

Comments about Making Announcements

The Spiritual Side

In our assemblies, announcements are often made concerning various topics affecting the congregation, ranging from serious health problems to "housekeeping" items such as the need to keep the children out of the parking lot after services.

It occurs to me that *some* **announcements**, while essentially related to physical matters, **have spiritual significance**. For example, consider our members who **travel**. We naturally pray for their safety, but we should also consider **the spiritual side of their trip**. The person may be travelling to a place where there is no church, or may be coming into contact with non-Christians. We should pray for **opportunities** for the spread of the gospel. Also in such conditions, we should pray for the traveler's **spiritual strength**, especially if they're likely to undergo **persecution** or unusual **temptation** (for example, Christians in the military).

And what about the sick? Spiritually speaking, a prayer list may include an elder or preacher, as well as a non-Christian. **What we know about the person's spiritual condition affects how we pray**. If the person is a Christian, we're likely to ask God to grant them **steadfastness and patience**. On the other hand, if the person is not a Christian, we'll probably ask God to extend their life to allow **opportunity to hear the gospel and repent**. Our prayers in that case will also extend to asking for opportunity for Christians in their circle to have **opportunity and courage and wisdom** to teach the person the gospel. (So it's appropriate to announce what we know about the person's spiritual condition, at least generally, and of course, as best we know.)

May we always see the spiritual side of our physical circumstances.

Guidelines

Everyone seems to have an opinion about what should or should not be announced. Here are InkMan's guidelines for deciding what to announce:

- **Set the tone.** The fact is, if announcements are made at the beginning of the worship service, the announcer indeed sets the tone for the service.
 - Making announcements is not stand-up comedy. (1 Corinthians 14:26)
 - Pray before you make announcements. Let the spirit of Christ dwell in you.
 - Be joyful and enthusiastic, as appropriate, but know that not everyone should be expected to share the same mood. (This also applies to song leading.)
 - NEVER say discouraging things like, "Well, it looks like our number is down..." (Besides, how carnal is THAT!?!)
- **Plan your words. Organize** the items by categories.
 - If you have several papers to juggle, get them together before you expect people to pay attention to you. (1 Corinthians 14:40)

- Check with people to see what needs to be said BEFORE you make announcements.
- Don't open the floor for people to start making announcements from their seats. That practice leads to various problems, including women speaking out of turn, things being announced of a more private nature, people not being able to hear what is said, someone taking over the service and introducing controversy and dissension, etc.
- **Focus on spiritual matters**, not on carnal concerns.
 - NEVER start a worship by saying something inane like, "Well, it's past time to start...."
- Generally speaking, **if everybody needs to know it, announce it.**
- **If it's appropriate to pray about, it's appropriate to announce.** This includes illness (James 5:13), issues involving the government (1 Timothy 2:1-8), especially from a standpoint of righteousness and morality (Proverbs 14:34), and travel. (Ezra 8:21-23)
 - Remember that there's a difference between what is appropriate for private prayer and what is appropriate for public prayer.
- **Help the audience focus on the worship service.** If it's worth mentioning in prayer, announce it before prayer is led in the assembly. Otherwise, consider announcing it at the END of the service. (E.g., upcoming work days, a need for volunteers for the duty roster, special services at other congregations, etc.)
- Announce only items that have a direct connection to the **work of the church.**
- **Avoid** announcing items that pertain to the **work of the home** (birthdays, graduations, potlucks, etc.)
- **Submit to the elders' judgment** regarding matters of opinion.

To get InkMan's **Template for Making Announcements**, go to www.MyPreachingPen.com/topics.htm and look under "Church Matters."