

Advertising the Church

Hebrews 10: 24-25 and 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31 – What really makes going to church important?

Two people sat on chairs next to a flip chart. Vicar walks in to lead this committee meeting, stands by the flip chart, marker pen in hand.

Vicar: OK, let's get the meeting started. As you know, we are here to discuss ways of promoting, or marketing, our church, so let's get brain storming. Let me start by posing the question: Why should I go to church?

Person1: Because you're the vicar?

Vicar: Good! Vic...*(starts writing "Vic" on flip chart whilst saying it out loud. Stops, scribbles over it, realising what he's writing)* ...we need answers that apply to a broader range of people really

Person2: "Come to our church, we serve tea and coffee" *(like reading chirpy advert out loud)*

Vicar: That's not very spiritual, talking about refreshments. It is appealing though.

Person2: In theory. I'd recommend giving the tea a miss.

Person1: Hmm. I stick to squash.

Person2: "Come to our church, we serve coffee and squash, and also the Lord!"

Person1: That's spiritual...

Vicar: Please tell me you have some other ideas?

Person2: Seriously, I've done some research. I searched the internet for church marketing ideas and the advice was that we aim for a relevant and catchy slogan

Vicar: Did they give examples?

Person2: *(Reading from his notebook)* "Don't let worry kill you – let the church help"

(Vicar is writing key words up on flip chart while Person1 is talking, KILL, HYPOCRITES, SINNERS, but blocking chart with his body, then stands back for audience to see it)

"Think the church is full of hypocrites? Join us, you'll fit right in!"

"This church is for sinners only"

Vicar: Somehow this isn't shaping into the positive "sell" I had in mind. Other than help kill people, be hypocritical and sin, what do we do here?

Person1: Sing. I love singing!

(Vicar writes SINGING on flip chart whilst Person 2 sings a very out of tune version of "Shine Jesus Shine" – Pastor and Person 1 exchange looks of physical pain at this outburst)

Person1: "Shine Jesus shine! Fill this land with the Father's glory! Blaze spirit blaze, Set our hearts on fire..."

(There is a pause - Vicar silently crosses through the word SINGING)

Person2: "Praise" sounds better

Vicar: I certainly hope it does (*writing PRAISE on flip chart*)

Person1: I don't think I'm very good at singing

Vicar +

Person2: No! Yes! I mean... (*flustered, don't know what to say*)

Person2: You're very heartfelt

Vicar: Yes! (*relieved at having been given right thing to say*) Heartfelt!

Person1: It's ok, I don't have to be good at singing, because the people in the Worship Group ARE. I can be good at something else...like organising rotas.

Vicar: That's it! (*revelation strikes!*) Whatever you're good at, God's got a job lined up for you in our church. It's where we pool our resources to help one another grow in our faith and introduce new-comers to Jesus.

(Vicar flips to a new page and writes key words on the flip chart again, as each offers an idea – BUILD, OPEN, TOGETHER, TIME, OUT, MORE. Others join in with ideas, speaking slowly. Like they're just thinking of these things)

Person2: We build our church up...

Person1: It's open to all...

Person2: We pray together, so we don't have to worry alone

Person1: It's where we take time out to focus on the Lord and give Him the praise and worship He deserves

Person2: And learn a bit more about God and how He wants us to be as we listen to the sermon

Vicar: Now we're getting somewhere!

Person2: (*standing up and picking up red marker pen*) Though if you want to use an acronym... (*ringing starting letters*) I think we'd better work on it...

(Vicar stands back to reveal flip chart, clearly showing the word "BOTTOM" written down the left side in big letters)