



Marketplace Ministry Goals: Know Him, Love Others

Is ministry in your marketplace too big for you? God has boiled it down to two very simple principles: (1) Know Him intimately and (2) Love others deeply. That results in (3) Changed lives.

For starters, have you heard from God lately? What's He saying? What's His vision for you?

Why? A personal connection to the presence of God is the key to my eternity, key to my life, and key to my witness in the marketplace and beyond.

All the tips, techniques, and planning to take God to work (or anywhere) is worth NOTHING unless we know Him. Nothing. People will see through my actions, my comments, and my intent if I don't have Him.

Knowing God intimately is easier than we think:

1. Get hungry for Him. Remember the greatest commandment from Mark 12:30? "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." If something's in the Bible, it must be important. Those words show up eight times!
2. Seek Him. We can find God in amazing places. Along a quiet trail. In a good book or song. Through people who are close to Him. "He who seeks finds." (Matthew 7:8).
3. Spend time with Him. God is calling us to walk intimately with Him every hour and every moment of every day. You'll know and hear from God when He's walking alongside everything you do. Ask Him the big questions: What are Your plans for me? How should I prepare? Where do You want to go?
4. Follow Him. The writer of Hebrews called Jesus the "great Shepherd". God has plans for you. By worldly standards, they may seem "different". In His eyes, they bring us closer to Him.

Where do I start? The Bible is full of insights. Books that stoke the fire include "Too Busy Not to Pray" by Bill Hybels and "The Lost Art of Practicing His Presence" by James Goll. And what would your pastor say if you asked, "How can I know God more?"

We need to know Him before taking His love to others. **Loving others deeply** is the secret to impacting lives and changing the world. Jesus made that clear when He identified the second most important commandment in Matthew 22: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

In the marketplace, my "neighbor" is in the next cube, next department, or next building. Know anyone who is scared, lonely, hurting? Abandoned, tired, depressed?

Peter understood: "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins." How do we love deeply?

1. Be real. It's not going through the motions. Your co-workers have a surplus of phony people around them. God calls us to be so full of Him that sharing His love is the real focus.
2. Set the right goal. Bible Studies, conversions, and numbers are valuable steps, but they miss God's primary call to disciple others. That usually happens one-on-one.
3. Be loveable. Ask questions, listen to others, put yourself in their shoes. Smile. Bring "sun" into peoples' lives. This builds a bridge of opportunity.
4. Follow Jesus' model. Make compassion a central theme in your life. Invest deeply in a few lives, not dozens (but be ready at any time). Pray for a heart to touch others, then pray for them, and pray for opportunities to connect.

Then, make personal connections in their world. Let those connections address personal needs – giving your time, finding common interests & hobbies, giving tangible (small) gifts, and more. Be there for the long haul. This is especially meaningful in a crisis.

When you simplify what it means to be a marketplace minister – knowing God intimately and then loving others deeply – you open the greatest of opportunities for His kingdom!