



7 Practices of Effective Ministry

By Andy Stanley, Reggie Joiner & Lane Jones

The authors of “7 Practices of Effective Ministry” lay out a clear strategic checklist to help people lead effectively.

1. “Clarify the Win.” (pg. 10) The only way that we will ever succeed in ministry is if we first have a clear destination. Too many ministries never do this and as a result they are very busy but not effective because their energies are spread too thin. This must be done not only on an organizational or church level, but also at a program level. Figuring out the win also gives excitement as we move toward our goal.

2. “Think Steps, Not Programs.” (pg. 10) Programs are intended to not simply be an event, but are to move people from where they are to where they need to be. To do this we must learn to ask: “Where do we want our people to be? What do we want them to become? Is our programming designed to take them there?” (pg. 10)

3. “Narrow the Focus.” (pg. 10) Without focus a ministry ends up doing a lot of things poorly. “Focus is the key to achieving excellence and making an impact” (pg. 10). Ministries should try to narrow down their focus to one or two things so that they can invest the time and energy into doing those things well. It is important to find the area that we are most gifted rather than our areas of weakness if we desire to be effective. “Focus is why a river has more force than a swamp” (pg. 114).

4. “Teach Less for More.” (pg. 10) So many of the important things we say get lost in a sea of unimportant words. If we want to be effective in our communication, we need to say less. Figure out what it is we want people to understand, and say only what we want to communicate.

5. “Listen to Outsiders.” (pg. 11) If we want to reach unsaved people who are outside the church, then we need to start listening to them. Too often we set our plans and programs with the insiders in mind. We need to “focus your efforts on those you’re trying to reach, rather than on those you’re trying to keep” (pg. 11).

6. “Replace Yourself.” (pg. 11) Sooner or later we will all move on from our leadership role and someone will take our place. We should begin preparing for that now rather than just waiting for it to arrive.

7. “Work On It.” (pg. 11) In order to stay relevant and effective, we need to carve out time to really think about how we are doing and if anything needs changed. Too often we can become so busy doing things and keeping everything going that we don't take time to improve.