

Unlocking Our Growth Potential: A Strategy for Building our Local Church Body

The purpose of this module is to:

Improve personal and church ministries to the unchurched.

Objectives :

- *To envision and to enhance our personal outreach;*
- *To evaluate the church's ministry to the world;*
- *To enlarge our sphere of influence as God's people.*

I. Why should we prioritize evangelism?

- Outreach _____ God's Kingdom—
"Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full.'" (Luke 14:23)
- Jesus has _____ us to reach out—
"As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world." (John 17:18)
- Faith-sharing _____ spiritual growth—
"I pray you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ." (Philemon 6).
- Ministry to the world brings _____ to God—
"I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do." (John 17:4)
- Our mission is the same as Jesus' mission. Jesus is God's _____ for us to follow.
(Ephesian 5:1-2)
- We accept his _____ as our own. This is the natural next step as we read the Bible and apply it to our lives.

II. Will our evangelistic strategy be _____?

Here are ingredients observed in effective evangelism.

- Build _____ relationships. This is so important. That's why it is the first step. If people cannot trust and like us, they will probably not share spiritual conversations or listen to us.
- Begin to witness _____. We will speak in some fashion if we really are imitators of God who care for people.
- Extend an _____ to church or an event. Most everybody appreciates an invitation. Asking shows we care. It is a signal to the unchurched that we have them in mind. Granted, they may not accept our invitation.
- Follow through with a _____. If they do come, they may be open to explore spiritual things further.

- E. Find an “open door” to _____ the gospel. Opposition did not stop Paul from presenting the Gospel whenever possible. (1 Corinthians 16:9)
- F. Begin the discipleship _____. The apostle Paul instilled these values in Christians for years and he did not cease night or day to warn everyone, even with tears. (Acts 20:31)
- G. Celebrate what _____ has done!

III. How do we really tap into our potential?

- A. Evangelism _____ with the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. The Spirit’s job description is to convince people of sin and righteousness. (John 16:8)
 - 2. The Spirit _____ people into truth. (John 16:13)
 - 3. The Spirit comes alongside us, as a _____, to help us help Him. (John 14:16)
- B. God _____ the mission of evangelism to the Church. (Eph. 3:10)
- C. Evangelism, to be effective long term, will have certain foundational bricks laid:
 - 1. **Vision:** A leadership team with an agreed upon vision. This vision will be instilled throughout the congregation.
 - 2. **An accurate assessment:** The shared vision must be aimed at needs that can be met. Leadership will present solutions to problems.
 - 3. **Commitment and perseverance:** This is the only way the vision can be fulfilled, because obstacles, set-backs, and frustrations will arise. The congregation will respond to the promise given to those who persevere. (Galatians 6:9)
 - 4. **Unity:** The church will become likeminded or else it will never enjoy growth together. Disunity, not diversity, causes harm to God’s work in the church. (1 Corinthians 1:10, Ephesians 4:3, 13)
 - 5. **Passion and enthusiasm:** The more people unite under one mission, the more passionate they become.
- D. God uses people to _____ the Church. (Eph. 4:11-13)
 - 1. The teaching and pastoring ministries are usually blessed and released.
 - 2. Apostolic, prophetic, and evangelistic ministries usually need cultivating.
 - 3. Those possessing these spiritual gifts prepare God’s people for service.
 - 4. The gifted and graced leaders move the body of Christ into unity and maturity.
 - 5. The kind of education referred to here is on-the-job-training.
 - a. The best training takes place in real life experiences.
 - b. Trained leaders mentor emerging leaders.

E. God directs us to use a _____ of methods. (I Cor. 9:22)

1. The church will plan ministries to which outsiders may be invited.
2. Church goes want to invite friends and family to gatherings that address their needs and interests.
3. These events should be clearly focused, intentional, and even up to par with what people expect professionals to produce.
4. Outreach events aimed at young families, mothers, teens, skeptics, athletes, or other groups with special interests can be offered.
5. Worship services will provide:
 - a. Cultural relevance—the Gospel should be proclaimed in a way that non-believers may understand.
 - b. Excellent audio/visual—music and message will take into consideration the listeners' hearing and preference.
 - c. Thoughtful and meaningful teaching of the Word—aim at combining scripture with relevancy.
 - d. A stimulating atmosphere and pace—the program of worship cannot be dull and boring.
 - e. Engaging components of worship—should make the congregation think about their own lives and draw them into a closer relationship with Christ.
 - f. A wide variety of classes and small groups—provide excellent training for people with different ministry styles and interests.
 - g. A wide variety of service projects—give people chances to help others as well as fellowship and get to know each other better.

IV. What else needs to happen?

A. Following up on _____ time worshipers

1. While some visitors to church wish to remain anonymous, others will provide contact information.
2. The church should develop a plan by which they communicate love and acceptance.
3. A responsive congregation will set the climate for future spiritual decisions and growth.

B. Inviting the _____

1. Take initiative to build rapport with the unchurched.
2. Offering friendship to people may lead them to accept an invitation to visit church.
3. Remember the people most influenced by us are co-workers, clients, friends, relatives, neighbors, and strangers.

C. Responding to God's call with _____

1. God has called us to action—reaching lost people. (2 Corinthians 6:1-2)
2. We desire to do His will and to care for people.
3. We will pray for faithfulness and courage.

Small Group Activity

What is the most important reason for you to prioritize evangelism (see section I)?

How does God's mission and model of ministry affect your life?

What specific actions might God be prompting you to do next?

How would you measure your involvement in your church's vision?

Action Planning

The homework assignment for this module is to develop or to improve an effective evangelistic strategy. Here are some discussion starters:

What is your church's strategy for evangelism?

What are your thoughts about the seven step strategy (see section II)?

What could our church do to reach out that we are not doing presently?

What is our church doing that is high quality?

What ministries need improvement?

What is God doing right now in our church?