

Connecting the Church to YOUR Community

The Miraculous Power
Of Going and Sending

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01

**Connecting The
Church to Your
Community**

One of the most powerful ways to connect your church with your community is through service. That means stepping outside the walls of your church and into the neighborhoods around you.

Several years ago, we ran an annual event called Rock-A-Block. We'd throw a block party in a struggling neighborhood, giving away everything from iPads to teddy bears, bikes, and floor fans. We'd provide food, lots of food really good food. We provided great music, and, toward the end, we'd have a lil' "come-to-JESUS" moment.

We always included an invite to the local politicians, they'd show up to greet THEIR community.

Then I'd preach for about five minutes and invite everyone to church.

Was it exhausting? Oh, absolutely. But did it connect us to our city? Without a doubt.

You don't have to have a Rock-A-Block, but if you will prayerfully consider, the Lord will reveal to you something that YOU & your church can do.

Create something that makes a real impact where you live.

Serve first, serve without expectancy of return...

The most famous guy in all of HIStory said "Give and it will be given unto you." – if you'll try it you'll see that it'll never go un-rewarded.

Then one of His followers said... his name rhymed with Saul... yeah, that guy... he said

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; ...". Romans 15:1-3 (kjb)

The thing is, we somehow, forget that once we received the Spirit of God, we forget how strong we are...

I'm telling you ... YOU are stronger than you know...

There is enough strength in you, in the smallest few of you, to conquer your entire city, you can do this...

You have to... you must... you absolutely can connect your church to your community.

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02

**Give Honor to
Whom Honor Is
Due**

It's easy to get caught up in honoring those within your church, but what about those leading your city?

We made it a practice to invite city leaders—Congressmen, Fire Chiefs, Police Chiefs, even the Mayor—to attend our Sunday morning services. We'd let them say a few words to their people and then present them with a plaque and a certificate of appreciation for their service.

Sounds small, right?

But people REMEMBER when THEY are honored.

We invited the Police Chief to a Sunday morning service, he got up and said a few words... and we gave him a plaque. A plaque my secretary printed up and put a cheap lil' plastic frame.

Years later, when our police chief retired after 40 years of service, I was asked to open and close the ceremony with a few words and a prayer.

Among all his awards and recognitions, in the middle of a table full of very honorable memorabilia, awards for service, medals earned and diplomas worked for, sat that little two-dollar frame with a certificate our church had given him.

When I did his funeral, his children came up to tell me how much that moment had meant to their dad.

It happened again at our local fire station. I walked in, and there, hanging on the wall, was the same cheap certificate we had given the fire chief.

Simple acts of appreciation can build bridges like you never imagined.



03

**Join Community
Efforts Like the
Chamber of
Commerce**

You'd be surprised at how many doors open when you step into spaces outside the church world. I was asked to serve as a board member on our local Chamber of Commerce, and to be honest, I was shocked and humbled by the invitation.

But soon I realized that the leadership skills I had gained from ministry conferences and classes were exactly what these business leaders needed.

None of them were billionaire tycoons, or geniuses... actually, they're just normal hard working Americans that wanted to contribute to their community...


they're just small business owners who've never had access to the kind of leadership training that pastors get through ministry conferences, books, and hands-on experience.

If you go in with a humble heart and a desire to serve, you'll be amazed at the influence you can have.

Business leaders in your city NEED what you already know.



You just have to believe in yourself enough to know that you have WAY more to offer than you think you do.



04

**How to Connect
The Church
to Your Community**

Your church is more than a Sunday morning gathering.

It should, and it CAN be, a vital part of your city's heartbeat.

Preach community connection to your congregation.

Get your people involved in school programs like the PTA or PTO... and/or local efforts.



Stop hoarding the giftedness of your members – cut them loose to serve beyond your walls.

Too many pastors believe the only way to serve outsiders is by inviting them inside.

But what if we flipped that script?

What if we served people where they are instead of expecting them to come to us?

Sure, JESUS called us to serve the poor.

But there's also a mission field in boardrooms, in town halls, and on Chamber of Commerce panels.

