

## Developing an Outreach Mindset by Ken Behnken

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In the March issue of *Entrepreneur* magazine, Jay Levinson commented, “Pure and simple, if people don’t know about you, your products or your services, they can’t buy from you.” How many people know about your church, why you are in their neighborhood, and what you have to offer?

An outreach mindset involves everything you do or say about the mission of your church. It works constantly to build awareness in your community by letting people know who you are and what your church stands for. All activities are tied to your mission statement and members of your congregation are letting everyone they meet know what your mission is. An outreach mindset understands its target group and builds meaningful relationships with those people in your community. Outreach means looking out, not in. It is a mindset that keeps its eyes focused on people, not on buildings or programs. Members and staff are constantly asking, “How can we share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a meaningful way with the people in this community?”

An outreach mindset has a clear identification with why the church exists and what it does. Levinson says, “Define what business you are really in. Are you selling eyeglasses, or are you selling vision? Are you selling drill bits, or are you selling the holes? Are you selling circus tickets, or are you selling thrills?” Why does your church exist? Is it offering outstanding worship, excellent sermons, and great programs or is it offering a relationship with Jesus Christ and His body, the people of the church? Is your outcome for people to feel good on Sunday morning or to help lost souls find salvation in Jesus Christ for eternity?

A church with an outreach mindset is a church with “glass walls.” People can see in and know what is happening when God’s people meet together. It is not a people huddled behind barriers performing their liturgy in secret. It is a people scattered in the community performing their liturgy--service to God and God’s people--in public. In 2 Corinthians 9:12, the Apostle Paul encourages God’s people: “This service (liturgy) that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.”

A church with an outreach mindset knows why it exists, who it is trying to reach, what it has to offer, and how it will make this available. ■

(Quotes are from the article “Mind over Market” Jay Levinson and Al Lautenslager, pp. 67-69, in the March 2005 issue of *Entrepreneur* magazine.)