



## *People Spot Missile: Your Ministry Niche*

I've been around a long time. Almost every pastor wants to attract young families with children. Whenever they draw up their ministry target "Jack and Jill," the description they write goes something like this. They are 35 with college educations, both have good jobs and two small children. They are currently unchurched though they may have been in the church in their past. The tale goes on.

But not every pastor is gifted to reach those people. That demographic only makes up a very small percentage of the population. What about the rest of the people in the community? Do they count? Who did God gift you and your church to reach?

I just spent time with Fred Perkins this past weekend. Fred pastors New River Church. Fred went there a number of years ago when the church was averaging 30. He was striving to reach the traditional market. Over a number of years the church progressed to about 100 with much energy and effort. There developed a great deal of frustration with the work. It seemed that the effort and energy being expended wasn't generating the desired results. Fred said, "Jim, I looked around this community (Zephyrhills, Fla.) and realized there are 100,000 retired folks within a reasonable distance of this building. It is obvious we needed to go in a different direction." Fred is obviously gifted to reach older adults. The first three weeks of February they averaged 411 with about 300 older adults. A portion of those were snowbirds. (Older adults who go to Florida for the winter.) The two services designed for the seniors were alive and vibrant. The adults were interactive with the service. The greeting teams worked overtime. I was touched at least a dozen times. The point of this is that Fred has a special gift of God to reach senior adults most of whom have not been regular in church for a while. Fred realized that Seniors need Jesus too. When he turned his focus, the ministry at New River Church blossomed. All of this in a very, very limited facility. I am amazed. This is one of the most unusual churches I have ever visited.

Then the thought struck me, who did I attract. I spent ten years serving the Carrollton Church of God in Maryland. A number of new people came. All but one family were native Carroll Countians. That should have been my focus.

What demographic are you able to reach? Here is a study for you. Look at the new people who are in attendance at your church since you arrived. Is there a demographic common

denominator? If you say, you can't see one, look a little closer. What is the dominant factor? Figure out what you have been doing right and then go for it.

Again, I ask so many pastors, "Who are you trying to reach?" Many respond, "Everybody!" Very few people can reach "Everybody!" You may not be one of them. So who can you reach?

In the 1950's, secular marketing was pretty generic, aimed at everybody at the same time. Today, businesses understand that anything designed to reach everybody will probably reach nobody. I have a friend in marketing. I said, "I like the history channel." He said, "You're a perfect fit for their demographic." I have gray hair and am male. So the businesses who advertise on that channel are targeting people who are male with gray hair.

I am convinced that God doesn't call you to reach everybody. He calls you to reach somebody. He will call others to reach the people who you can't touch.

*Most of the People Spot Missiles may be viewed at [www.newlifeministries-nlm.org](http://www.newlifeministries-nlm.org) Click on People Spots*

*My newest book is now available. A little different than anything I have done before. It is A History of the Civil War as Presented by the Church Advocate. It is volume 1. It covers from May of 1859 to May of 1862. It is what was printed at the time. It is 400 pages The cost is \$40.00 plus shipping. I am also available to make a 1 hour presentation on the material.*

*I am now available to present "Starting a New Service", "Churches Have Personalities", "People Spots", "Does Your Church Really Care About People?" and "A Christian Perspective on Leadership Skills." "Stewardship and Managing Debt" jm*

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