If you know the leaders in your denomination but don't know the leaders in your city, there's an imbalance in your calling. That can be a very dangerous precedent. We are not here to build bigger better religious organizations...

Your calling is to reach the City... the community... that God has called you to.

Sure you believe in GOD... but God believes in YOU ... He will be there with you when you step out of the four walls of your box... when you step into your community with a real heart to serve.

Sure You believe in GOD ...

but God is calling you to believe in His people... the people in His church...

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05

**The Unexpected
Benefits of
Community
Involvement**



You never know what kind of favor might come from these connections.

When our church's snowplow broke, the fire department came and plowed out our parking lot.

When our team leader messed up fueling our Sunday school bus, the DPW (Department of Public Works) came and volunteered to baile us out.

Our mayor once told me, "Everyone in this city knows about your church. Your church represents what true Christianity looks like."

City leaders have started attending our Bible studies – some of whom never would have never stepped foot in our church before.

And okay, fine... I may have been pulled over for speeding a few times – but knowing the officer personally does have its perks.

(NOT saying that's why you should get involved, but hey, it happens. Ha!)

These relationships go beyond favors, though.

They turn city officials into allies. They create real, lasting friendships.

There are good people out there that are just waiting for YOU to take the 1st step.

You can do this & Jesus will walk with you when you do.

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06

**A Couple of
My Favorite
Stories...**

Growing up, my dad used to tell me stories about my grandfather's "civic prominence." Dad always seemed a lil' impressed that the mayor would stop by his fathers business before elections, seeking his counsel.

That always seemed like a big deal to me.

Today, city leaders are just a phone call away for us – because I intentionally built those relationships.

One day, our mayor reached out and suggested I connect with a pastor across town who had just lost his church building through a really ugly banking scandal. Nothing our local pastor had done wrong, they had paid their bills, had growing church, bible collage and bank account.

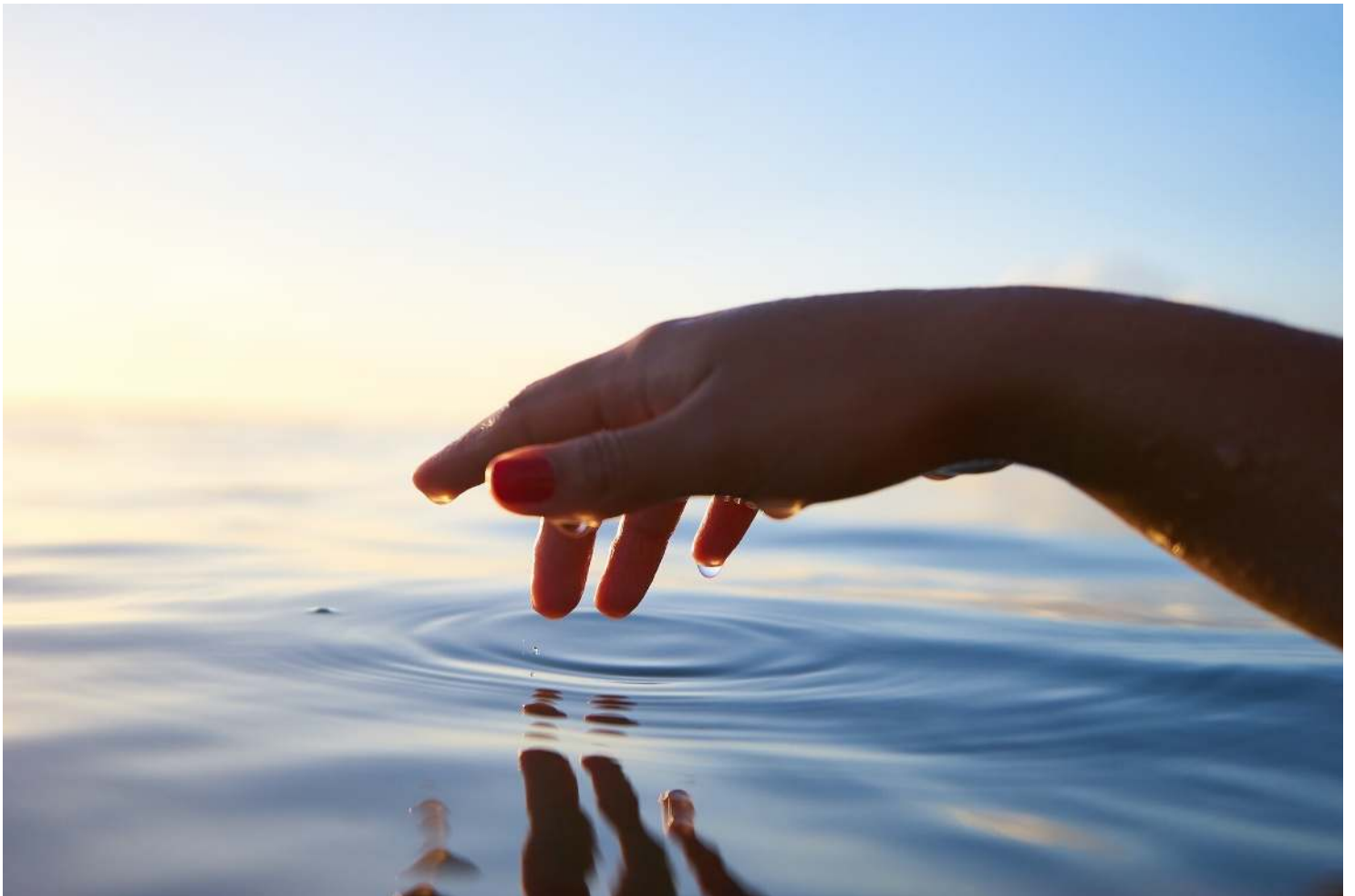
The pastor was pretty "down" according to the Mayor. He became a very good friend, (he had to move his whole operation out of town) but later convinced me to get my masters degree through His Bible college.

