

Spiritual Food Served on Demand: How Faith Radio is Ministering to the Generations

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From its base in Montgomery, Ala., Faith Radio has spent decades using the power of radio to fulfill a single mission: sharing the hope of Christ. What began as a local broadcast ministry has grown into a regional network with two FM stations and numerous translators, reaching far beyond its hometown roots. As a leader in Christian broadcasting, the station's approach offers lessons on the topics of audience engagement, combining teaching and music, and effectively using both traditional and digital media.



Part of the team driving this mission includes Bob Crittenden, Director of Special Projects and host of "The Meeting House," who has served at Faith Radio for more than 34 years, having begun his career in Christian radio in the 1970s. Billy Irvin, the Director of Ministry Relations, focuses heavily on community involvement and building relationships with donors.

Faith Radio operates on the conviction that despite shifts in media and technology, "ministry is never going away," Irvin said. "We will always have to do God's work in ministering to others." Though some assume radio is losing relevance, research continues to show otherwise. The medium remains a trusted, personal medium, reaching people in their cars, at home, or on their mobile devices. "Radio is a medium that can go anywhere," Crittenden said, "can be a companion to someone wherever they are." Faith Radio sees its primary job as fulfilling the calling to "go and make disciples." The effectiveness of this approach is wide-ranging, ministering to people as young as 14 and as old as 90. "We never forget that God's Word is for everybody," Irvin said. "So, whether we sing it, preach it, teach it, it accomplishes what God intended."

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— Billy Irvin



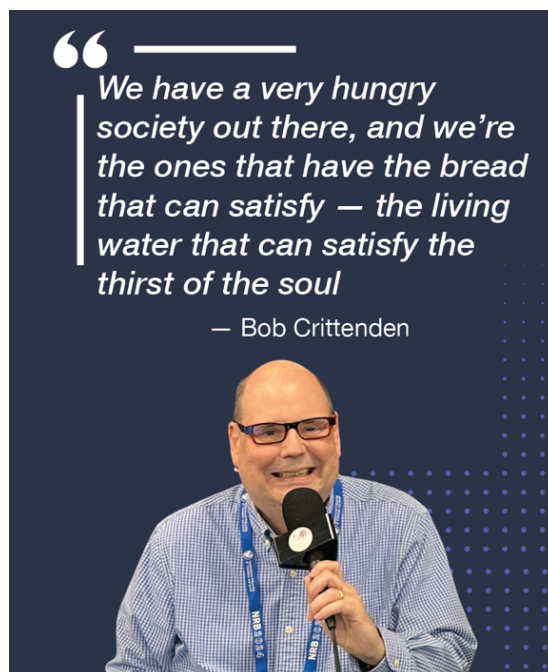
Faith Radio's unique mission, established in 1984, is to provide a blend of Christian teaching and music. Listeners have compared the programming to attending a full-day Christian conference. The music selection is designed not just for entertainment, but to draw listeners into an experience of worship in the Lord's presence. The station is deliberate about including various arrangements that reflect a variety of worship genres, whether traditional or contemporary, while remaining biblically centered. In the same vein, Faith Radio also seeks out the very best Bible programs and teachers. Recognizing that modern audiences expect flexibility, Faith Radio has embraced new

technologies. They rolled out a fresh, comprehensive, on-demand section for their website and app. Irvin compared today's digital ministry to a spiritual drive-thru, explaining that audiences now expect access to content whenever they want it, rather than at specific broadcast times. "We now have the ability to take that same spiritual food and serve it whenever you'd like it," he said. People are no longer accustomed to waiting, and Irvin points out we need to be where the people are—"in the fast-food line of social media, the on-demand section."

Faith Radio adheres to the goal of having a "global reach with a personal touch," as Crittenden put it, fostering relationships within the communities they serve. This personal approach often means staff members step in as friends and ministers to their audience. They partner with local and national ministries, promoting their banquets, events, and disaster relief work, acting as a connecting "central nervous system" for the Christian community. "It's not unusual for us to get called to go to the hospital and visit one of our listeners because they may be disconnected from the church," Irvin said. "It's not uncommon to go to their home and pray with them or help them walk through some things, whether it's at funerals [or] weddings."

The ministry provides tangible support resources, including a magazine sent out four times a year, which features an Advent guide. They also keep resources on hand to mail to listeners, ranging from grief books to material on blended families or parenting teenagers. Faith Radio's fundraising event is their annual golf tournament. The tournament, in its 26th year, brings together hundreds of people and provides spiritual resources and devotionals, sometimes leading attendees to find Jesus.

Crittenden and Irvin observe that our culture is desperately searching for answers right now. While mass media offers incredible resources, people are discovering that "the world's answers aren't working for them anymore," as Crittenden said. Faith Radio believes this presents a tremendous opportunity for the church and Christian media to offer hope. They are confident that by teaching and preaching Jesus, they provide the needed hope because "truth wins, and Jesus wins," Irvin said. "We have a very hungry society out there, and we're the ones that have the bread that can satisfy," Crittenden said, "the living water that can satisfy the thirst of the soul."



Thank you for letting Faith Radio be one of the many ways you share Jesus with others!

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