

Walking Through Open Doors

by Kent Humphreys

Four Words for Today

- Kingdom
- Relationships
- Community
- Transformation

Question:

- How do we take His Kingdom to where we live, work, and play?
 - How do we *develop relationships, form community*, and see our neighborhoods and workplaces and cities *transformed by Jesus Christ* who lives in our hearts?

Colossians 4:2-6 (NASU)

- Devote yourselves to prayer...
- That God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ
- Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity...
- So that you will know how you should respond to each person

Prayer

- Make a list of twelve people in your workplace, neighborhood, or school
- Begin to pray for them by name on a regular basis
- Ask God to make you sensitive to them and to use you as He is working in their lives.

You Become a Pastor in your Workplace

Co-Worker/ Contacts

Believers

Need

Resource

Action/ Date

Non-Believers

Unsure

Open Doors of Crises

- Birth of a new baby
- Death of a loved one
- Major illness
- Marriage problems
- Children issues
- Financial difficulties
- Loss of job

Opportunities to Minister to Others

- Observe
- Identify Needs
- Be Sensitive
- Listen
- Be Available
- Serve
- Care
- Encourage
- Love
- Communicate

Examples of Responding

- I have been praying for Joe for months
- I hear that Joe's mother has died (crisis)
- I know that he is going through the normal grieving process (observation)
- I send Joe a card with a personal note and continue to pray (sensitivity)
- I listen to Joe over a coffee break about what he is doing to settle her affairs

Examples of Responding

- I ask Joe to go to a basketball game with me during the next few weeks (availability)
- I offer to help Joe go to pick up some furniture from his mom's home that he is selling (servitude)
- I send him a booklet of scripture (caring)
- I drop him a note to let him know that I am still praying for him months later (encouragement)

Example of Responding

- I get a call from Joe late one night about his teenager who is in trouble. I listen, trying to encourage and counsel him. I am there for him. (show love)
- Finally, I ask Joe if we can read the scriptures together. Eventually, I ask if he would like to invite Jesus into his life.

Ministry in the Workplace

- Their Need:
 - Relationships
 - To be loved by their co-workers

- Our Objective:
 - To communicate the love of Jesus Christ

Make Your Own List

- List the names of your co-workers, neighbors, or family members
- Put down what problem(s) they are facing at this time
- Make a list of possible tools that you can use to minister to each person individually

Review the Process

- Pray for those in your sphere of influence
- Watch for the doors that God is opening
- Be sensitive to each opportunity to minister to the person
- Respond to their interest as you build trust in the relationship

This Type of Ministry

- Kingdom focused, not church or religious
- Based on relationship
- It is intentional about what we do
- We have to build bridges with Joe through our workplace connection *before* the crises in his life
- We are extending the walls of the church out into our natural sphere of influence

Think Strategically

- How can you serve a family with a new baby?
- How can you care for a co-worker or neighbor facing surgery?
- What can you do with a friend who is facing marital difficulties?
- What about someone who is having financial problems?

Think from a Servant's Perspective

- How can you show your concern when a friend mentions having discipline problems with a child?
- How would you help a parent who has a teen with a drinking or drug problem?
- How would you handle a co-worker who has a spouse that has lost their job?

Taking Christ to Your Workplace

- Do NOT take religion to work – take Christ!
- Lift up the flag but do not be offensive
- Be a light in a world of darkness

Taking Christ to Your Workplace, cont.

- Offer to pray for co-workers with problems
- Write it down and check on them later
- Ask about their families
- Keep a supply of Bibles and booklets to give out in the right situation
- A hand-written card is a sign of caring
- Say 'thank you'!
- Go out to lunch and talk as you travel together

Remember!

- Always pray first; preparing your heart and theirs
- Look for where God is at work in the lives of others; watch for that open door
- Be patient – this is a process, not an event
- As you walk through that open door, identify which opportunity that you need to address first

Remember!, cont.

- Respond carefully and with sensitivity; this person is NOT a project but a relationship that God has brought into your life for His purposes.
- They want to know that you care for them before they will listen to what you have to say to them.
- They will look for examples of your character and integrity. They want to know if it really works in your life before they will buy into what you “preach” to others.
- It is “caught”, not “taught”; they will watch you closely. This takes TIME!

Biblical Examples

- Jesus with Matthew and tax collectors
- Jesus with Zacchaeus in his house
- Had centurion go back to the army
- Had the demoniac stay in his community
- Our greatest influence will be with those that we are with everyday

Focus on Your Friends that Need Christ

- This type of evangelism and discipleship takes places in our sphere of influence and is NOT about activities but about relationships
- Pray...Pray...Pray
- Read the Gospels and look at the example of Jesus Christ loving and serving people

Examples of Booklets

- Be prepared; build your tool box
 - American Bible Society

Stories

- Children's Bible story books / books on parenting teenagers and finances
- The Message Bible
- The Spanish Bible
- The One-Year Bible
- Give up your parking place and park at the back

Stories

- Cards to those who are sick, hospital visits, Grief Kits (for 12 months of care)
- Birthday cards – signed with notes
- Monthly letter, “My Heart to Yours”
- Christmas letter to all employees, customers, and vendors
- Cards to Jewish competitors

Stories

- Christmas dinners
- Free books
- Summer picnics for the entire family
- Marriage retreats
- Saying THANK YOU in person, by card, by phone, by email, by awards of every kind

Stories

- Pizza lunches on values for new employees
- Monthly cookouts in the summer
- Company chaplains
- Mother's Day for the entire week
- Take your family to the movies, with a video and popcorn (Christmas gift)

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Go Walk Through Some Open Doors!