one God eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
2. We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man and that it is verbally inspired, authoritative, and without error in the original manuscripts.
3. We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, death on the cross to provide for our redemption, bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, present ministry of intercession for us, and His return to earth in power and glory.
4. We believe in the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit, that He performs the miracle of the new birth in an unbeliever and indwells believers, enabling them to live a godly life.
5. We believe that man was created in the image of God, but because of sin, was alienated from God. Only through faith, trusting in Christ alone for salvation which was made possible by His death and resurrection, can that alienation be removed.

MISSION STATEMENT

Promise Keepers is a Christ-centered ministry dedicated to uniting men through vital relationships to become godly influences in their world.

THE SEVEN PROMISES OF A PROMISE KEEPER



What does PK believe about homosexuality?

Promise Keepers shares the same historic stance taken by Evangelicals and Catholics: that sex is a good gift from God to be enjoyed in the context of heterosexual marriage. We believe that the Bible clearly teaches that homosexuality violates God's creative design for a husband and a wife and that it is a sin (Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Because we have experienced the love of Christ, we desire to share His love with all men. While we have clear convictions regarding the issue of homosexuality, we invite homosexuals to be recipients of God's mercy, grace, and forgiveness, available to everyone through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We therefore support their being included and welcomed in all our events.

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What is the role of the Seven Promises in the life of a Christian?

The Seven Promises are meant to be a guide to men who want to pursue godliness. The Seven Promises are not man-made rules but are each taken from biblical instruction on spiritual growth. The Seven Promises were formed as a response to the many men who were writing to us, asking how they could grow as Christians. These men had a clear desire to become like Jesus; however, it seemed that there was a vacuum of clear moral teaching in our society. After much prayer and deliberation, the leadership of Promise Keepers developed the Seven Promises as a way to help men focus on specific areas of concern for Christian men. We believe that the Seven Promises are *commitments to grow*, rather than a set of rules to be followed.

However, making a commitment to these promises should not be seen as a sure-fire way to achieve godliness. True change only happens as men recognize their need for the righteousness of Jesus. Only by depending upon the power of Him who began a good work in us (Philippians 1:6) can anyone achieve even a measure of holiness. The process of change can only come from the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit in a mans heart.

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Is Promise Keepers associated with the Christian Coalition or any other groups from the "religious right?"

Promise Keepers has no affiliation with the Christian Coalition. Promise Keepers is not politically motivated in any way. God has called us to one mission --- the distinct ministry of uniting men to become godly influences in their world. It is exciting to know that Christian men, from across the political spectrum, have become involved in the ministry of Promise Keepers.

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Nevertheless, one of the primary goals of the conference is to deepen the commitment of men to respect and honor women.

THE CRITICAL EVENT: Promise Keepers evaluates its ministry by the impact of a man keeping his promises to God and others, in the context of the local church. Promise Keepers requires no dues and is not a membership-driven organization.

Information on Men's Ministry and Leadership Seminars.

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City	Attended
Georgia Dome (Atlanta)	64,500
The Pavilion (Boise)	8,397
Charlotte Motor Speedway (Charlotte)	41,438
Soldier Field (Chicago)	68,972
Texas Stadium (Dallas)	62,800
Mile High Stadium (Denver)	51,529
Pontiac Silverdome (Detroit)	70,490
Autzen Stadium (Eugene)	33,376
RCA Dome (Indianapolis)	60,420
Jacksonville Municipal Stadium (Jacksonville)	54,011
Arrowhead Stadium (Kansas City)	69,955
Los Angeles Coliseum (Los Angeles)	48,871
Liberty Bowl (Memphis)	52,436
HHH Metrodome (Minneapolis)	57,770
Superdome (New Orleans)	33,026
Shea Stadium (New York)	34,600
Oakland Coliseum (Oakland)	49,200
Three Rivers Stadium (Pittsburgh)	44,309
Jack Murphy Stadium (San Diego)	48,053
Kingdome (Seattle, WA)	58,877
Carrier Dome (Syracuse)	38,153
RFK Stadium (Washington, D.C.)	47,351
Total Attendance	1,098,534

