

LESSONS FROM THE PROPHETS: ONE WAY COMMUNICATIONS

Challenge:

Shepherds get discouraged when they don't get any response from members, despite repeated attempts to make contact or keep in touch.

Response:

Maintain effort and don't lose heart by drawing from the experience of the Old Testament prophets who often faced being ignored, ridiculed or even persecuted by the people the Lord called them to serve.

Strategy:

Learn from the prophets to excel in "one way communication" so the message goes out even if it is not responded to by your members.

THE MODEL:

Jeremiah 7:27

*"So you shall speak all these words to them,
but they will not listen to you.
You shall call to them, but they will not answer you.*

Jeremiah gives us an example of being faithful to our calling and to delivering God's message. We can only do our part in obedience, but we do not control the response or outcome.

Why don't people respond?

1. They are not familiar with what a shepherd does and how to respond.
2. They are shy or private people.
3. They are new to Covenant and not ready to engage.
4. They already have a strong support network, so they don't see the need for a shepherd.

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How do you create connection opportunities with one-way communication?

1. Provide information on what is going on at Covenant such as a new series or important church news.
2. Recognize occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries, including sad occasions, that mean a lot to people.
3. Reach out with a “non-occasion” note, text or email that tells them you are thinking of them.
4. Connect with them on social media.

The Benefits of One-Way Communication

1. It encourages us to pray for our members
2. It helps to strengthen our shepherding teams as we share our concerns for people and pray in community.
3. It sharpens our focus on why we are shepherds.

Conclusions

Learn the lessons from the prophets, and in so doing, honor the Great Shepherd by being faithful to your call.

Galatians 6:9

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

Ezekiel 2:5

I will send you to them. Whether they hear or refuse to listen they will know a prophet [shepherd] has been among them.