

Reaching People Beyond the Walls of the Church

In the UK, maybe 5% attend a church of any description and only 2% attend an evangelical church. Although the figures vary from country to country, across Europe about 2.5% of the population would identify themselves as Evangelical. So how do we reach the other 97.5% or 725 million people? Given that very few of these (humanly speaking) would enter a Bible-based and Gospel-loving church, how do they get to hear the good news of Jesus? We will look at Biblical principles and concrete examples of reaching people beyond the walls of the church.

Tim Howlett lives in the UK in a small town just south of Bristol. He has been Executive Officer of United Beach Missions since 2010, although he has been a volunteer on their summer mission teams since 1984. In fact over 2 years of his life has been spent on UBM's weeks of evangelism. United Missions is an interdenominational organisation seeking to share the good news of Jesus on the beaches and in the cities with holiday-makers, tourists, and international students. UBM operates mainly in the UK and the Republic of Ireland but also runs teams in France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Switzerland. UBM seeks to reach people who perhaps would not naturally enter a church building. Tim has been married to Alison for 30 years and they have 3 sons, 3 daughters-in-law, and one grandson.

I. Introduction

There are many Bible examples of reaching those who have no church connections – but we will learn from Christ himself, the master soul-winner. In particular we will consider how he spoke with the Samaritan Woman in John 4.

A. John 3 v John 4

B. What's the difference between a fishing net and a fishing rod?!

II. Understand Context

A. Culturally

B. Biblically

III. Overcome Complacency

IV. Start Conversations

A. Meet people where they are

B. Talk to them about what interests them

C. Do it when you have every reason not to

D. Do not discriminate

V. Win Confidences

A. Be noticeably different

B. Be patient and don't give up

C. Invest in people

VI. Prick Consciences

A. Use tact

B. Use truth

C. Use tenderness

D. Use timing

VII. Explain Christ

A. Be prepared for red herring questions

B. Look to explain Christ starting from where they are at

VIII. Expect Conversions