

## **Chapter 8**

# **MINISTRY "OUTSIDE THE LINES"**

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Servant Evangelism **OUTSIDE THE LINES** is exciting. Actually, it's great fun and, at times, somewhat dangerous (response from those "in the box"). It's expanding the vision. In ministry, that's where many of the people live . . . work . . . do leisure . . . do recreation . . . and socialize. Often times, they are the non-believers and non-churched. Doing ministry the same "old" way often times does not reach them. What do you do? It may mean "coloring outside the lines". You dream. You adapt. You create. You innovate. You change.

Don't fight change. Embrace it. Stop looking in the rear view mirror to see how it has always been done in the past. The seven last words of a church . . . even a ministry . . . are "**we've not done it that way before**". Another way to say the "seven last words": "If you always do what you've always done, you always get what you've already got." Do some changing. Start looking through the wind shield to see what's coming down the road ahead of you. That's where opportunity waits ministry.

"New opportunities, new challenges and new ministries come at a cost. They are met with anticipation and expectation about what comes next. . . . It seems harder to let go of something that has been around for awhile, something familiar, something comfortable, even when we know it is time to let go. . . . The future is going to demand from us that we try some new things. . . . To embrace new things will not be easy. . . . We will ultimately have no choice. Either we will proactively make those choices under the leadership of the Holy Spirit or our budgets, people's failure to respond, a lack of participation, a loss of effectiveness or impact, or a legion of other reasons will force us to reactively make a change or die".\*1

It is a breath of fresh air when there is freedom to be creative and innovative in ministry to help non-believers experience God's Good News. It's easy to be comfortable and stay inside the church walls. Be a dreamer. Be a visionary. Be creative. Be innovative. Get outside the church walls. That's the non-believer's turf. Cross the bridge linking together the church with the non-believers, non-churched and community. Dream a little. Dream about the difference ministries might make **OUTSIDE THE LINES**. Develop new possibilities . . . not ones that satisfy the religious people with "churchie" outreach, projects and events. A great need is for ministries to translate the Good News through ministries **OUTSIDE THE LINES** that will connect with non-believers. It's okay to do ministry **OUTSIDE THE LINES** so long as you don't fall off the page.

We have the right to tap into the "creative-innovation" power of God. God invented "creative-innovation". Out of nothing He created "the heavens and the earth". *Creative-innovation*. He made man . . . and woman. *Creative-innovation*. He changed the water to wine. *Creative-innovation*. He raised Lazarus from the dead. *Creative-innovation*. He spit on the ground and used His saliva to make a blind man see. *Creative-innovation*.

The one thing that might get us to cross the ministry lines and live and minister dangerously is a person on the other side who is without Christ and salvation . . . a non-believer . . . the one God “misses most”. Nothing would affect a person’s ministry more than letting God lead him **OUTSIDE THE LINES** to reach that person. Staying inside the lines may very well hold someone back from reaching people today.

When you are **OUTSIDE THE LINES** people may want to bring you back and put you back inside. Sometimes, it’s not a gentle trying to put you back. Ministry **OUTSIDE THE LINES** can be dangerous and scary when creative and innovative. If there is a line for outside the line ministry, who draws it? Actually, those outside the lines of ministry and evangelism are . . .

Not rebels or dissenters of the faith,  
Still a team player,  
Plowing new ground which will eventually be inside the box,  
Not wanting to experience the seven last words of a church or ministry;  
and most of all,  
Where God has called them to be.

Mike Barrett in his book, **Danger Habit\*2**, gives testimony of failing in the business world only to find purpose in life by living outside the box for ministry. Was he crazy, a thrill seeker, radical, permanently out of the box, an adrenaline junkie, or just plain off the hook? I don’t think so. If he was then I am a member of his ministry family. My ministry family was created as radical for an important reason . . . made for an eternal purpose of sharing Christ with those **OUTSIDE THE LINES**. My family relatives are David Wilkerson who did not back down from Nicky Cruz, Jim Elliot who gave his life in the bush of the Amazon River, Lonnie Frisbee, a radical who left the Haight-Asbury life and became co-leader of the Jesus Movement, and Peter who cut off the ear of a Roman soldier. If “outsiders in Christ” do not share the Good News with “outsiders without Christ” . . . who will?

**OUTSIDE THE LINES** . . . being flexible, creative, innovative and open to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. It means not being bound by traditions or prejudices – not even embarrassed when doing Servant Evangelism. It may be brushing a stranger’s hair in public . . . being part of a youth team cleaning rest rooms of a fast food restaurant.

**OUTSIDE THE LINES** . . . “It’s the incarnation, God filling and blessing the right human means. It is human beings seeing what God is doing and jumping in with both feet and with committed hearts and with busy hands and mouths.”\*3

Let God challenge you . . . your **OUTSIDE THE LINES**’ strategies . . . your traditions.

**God . . . lead us OUTSIDE THE LINES  
to reach people with the Good News.**