

Starting a Motorcycle Ministry

Ministering to bikers is a very demanding, yet rewarding outreach. This is a growing area of ministry and one that is transforming the hearts and minds of not only bikers, but the congregations of the churches that have witnessed what motorcycle ministry is all about. Whether your church is just exploring the idea of starting a motorcycle ministry or you are feeling a specific call to start a motorcycle ministry, let us give you some advice.

First

This type of ministry is not for the faint at heart. It is not for people who purchase their first motorcycle and after a few months think they can get involved in this type of ministry. Motorcycle ministry is for those who are or have been members of the biker world, are saved by grace, and have a passion for bikers and evangelism.

You should know what to expect when ministering to bikers. Bikers are a different breed of people. They think differently, they act differently, and most are not from a church or religious background. They know a phony from a mile away and they normally won't let outsiders into their lives and territories. Bikers are very passionate about the biker lifestyle, which if you aren't familiar with, can be quite different than anything most have ever experienced. Motorcycle Ministry should be left to those who know the biker community, have a passion for that lifestyle, and have come out of that lifestyle through faith in the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Before you jump right in and start a ministry, ask the following questions:

1. Who will lead this ministry?
2. Why should you start a motorcycle ministry?
3. What is the target audience you are seeking?
 - Local enjoyment riders
 - Motorcycle enthusiasts
 - Hard-core bikers
 - This is important because each requires a different approach.
4. Is your church open to this type of ministry and the type of people this ministry may attract?

If you have a person driven to lead a ministry like this, then you have won part of the battle. This person will be the force behind encouraging others to participate and minister to a special breed of people. If you have a church and staff willing to open its doors to this type of ministry then by all means support it and watch it grow.

Second

The next thing you will need is a mission statement. After you determine the type of groups/bikers you will be ministering to, then creating a mission statement on how to reach them is very important. This is intentional ministry, geared toward a specific group, under specific circumstances, dealing with specific stereotypes and fears. A clear mission will help shape the ministry and keep the group focused. Some things your mission should include are:

1. What types of groups/bikers are we reaching out to?
2. How will we accomplish this?
3. Will we participate in local biker community functions, which include secular activities?
4. Will the church stand behind a group of church members involved in this type of ministry?
5. What is the goal of a ministry like this?

The ministry with a strong mission statement and intentionally focused will be successful. A ministry with congregational support will more likely accomplish the stated mission, while being held accountable for the mission of the church. When ministry and church support each other, the result is a strong, effective ministry.

Third

Expect change within the church. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Are we open to all?
2. Will we love anyone who comes to the church, no matter what?
3. Will we accept behaviors that may not be in line with our beliefs? Examples:
 - Tattoos
 - Earrings in men
 - Smoking
 - Etc.

Expect to see members of the ministry change, as well as the complexity of the church. In order for an effective ministry to accomplish the mission, the members must fit into the biker community. Suits and ties don't work; leather, jeans, and biker gear do. Motorcycles in the parking lot mean an inviting, safe environment for other bikers. Some drawn to the church through a biker ministry may not be refined; they may have habits that must be accepted, at least while they are seeking. Case in point is smoking. If you have issues about smokers, then the biker thing may be difficult. Bikers must feel they are welcomed

no matter what they look like, how they dress, what they ride, and who they are. If we require them to change before they come, we lose the battle up front. We must allow God to change them. Most bikers, especially hard-core bikers, are for the most part non-conformists. Expect the worst and love them anyway.

Lastly

Finances are always important. Ask the following questions before starting a ministry:

1. How do you fund the ministry?
2. What are possible expenses be and how can we fund them?
3. What events do we plan to do to invite bikers to the church?
4. Will we hold special events to let bikers know they are welcome?

Intentional ministry may mean providing material such as Bibles to people who may not own one. Full-time ministry usually cost something. If you plan on having events geared toward welcoming bikers, such as Biker Sundays or Blessing of the Bikes, then expect a cost.

Conclusion

Use the experience of those that have gone before you. The Nazarene Motorcycle Fellowship (NMF) is designed to do just that. We have gathered people instrumental in the organization of successful motorcycle ministries within the denomination, as well as people who have been on both sides of the biker community, to assist you in developing an outreach ministry like no other. We have resources available to help as you uncover this new approach to serving your community.

With patience, prayer, and a desire to “go” into your community, this can be one of the most rewarding ministries within your church. This ministry will change more than the lives of the bikers you reach, it will change the lives of your entire church.

Website resources:

Visit <https://nazarenemotorcyclefellowship.com> to learn more and view all available resources. Links contained in downloadable PDFs may change. If viewing the PDF in digital format and links are broken please visit the NMF website to download updated versions. If you have the most up to date version from our site and links are still broken, please use the form on our Contact Us page to notify the website administrator.

A PDF containing of all of our resource documents with a table of contents can be downloaded at <https://nazarenemotorcyclefellowship.com/#NMF-Resources>