

Define What's Really Good

When I was studying to be a new church planter, one of the exercises I had to do was make a list of the fifty reasons why someone would want to join the church I was starting. Believe it or not, that's a daunting task. I came up with a dozen things in nothing flat, but the next thirty-eight reasons took some real thinking. I ended up leaving my partial list on the table and every time I walked by it, I'd glance at it and often came up with just one more good reason. In the end, though, I had a list of fifty reasons why someone would want to visit the church.

Of course, the point of the exercise was to be ready with a quick and compelling response to visit when I was in a conversation with an unchurched person who managed to ask me about the church start. By having a bunch of reasons at my fingertips, I could share a reason that was "customized" for the situation.

Since then, I've modified the assignment for church leaders and asked them to make a list of the top twenty-five reasons why someone would want to join their church. That's an easier task, but it generally still takes some soul searching and brain scratching. The reason for the exercise today is similar to the one I just shared, but there are several other ways to use the list, especially with the advent of the many social media platforms.

So, I'm sure you see this coming ... go make your own list of the twenty-five (or more) reasons why someone would want to visit your church. I've listed a couple examples below to get your creative juices flowing.

You'd love our church because:

1. We're the friendliest church in town
2. We're the best-kept secret in town
3. Our pastor makes the Bible come to life
4. We've got great tasting fair-trade coffee ... and you can take it into worship with you
5. I'll be there to make you feel at home!

Once you have your list, you'll be ready to share one or two of them with anyone who asks you about your church. That's a great tool in your church growth tool belt (plus you'll be way ahead of most of your other church members!). But with all that work, there's more you can do with that list that can definitely help grow your church.

Of course, there are many ways to use your top twenty-five list, but perhaps the most effective way in today's internet-savvy climate is to judiciously share your reasons on social media. I say judiciously because the point here isn't to overwhelm. It's not to inform. The point of this exercise is to pique people's interest and you do that by dangling good ideas in front of them regularly and repeatedly. For instance, using the five reasons I used in the example, on Monday you could post "Yesterday reminded me that we must be one of the friendliest churches in town. I saw more smiles on people's faces that if I'd gone to a Hugh Grant RomCom." Then next

Sunday, following the worship service, you could post “I’m always amazed at how well my pastor explains the Bible and makes it come to life. I could almost taste the wedding wine Jesus made for the panic-stricken groom.”

Another idea I came across would take a smidgen more work ... you’d need to come up with thirty reasons why someone would want to come to your church. But if you could do that, November is National Gratitude Month and you could make a post each day to let your friends know why you’re grateful for your church. Again, using the ideas above, you could post on November first, “I’m grateful that my church serves fair trade coffee every week. It’s the little things like that that are so important to me.” Then on the second, you could post, “I’m grateful that I found my church ... it’s not everyday that you discover the best kept secret in town!”

As usual, if others in your congregation are doing this, be sure to Like, Comment, and Share their posts as well. That way your friends get to see that you’re not the only one who loves your church ... and the more people who share how much they appreciate the church, the more likely someone is to think, “Wow, there must be something really great going on there. I should check it out!”