An unprecedented 39,024 clergymen gathered at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, GA on February 1996. Promise Keepers also operates locally through 38 state offices in Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Washington, D.C.. International affiliations exist in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

In 1997: Promise Keepers seeks to gather a multitude of men known as *Stand in the Gap: A Sacred Assembly of Men* on the Mall in Washington, D.C. for worship, prayer and other spiritual, non-political purposes. Up to 22 stadium conferences are planned throughout the United States for 1997. Information on locations and dates will be available on January 25, 1997.

STAFF AND BUDGET GROWTH:

at the end of 1993--22 full-time staff, \$4 million
 end of 1994--150 staff, \$26 million
 end of 1995--300 staff, \$64 million
 end of 1996 - 400 staff, \$97 million
 so far in 1997 - 437 staff, \$107 million

WHY IS THE MESSAGE FOR MEN? Promise Keepers' specific calling to minister to men has helped to fill a void in Christian resources. In addition to developing and distributing books, videos, Bible study guides and other materials year-round, conferences and seminars are designed to address specific men's issues.



Fact Sheet

MISSION STATEMENT: Promise Keepers is a Christ-centered ministry dedicated to uniting men through vital relationships to become godly influences in their world.

HOW WE STARTED: On March 20, 1990 Bill McCartney (at the time, University of Colorado Head Football Coach) and his friend Dave Wardell, Ph.D. were on a three-hour car ride to a Fellowship of Christian Athletes meeting in Pueblo, CO, when the idea of filling a stadium with Christian men first came up. Later in 1990, seventy-two men began to pray and fast about the concept of thousands of men coming together for the purpose of Christian discipleship.

BUILDING A NETWORK TO SERVE THE LOCAL CHURCH : Promise Keepers "Key Men" are appointed by local church pastors to serve that church's men's ministry and represent those needs to Promise Keepers. "Ambassadors" are recruited to introduce Promise Keepers to clergy and Key Men in specific communities, and supply churches with Promise Keepers resources for the development of men's ministry.

1992-- 230 "Key Men/Ambassadors" were active,
1993-- 1,320 "Key Men/Ambassadors" were active,
1994-- 4,919 "Key Men/Ambassadors" were active,
1995--13,842 "Key Men/Ambassadors" were active,
1996--19,590 "Key Men/Ambassadors" were active.

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION: Promise Keepers Men's Conferences serve as a catalyst, challenging men to live a life of Christian integrity, and equipping them with practical teaching and tools for improved relationships with God, their families, other Christians, and their communities.

July 27, 1991-- 4,200 men met at the Univ. of Colorado Events Center (basketball arena);
July 24-25, 1992--22,000 men met at CU's Folsom Stadium;
July 30-31, 1993--50,000 filled Folsom Stadium to capacity;

1994: Seven sites nationwide totaling 278,600 men:

Anaheim Stadium, (CA); Hawks Memorial Stadium, (ID); Hoosier Dome, (IN); Univ. of N. Texas Fouts Field, (Denton); Portland Civic Stadium (OR); Univ. of Colo. Folsom Stadium, (Boulder); Texas Stadium, (Irving).

1995: 13 stadium events reached 727,342 men:

Silverdome, (Pontiac, MI); Los Angeles Coliseum (CA); The Pavilion, (Boise, ID); RFK Stadium, (Washington, DC); Astrodome, (Houston, TX); Mile High Stadium, (Denver, CO); RCA Dome, (Indianapolis, IN); Georgia Dome, (Atlanta, GA); Kingdome, (Seattle, WA); HHH Metrodome, (Minneapolis, MN); ThunderDome, (St. Petersburg, FL); Oakland Coliseum, (CA); Texas Stadium, (Irving/Dallas, TX).

1996: 22 stadium events reached 1,098,534 men:

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