



Dear Kris, we recently started our singles ministry. We conducted a survey and found out what the singles at our church wanted to do. We had a big cookout and a ton of folks came. However, at our next event the numbers were way down. By the third event we were thinking we had done something wrong as hardly no one showed up. So now we are thinking about quitting. We need your help.

Dear Leslie, first let me encourage you and say "don't quit". You simply went about things in the wrong order. Most people come to church initially to please themselves. Whether it's finding a good program for their kids, a pastor who preaches what they like, a non-stop welfare ministry so their light and grocery bill is paid each month to finding a mate. Now, don't get me wrong, I think these things are needed however, if people come and they don't find what they want, they typically don't return. This is why it's called ministry. We know most people come for the flesh (Jesus minister to people all day who were hungry and sick) but the goal of the ministry is to use this to reach their heart. †

So let's talk about your order of events. As much as I love a good cookout, sometimes it should be something done as a result of a ministry that has been built on a solid foundation. A foundation that has been building for months. Some churches will do a big event to start a ministry, to get the word out, etc. but they are prepared. They are ready with a leadership team, volunteers and a place for folks to land. They quickly follow up with everyone who came, finding places to get them plugged into such as bible study, book club, Sunday school or small group, missions, etc. If you simply have an event and wish people well, you have missed the opportunity for real ministry. Real ministry is relational. You have to use the large event to get to the people as individuals.

Leslie, what I have found is most singles groups are not large enough to handle a big crowd for their first event. It is better to build your leadership team, praying and asking for God's direction. Start simple by having a bible study with the goal to have it grow to include music and refreshments. Allow God to build it to the size of a large event. All the while, building your leadership team and volunteers to handle what the Lord brings to you. And singles, like most people searching for a church, are looking for community. Be that community, those friends.

So ok, you feel like all your work was wasted as no one has really come back. Pray and ask



God of those who are coming, who would be great on your leadership team, to help build the ministry the right way. It's always better to do small ministry well than larger ministry not so well. Please understand, singles do not need us to plan their social calendar. You build your ministry on the foundation of Christ and the singles will come. When they come, they will find each other and naturally plan things to do together.

Blessings, Kris