

Why Jesus Would Go to Vegas if He Came to America

Vince Antonucci says Vegas is the place Jesus would go if he came to America.

If you're looking for a great example of how to love people outside the church and what it means to be mission oriented, you need to meet Vince Antonucci, pastor of [Verve](#) in Las Vegas. Their tagline is "Stripping Church. Seeking Life." These guys have an amazingly clear of how to love people who hate the church!

The title of this blog was almost *Vince and Jesus love strippers, pimps, and Nazis* because I keep hearing stories about how Verve is overwhelming people with God's love for them. Not just lost people, but people Christians typically write-off as unreachable or far too intimidating – like say...Nazis.



redemption enacted

One story of redemption that impacts me poignantly is the story of Warren. Warren plays an evil, fire-breathing clown – literally. He is someone who hates God and anyone associated with church. Warren came into contact with Verve because he heard about a new church starting up, and was determined to sabotage it. Vince tells the story so powerfully, as he lays out Warren's plan to disrupt the services by spewing profanity and violence throughout it.

When Warren showed up, though, what he found going on there in the music, the speaking and the ambiance was so surprising, that he was distracted into hearing the message. Verve is living out their core value of **Irreverence TO Reverence** with clarity so powerful that it captivated Warren immediately. They state the value as *We do anything outside of sin to uncross the arms of unbelieving people to lead them to the cross so Jesus can remove their sin.* The service reached an end, and Warren snapped out of his amazement thinking, “*\$%@!, its over. I didn't get around to wrecking it!”

Showing up again the next week, he sent Vince an email saying the service was strangely addictive. But he expressed quite clearly that he HATED Vince and everyone at the church. It wasn't long before he was driving 45 minutes to come to all three services. After one of them

Vince saw him and commented that surely Warren had figured out by now that all three services are identical. Warren's reply shocked me...

"Man, I know...I just can't get enough of Jesus."

Wow! What a powerful and convicting statement from someone who had not even given their life to Christ yet. I want to sincerely say that with as much desperation as Warren. A man who was dedicated to hating God and destroying His church is so thirsty for Jesus that he can't get enough. Vince and Verve are living out the unique identity and mission God has planted in them with such compelling clarity that they showcase the irresistible grace and beauty of Jesus.

measures of success

I love how they creatively and succinctly express the essence of how they measure success in their church. Let these sink in a little:

God Stalkers

- 1. Intimacy with God: How have I passionately pursued meaningful time with God?*
- 2. Identity in Christ: How have I allowed God to love me just the way I am, and how have I allowed Him to show me where He loves me too much to leave me that way?*
- 3. Obedience to the Holy Spirit's direction: How have I been inviting God into all my decisions?*

Grace Wholesalers

- 1. Intimacy with Others: How have I passionately pursued deeper relationships with those closest to me?*
- 2. Authentic Relationships: Have I allowed God and a few friends to see and deal with my hurts and hang-ups this week?*
- 3. Evangelism: Who have I invited to church this week?*

Guerrilla Lovers

- 1. Influence for God: How have I passionately pursued opportunities to ambush a few people with God's love?*
- 2. Contribution: How have I allowed God to show me where I can generously invest my time, talent, and treasure into His Kingdom?*
- 3. Multiplication: Who am I inviting to serve with me?*

What is going on at Verve is a powerful expression of how God's clear vision and focus expands influence and effectiveness. I encourage you to check out more of what's going on, and hear the outrageous stories of God's impact in people's lives. You can find Verve on the web [here](#).

You can see more of Warren's amazing story of transformation on YouTube [here](#)

What is the unique identity in your church just waiting to be unleashed?

Read more from Tony [here](#).

