



## Men's Ministry Retreat Plan

### **WHAT:**

The retreat is an event designed for those attending the church. If your church only has an annual men's retreat, they really don't have an effective men's ministry. This is a unique opportunity to provide concentrated time away from the routine distractions of work, community, and family. If done right, it is an event that will build deep and lasting relationships between your men and it will become a celebrated annual tradition for them.

The retreat should be an annual event scheduled at a time to attract most of the men. The date should be reflected and promoted in the Annual Calendar and listed on every church bulletin announcement at least two months in advance. It is most important that the Senior Pastor support and promote this event. The most ideal event would include a Friday night, Saturday, and a half-day on Sunday. Due to cost and logistics many men's retreats now run through Saturday night dinner.

### **PURPOSE:**

The end purpose of the retreat should be to help:

- deepen the faith and self-discipline of the men
- connect and bond with fellow believers
- provide an open and transparent atmosphere that encourages men to share
- lead men to life-changing resources and experiences
- help create a caring spirit for the other men
- deliver men from Satan's bonds
- assess ways to assist men at future events
- provide an entry point in to weekly discipleship programs
- build relationships between men and their pastors

Men appreciate good organization and a program that is entertaining, relevant, and challenging. Make sure the transition from one event to another is smooth and efficient. A "detailed run sheet" should be followed by each person on the leadership team.

### **PROGRAM ELEMENTS:**

**Theme:** An appropriate theme should be identified that stimulates men to attend. In order to effectively prepare, promote, and provide a dynamic retreat a Retreat Committee should be formed five months in advance. An assessment of the men should occur to discover the most needed areas

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(topics) of growth. Men's Ministry Catalyst has a survey that can help you determine potential interest areas. The committee should include several guys willing to serve as recreation directors, table sponsors, prayer team members, counselors, hospitality directors, registration/administration, emcee, promotion, and breakout group leaders. It is important to build plenty of fun into the retreat. Often speakers or select men within your fellowship can provide fishing, fly casting, hunting, or archery clinics during the break times. This can be used as another draw to the event.

**Facility:** We recommend that the retreat facility be located no more than 2.5 hours from the church. It should be well-equipped to handle men. It is ideal that the facility have activity fields, a swimming pool, indoor gym, library, archery range, nearby lake or stream, great food and plenty of it, and good beds. It is preferred to have an indoor activity area in case of inclement weather. And the most important is to PRAY over the facility and claim it as Holy ground for Christ.

**Schedule:** The schedule should reflect the spiritual maturity of the men and the direction of the church. A schedule should be set that encourages enough free time for the guys to have unstructured fellowship. To help the men establish a specific action plan, we recommend that time be allocated for break-out sessions where guys can interact with one another.

**Speaker:** The speaker should reflect the direction of the church. If the pastor is emphasizing discipleship, then it is ideal to have a speaker in this area. We strongly recommend that you have speakers from outside the church. Men's Ministry Catalyst has a resource list of recommended speakers on its website, [www.mensministrycatalyst.org](http://www.mensministrycatalyst.org) (Speaker's Portal). The speaker should be selected based upon Bible knowledge, recommendations of others, area of focus, ability to rally men to action, personal character, and the ability to be practical and relevant. Careful attention should be given to the speaker communicating with the senior pastor ahead of time so that the messages properly reflect the pastor's direction and mission. The speaker should give the men outlines of his messages so that the men can take away concepts and value to be applied in to their daily living.

**Emcee:** The emcee should be someone who is respected by the men and who has a good easy communication style. He should keep church announcements or promotion of church business to a minimum. This person should have a good sense of timing and humor. He needs to have a discerning spirit and thick skin. Some men will complain no matter what. This job can be a pastor, but often it's nice to let the pastor have this event off. Engage the services of one of your men's ministry leaders.

**Music:** It is recommended that the music be carefully selected to encourage men to participate. The songs should be robust and manly. A small band and enthusiastic worship leader help encourage men in this area of worship.

