

# MORE TIME, FEWER PEOPLE = GREATER KINGDOM IMPACT



Modeled after the ministry of Jesus,  
Regi Campbell offers the church a proven formula for mentoring men

By Sean Fennelly

The church has attempted for years to reach men mainly from the pulpit, which employs a *less time with more people* approach. For the past nine years, Regi Campbell has been doing the opposite—spending *more time with fewer people* by mentoring eight men for an entire year at his Roswell home.

Why only eight? “That’s how many chairs I had at my dining room table,” Regi tells a group of church leaders at Buckhead Church. They’ve come to hear about Next Generation Mentoring, a non-profit organization Regi started to take mentoring to churches—churches full of young men who’ve tired of programs, yet long to hear from a transparent mentor who can provide spiritual direction. Regi was that young man.

In the early 80s, Regi, a South Carolina native, took a job and without consulting his wife, Miriam, agreed to

move his family to Atlanta. He now calls that: “the square root of stupid.”

Regi, still in his early 30s, experienced fast-track success as a young professional with AT&T, but his rising stardom came with a price. He neglected Miriam and his family as he climbed the corporate ladder. Changes also occurred at AT&T that threatened his career, including the departure of the man he considered to be *his* mentor.

One day in September 1983, Miriam left Regi with the instructions: “Get to know your kids.” At 33, he was suddenly faced with the prospect of divorce and job loss. “I went out in my back yard and got on my knees and did the only thing I could do—I surrendered my life to Christ.”

## A New Beginning

Miriam eventually came back, and Regi left AT&T to start his own business. He and Miriam also began volunteering in the singles ministry at their church, where Regi met informally

with the single guys. “They were just out of college—25 or so—and they saw me as a little older and with some business success,” Regi shares. “Before long, they started referring to me as their mentor.”

Regi recognized the need and tried to leverage his experience through the church. “The initial effort was was a bust,” he says candidly. “We had maybe two guys willing to mentor and a big database of guys wanting to be mentored.”

Regi decided to try a mentoring group. He selected 10 books and 22 Scripture verses that had shaped him. A seasoned manager, he also laid the ground rules. He says, “I told guys, ‘if you’ll commit three hours a month, I’ll meet with you for a year; but you’ve got to show up, you’ve got to be on time, and when we’re done, someday ... you have to ‘pay it forward’ and mentor eight guys.’” The ground rules evolved into a covenant signed by every mentee. Now, covenants must also be signed by the mentee’s wife, acknowledging their

husband's commitment to the group.

Regi cites the covenant as one of the many aspects of the group used to emphasize accountability. Mentees must also memorize scriptures—which they have to recite in front of their peers at every meeting. They must also write a one page summary—a “net out” of the book assigned for that month. “You can't hide like you can in church, that's for sure,” one mentee shares.

Not everyone gets into the group either. Regi carefully prays over each

Now the MBA-educated mentor is reintroducing his mentoring model to the church with the following statistics:

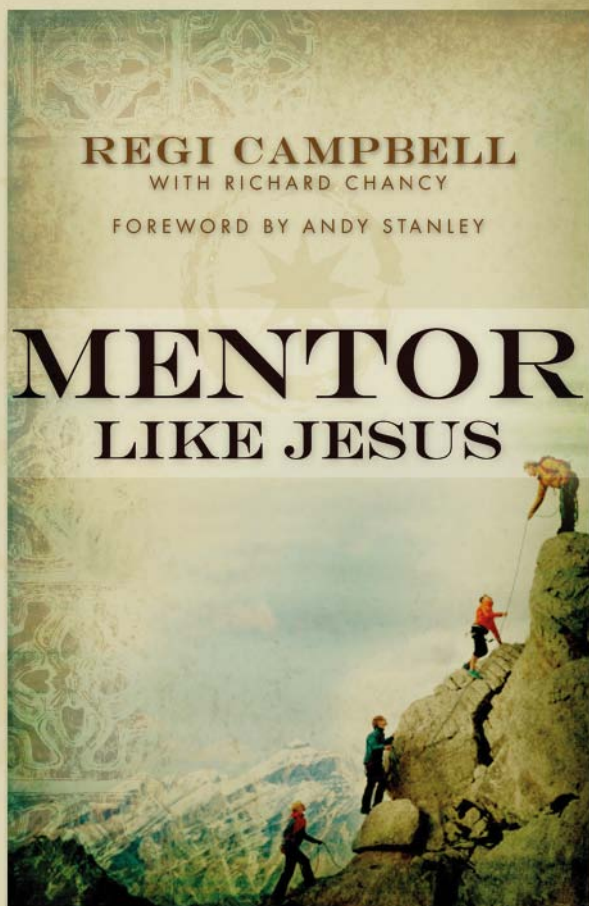
Roughly 90 percent of Regi's mentees said the group met, exceeded or far exceeded their expectations

The number of men giving ten percent or more went up 60 percent

In the past nine years, there have been no divorces among the 72 married men Regi has mentored.

Attendance was 99.2 percent.

Those late to a meeting were less



application and, in the end, only eight make it into each group. This gives the group a measure of exclusivity. Richard Chancy, a mentee and subsequent co-author with Campbell on *Mentor Like Jesus*, didn't make it in on his first try.

## Few Are Chosen

It was this 'few are chosen' reality that woke Regi up one day with a humbling thought: *You're just doing what Jesus did when He walked the earth. Jesus was on purpose; He was selfless; and He mentored a chosen group of men for a defined period of time.* That thought led to his book.

than 2 percent.

The numbers speak volumes, but that's not what speaks loudest to Regi. At least half of the men he has mentored in nearly a decade are with him at his event. He doesn't want others to miss out.

“You don't need to wait until you're 40—until you think you know everything,” he says. “Start now. Mentoring is everyone's job and everyone's joy.”

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