The mayor had no idea that a lot of pastors—even in the same city—rarely connect.

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He didn't know that competing lawyers and rival bar owners are more likely to be friends than pastors of different denominations.

But maybe he saw something, it might have even been because of the friendship we had forged, he trusted that I could befriend a guy that was hurting... I'm so glad he reached out and made a great connection for me...



07

**Call to Action:
Get Involved in
YOUR City**

For the sake of the Kingdom of GOD... with as badly as people need to hear the message YOU are so passionate about ...

DON'T be afraid to take the first step.

Go to city meetings.

Honor local leaders.

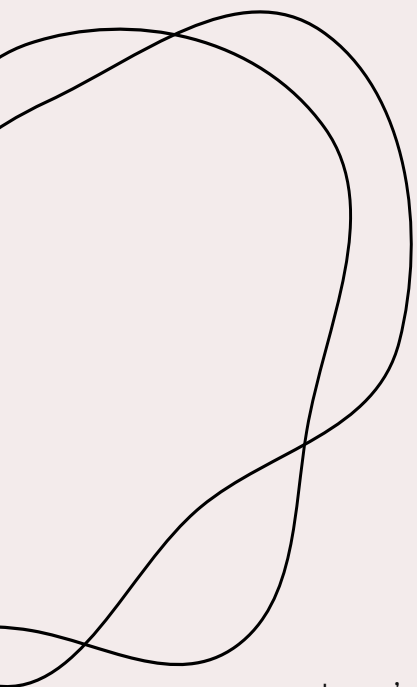
Join civic groups.

Serve beyond your church walls.

Your community needs you.

The question is... will you show up?

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About the Author

steve rogers doesn't like his name spelled with caps.

A devoted follower of Jesus.

Married to a remarkable woman named Cindy.

Father of two and a father-in-law to two, far-far to 4.

As a pastor of a wonderful church in Greenfield, Wi, he'd usually say, "don't judge the church by the pastor – the church is really cool – even though the pastor is a lil' nerdy."

Having a masters degree in Biblical Studies has only stirred a love to study.

steve also volunteers as the chaplain to the local police and fire departments and serves on the planning commission as well as the state of Wisconsin's DOJ.

What steve loves the most is God, family, reading, the ocean, the woods and golf and a good conversation with... well... ... just about anyone.

