

Ministry Idea — Podcasts

As many of you know, our culture is always wanting to be entertained. One of the many forms of entertainment has been podcasts.

Knowing that so many people are now listening to podcasts, my co-worker (Stephen Rouse) and I decided that we would start a podcast local to Harrisburg, PA. We have found this to be an effective tool so far, and maybe next year I will update everyone on how this effort has gone.

For now, I will inform everyone about the podcasting process:

1.) Naming Your Podcast.

- This is a very important step. But first, I would encourage you to decide what the goal of your podcast is. For us, it is an outreach tool. We want to get people in our area in the Word. So, we decided to name ours “**HBG Bible Talks.**” “HBG” is short for Harrisburg, there are many businesses around here with that shortened version. Point being, people here know what that means. “Bible Talks” is straightforward too. People will know that if they listen, we will be talking about the Bible.

2.) Have Good Content.

- ***This is the most important step.*** But I want to start off by saying this, *people listening to podcasts are not there to be preached at.* They are there to learn and think through things. So, don’t preach when you record. Teach as if you were sitting across the table with someone. Having a second person record with you helps with this.
- With all of that being said, I highly recommend that you walk through a book of the Bible. Stephen and I have started talking/reading through the gospel of Mark. As far as I can tell, it is going well — glory to God. Don’t just re-preach your sermon from last Sunday, actually have a text you are following. Any book of the Bible will do. But slow down and explain everything as you would with someone who is new to the Bible.

3.) Have Regular Content.

- If you are going to commit to doing a podcast, I recommend doing it weekly, posting on the same day of the week. People listen to podcasts the way they watch TV shows. If they know their favorite show comes out on Friday, they will sit down to watch on Friday. The same goes for a podcast. People get into the habit of listening when they know an episode is coming out. For that reason, we are uploading podcasts every Monday morning.

4.) Production — Find a Hosting Service.

- The best places to upload a regular podcast is to the following: **Apple Podcasts, Google Play, & Spotify.** However, *you cannot just upload your podcast directly to those services.* You have to go through a *hosting* service. We have started using Acast. We currently use the free version, but will likely upgrade soon. It will end up being \$15/month.

5.) Production — Using Good Equipment.

- Now I know what you're thinking, "great, now I have to spend a bunch of money on equipment." Not so! All you really need is a good pair of headphones with a microphone on it. But, DO NOT use your computer mic alone. It will be far too echoey. If you are podcasting with someone else, you can just use a head phone splitter that plugs into a computer. They cost about \$5 on Amazon.
- As far as what to record on to, it won't really matter a whole lot. I recommend using a service called **Audacity**, or you can use **GarageBand** on a Mac. Either will do. It will give you the ability to edit your podcast after it is recorded. You can also insert your bumper music here as well.
- What is bumper music you ask? It is simply the music that plays at the beginning and end of your podcast. It gives your listeners a feeling of familiarity with your podcast. Just listen to other podcasts to get an idea of what it is. Obviously, you want something light and easy. Enter Sandman by Metallica won't do (so I am told).

6.) Getting Your Podcast Out There

- For us, we are using Facebook advertisement to promote the podcast.
- We will also soon be putting an advertisement in our local magazine to inform the public about the podcast.
- Also, we have printed up flyers concerning the podcast and other Bible study opportunities (Meetups). Members of the local body have taken these fliers and are giving them to co-workers, neighbors, etc...

I am by no means an expert here, we have only been doing this for a couple of months. But if you have any questions, feel free to contact me! Also, feel free to check out our podcast! We are on Apple Podcasts and Google Play. Or just google "HBG Bible Talks."

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