**Preparing an EVANGELISM STRATEGY**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

* One of the most important aspects of any church’s evangelism strategy is the resources available.
* If the resources are not available they should be prayed into being.
* Prayer for time, finances, personnel etc.
* If a lack of trained personnel is a problem then a training programme should be initiated.

Our evangelism should be **SMART**.

**S**ystematic

**M**easurable

**A**greed with God

**R**esource Related

**T**ime related

SMART yes, but not necessarily in that order.

**For example, a door- to-door visitation programme should be:**

SYSTEMATIC

* What streets are to be visited?
* Is a questionnaire to be used?
* Who organises follow up?
* etc. etc.

MEASURABLE

* Not all evangelism is measured by “head counts”.
* We must not fall into the trap of success equals souls.
* Of course our aim is to see the church full of saved sinners.
* The question is **“What does each individual church consider a success?”**
* In this example, we must ask: **“How many doors are to be knocked on to see one person saved?”**
* We are commissioned to preach the Gospel not to convert people. Although we should expect converts if we are truly preaching God’s word and not our own clever words!

AGREED WITH GOD

* No matter what we think is a good idea is it what God wants?
* Prayer is essential in all aspects of evangelism so we need to spend time in prayer asking what God wants us to do rather than thinking of good ideas and asking God to bless them – I know this from experience!

RESOURCE RELATED

* A church of 50 people can not expect everybody to be involved in everything let alone evangelism.
* With only 50 people finances will be limited - therefore the quality of literature produced might reflect this.
* However, the church should be as professional as possible no matter what the resources.

TIME RELATED

* A time limit is helpful.
* It is not an effective use of time to visit 20 streets with a community survey if it takes 2 years.

**2. THE STRATEGY**

* It is obvious that the more people who hear the Good News the more people we are likely to see won for Christ.
* So where do we find these unsaved people?
  + Shopping centres and educational establishments are the most obvious answers.
  + More people will hear the Gospel in these places in one hour than in several weeks of door-to-door work.
  + However, friendship evangelism is always more successful.
  + Therefore, a combination of mass evangelism and personal witnessing is preferable.

**Mass Evangelism**

1. A good quality, professional leaflet distributed to every home in the area.

2. A well organised door-to-door campaign.

3. Regular open-air outreaches.

4. School assemblies, Christian Unions etc.

**Friendship Evangelism**

1. Mums & Toddlers meetings.

2. Coffee mornings/evenings.

3. Special events to which personal invitations can be given.

The above lists are by no means exhaustive.

**3. EXTENDING PRESENT OUTREACH**

* To develop present outreach in a church it would be necessary to observe the current set up.
* It is possible that certain areas of outreach have already been developed to their full potential.
* Increasing the frequency of mums & toddlers meetings etc.
* Produce good quality tracts for distribution:
  + Include testimonies and scripture verses etc.
  + Have a tear-off slip for prayer requests
* Organise an ongoing door-to-door campaign.
* Coffee mornings could be extended to evenings also.
  + Screen DVDs, invite guest speakers, organise debates etc.
* It is always a good idea to organise evangelistic events at Christmas and Easter as people are generally more responsive to the Gospel at these times.
* Praise parties could also be organised at Hallowe’en and bonfire parties on November 5th.

**4. INITIATING NEW EVANGELISM**

* Approaching from a creation perspective.
  + With schools and colleges teaching evolution as a fact it is possible to give an apologetic and/or screen a video and then invite questions.
* It has been my pleasure to organise many events such as:
  + fun days at Waterloo Marina
  + picnics in a local park,
  + barbecues and bonfire parties.
* There are many other ideas which can be developed
  + pool parties (hire a local swimming pool and invite people to bring along inflatables, organise games etc.) - free to unsaved guests
  + DVD evenings where a good Christian movie is screened and supper provided - all free of charge
  + evangelistic Bible studies
  + Church day outings (walks in the country, trips to Alton Towers etc.)
  + Competitions
  + sponsored events (walks, swims etc. with the money going to charity)
  + barn dances
  + question times (either in the church, local radio or press when people can have their questions about Christianity answered
  + questionnaires
  + marches
  + car washing days
  + concerts
  + quiz nights
  + prison and hospital visits
  + friendship breakfasts and dinners
  + a monthly free newsletter to deliver to nearby homes
  + organise a “latch key” club
    - The list is almost endless!
* Having been involved in many county-wide evangelistic initiatives I have developed a good inter-church network and have contacts in many Merseyside churches.
* Experience has shown that the most effective way of developing links with other churches is firstly a brief letter explaining intentions, secondly a telephone call and thirdly a face-to-face meeting.

**For some evangelistic events the use of “neutral ground” is important as many people will not visit a church. Jesus told us to “Go into all the world.......” not to wait for the world to come to the church. However, that does not mean that we should never use a church building.**

**5. TRAINING AND ENCOURAGING**

A couple of years ago the Lord spoke to me about the three Es:

* Evangelism
* Equipping
* Encouraging - in that order.
* To that end I have always
  + preached to the lost first
  + provided training to willing volunteers second, and
  + encouraged the volunteers third
* Over the years I have organised many teaching and training seminars on evangelism. For example:
  + Introduction to Evangelism
  + Personal Evangelism
  + Open Airs
    - For 10 years I was involved in street evangelism during which I have experienced many situations; e.g. angry shopkeepers and passers by; questioning from police and council officials; hecklers and drunks; and, I am glad to say, sinners coming to salvation.
  + Door-to-Door work
  + Literature Evangelism
  + Sketchboards
  + Effective Testimonies etc.
* As mentioned earlier it is difficult to organise any evangelism without resources.
* Willing volunteers are a great asset and should be told so.
* I have attempted to put forward an Evangelism Strategy in simple terms.
* In order to elaborate I would need knowledge of:
  + finances
  + church motivation
  + personnel
  + geographical limitations
  + local needs etc.
* **Finally and possibly most important of all is PRAYER.**
* **Prayer is the backbone of evangelism.**