**Ministry Integration:** Make sure that ALL men's ministry groups have a table set up in the foyer with sign-up sheets saying "Yes – Please send me information" ie. weekly bible study groups, healthy sexuality class, motorcycle ministry, upcoming service projects, and any other men's group your

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church currently has available for men. This retreat is a great entry point for men to go deeper with a few and get involved in other areas.

**Games, Door Prizes, and Videos:** Make sure some clean humor, games, and or videos are part of the program. Guys should be encouraged and enjoy the event with their friends. Have some fun prizes or surprise gifts that show the men you appreciate their participation.

### **FINANCES:**

Retreats are a good investment in men's ministry. Selection of facilities, menus, etc. should fit the budget of the average income level within the church. The men's ministry treasury can assist those who can't afford the trip. No man should be left behind because of finances. Any scholarships should be on a confidential basis. The budget should include speaker fees, lodging, meals, gifts, and honorariums. Some churches help subsidize the retreat up to 20%.

### **PROGRAM GUIDELINES:**

#### *Potential Schedule*

#### **Friday**

6:00-7:00PM Arrival, Registration, and Room Assignments – to be most cost effective have the guys pick up a meal on the way. Carpooling should be encouraged to provide opportunity for fellowship

7:00 Welcome and Greeting, Announcements, Camp Instructions, Overview of retreat

7:15 Ice breaker (some activity that helps men get to know one another)

7:45 Worship Music (3-4 songs)

8:00 Introduce Speaker (First Session)

8:45 Breakout groups to discuss topic and answer prepared questions

9:10 Snacks and Games or Videos (Informal time to have fellowship)

10:15 Retire

#### **Saturday**

7:00AM Coffee and muffins for early risers

7:10 Optional Prayer Meeting for church and retreat

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7:30	Rise and Shine
8:00	Breakfast
8:40	Worship Music – Short testimony of a guy in the group
9:00	Second Session with Speaker
9:45	Break out groups to discuss topic and answer prepared questions
10:10	Snacks and coffee
10:30	Recreational time – lessons, games, competitions, visit local attractions
12:30PM	Lunch
1:15	Worship – Short testimony of guy in group
1:30	Third Session with Speaker
2:15	Break out groups to discuss topic and answer prepared questions
2:45	Recreational time – lessons, games, competitions, visit local attractions
5:30	Dinner
6:15	Worship Music – Short testimony of guy in group
6:30	Fourth Session with Speaker
7:00	Prayer, testimonies, deliverance, and commitment time
7:30	Check out and leave for home <u>or</u> option retreat to recreation time

### **Sunday**

### **Optional**

7:30AM	Coffee and muffins for early risers
7:45	Optional Prayer Meeting for church and retreat
8:30	Worship Music – Short testimony of a guy in the group
9:00	Fifth Session with Speaker
9:45	Break out groups to discuss topic and answer prepared questions

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10:10 Large Brunch and have men fill out the event evaluation sheet

11:00 Optional recreation time, check out, and leave for home

## **BEST PRACTICE TIPS:**

**No Man Left Behind:** There needs to be a 5-7 man team with one mission – to assure no man is feeling left out or rejected. These men need to search out the other men standing on the sidelines by themselves and get them involved. We recommend different colored lanyards/registration bands for first-time attendees. Make sure this team of guys engages these men and invites them to sit at their table during mealtime, etc. Ask them how are they are doing, etc.

**The Anointed Appointment:** On the back of every name badge have the name of a different man that's attending the retreat and be praying for that man throughout the retreat and watch what God does.

**Post-Retreat Surveys:** A must. We need to have attendees rate the speakers, breakout sessions, activities, facilities, food, and have them include a testimony of what God did for them on the mountain. Hand them out during the last gathering time and give 10 minutes for guys to complete the survey and turn in before leaving.