
IRRESISTIBLE INVITATIONS

Session Description

We've heard it – and many of us have pushed it – from the pulpit for years: the number one way to get an un-churched or never-churched person to come to church is through a personal invitation. But instead we've come to rely solely on our websites and mass marketing and, worse yet, our yellow pages and newspaper ads. In this episode Drs. Kris and Bill provide a few invitations that have proven to be irresistible as well as some techniques that will make it hard for your congregation to say, "I can't" when it comes to extending those invitations.

Session Outline

Issues

- The key excuse people use to not invite: "Everyone I know is already a Christian"
- The five key reasons why people do not invite others to come to church with them:
 1. They have no personal connections outside the church
 2. They have no personal connections inside the church
 3. They are uncomfortable with some aspect of their church (conflict, programming, the worship service, the messages, non-existent or inappropriate hospitality, etc.)
 4. They are neither inspired nor invited to invite others
 5. They don't know how

Considerations:

- Everybody can invite somebody
- Everybody has someone they can invite (contrary to popular opinion)
- Every congregation has a responsibility to make the congregation conducive to invitations
- Every congregation has a responsibility to provide opportunities for irresponsible invitations
- Ever leader has the responsibility to model irresponsible inviting

Irresistible Invitation Facts

- Irresistible invitations have everything to do with the invitee, not the church
- Irresistible invitations are compelling
- Irresistible invitations are in response to the invitee's social or situational "need"
- Irresistible invitations are pressure-free
- Irresistible invitations are not one-shot, end-all-be-all, once-in-a-lifetime deals
- Irresistible invitations lead to hand-offs to more irresistible invitations

- Irresistible invitations connect people with people and to Jesus

How to Make an Irresistible Invitation

1. Know your “neighbor” – their likes, needs, etc.
2. Know your church – what it’s offering that your neighbors might want to connect with
3. Invite strategically: Only invite your “neighbor” to an event they’re likely to want to come to

Some Irresistible Invitations

- Fun
 - Easter Egg Hunt for, or at least including, adults
 - Norman Rockwell opportunities: caroling, hayrides, swimming at the lake or creek
 - Teddy Bear Picnic with the kids
 - Team snowball fights (encourage each team to build a fortress or wall)
 - Block Party
- Situational Responses
 - *Financial Peace University, Bible Money Matters, etc.*
 - Groups and support teams for those caught in the trap of payday loans
 - Groups for folks who are in recovery (has to be extended by a fellow recovering addict)
 - Groups for moms, dads, emptynesters
 - Words that Work: “*My church won’t take away all the hurt/pain/worry, but I’ve found it helps and supports me when I’m hurting/worrying/etc.*”
- For Out-there and Armchair Athletes
 - Church sports team
 - Church ski trip
 - Championship game party held at the home of a small group member
 - 3-day camping/hunting trip
- For Those who Want to Help Others
 - ½ day of making emergency packs
 - Day of responding to a nearby emergency need (sandbagging, clean-up or home repair)
 - Serving dinner with your church at a local shelter
 - Mission Trips
 - Don’t Forget: *the dirtier the hands, the better*

Inspiring Invitational Invitations:

- Teach, don’t preach
- Build invitational opportunities into your church calendar – at least one per quarter
- Be excited about upcoming events and invitational opportunities
- Put invitational materials into the hands of your congregation: cards with upcoming sermon series, Easter eggs/Candy canes/Sparklers
- Use the Five Most Wanted process

- Share testimonies of successful invitations, particularly when an invitee is baptized and/or joins the congregation
- Follow-up with folks of different ages and stages of life, asking them what tools you can offer them ... and offer to pray with them for someone/s they can invite

Discussion Questions

1. What irresistible opportunities are on your church's calendar for the next six months?
2. How will you inspire your congregation to extend those invitations?
3. How will you and equip your congregation to extend those invitations?
4. Who will you invite? How? When will you share that with your leadership? Your congregation?
5. What do you need to do next and by when?
6. Who will hold you accountable?