

MEET JESUS

Running a Mission

A thorough list of principles and ideas to help you plan a Campus or Church mission.

Running a Church or Campus Mission

Principles and Practices

Most Christian groups (Churches or AFES) do some kind of outreach or mission to invite people to meet Jesus every year. Here are some things that might be helpful to consider as you brainstorm ideas and make your plans. ***Spend some time in prayer before working through the document.***

Part A: Main Method

There's lots of exciting things that we can do to invite people to meet Jesus. But how do you evaluate the options? Is any method better than another? *Rank these methods from most effective to least effective.*

- Walking up to strangers and asking them what they believe.
- Soap-box evangelism (ie. preaching on street corners).
- Running a free BBQ or handing out free hot cross buns at Easter time.
- Handing out flyers to advertise evangelistic talks.
- Being a loyal friend to unbelievers.
- Reading the Bible with an unbeliever.
- Putting gospel tracks into all the mailboxes of student dorms.
- Going to a music concert with your unbelieving friends.

Discuss your thoughts.

How did you decide which would be most effective?

- That's what's worked in the past.
- That's what we've always done.
- Some methods feel more socially awkward than others.
- That's what I think the Bible says is the best way.

Part B: Audiences and Aims

Now that we've thought about the main mission method, we need to consider *people*.

People: Who is your audience?

This question might feel obvious – there's lots of unbelievers in your neighbourhood and unbelievers on your campus – but did you consider the audience in your own Christian group / Church? With every mission you run, you're likely to have two audiences...

1. Internal audience (all the Christians in your campus group / church)
2. External audience (everyone on your campus / community)

Why is it helpful to consider both groups? Fill out the table below.

	Why do we need to consider both groups?	What do we need to consider for both groups?
Internal Audience	Cf. 1 Pet 2:9, 3:15,	
External Audience	Cf. 1 Cor 9:19-23	

Summary: Broadly speaking, we can either GO out to meet people in their context and tell them about Jesus. Or we can INVITE people to come to an event that will teach them about Jesus. Often, both approaches are necessary. So if you want to increase your task force and have all the Christians in your group / Church going out, speaking of Jesus and inviting their campus / neighbourhood to your evangelistic events, then they'll need to be equipped – with flyers and other advertising leaflets, and also with the gospel! So, consider how you are training and equipping your people to be empowered to go out and speak of Jesus.

Understanding the external audience (students on your campus, individuals in your neighbourhood) is also important. Perhaps there's a high Hindu population in your area, perhaps there's lots of International Students, or post-Christian Lawyers... Knowing your external audience can help you 'be prepared to make a defence' for the particular questions that arise from different demographics. But don't forget, the gospel of Jesus is eternal and universal! It does not change. So we mustn't let our desire for cultural awareness prevent the boldness required to gently speak the truth in love.

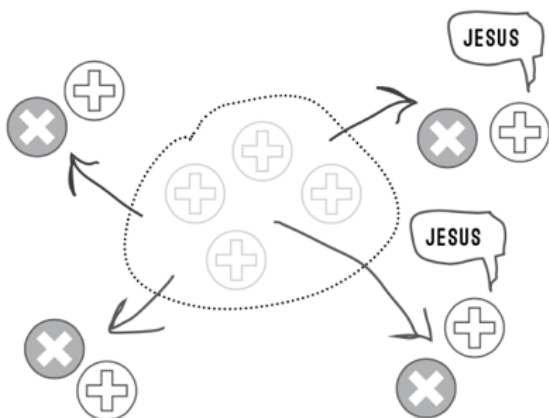
1. SPEAK

We are to declare the wonderful works of God to everyone in the world (Ps 96:2-3). We can do this boldly (Eph 6:19, cf. 1:20-21). But we must do this with gentleness, respect, and a clear conscience, because Jesus is holy (1 Ptr 3:14-16).



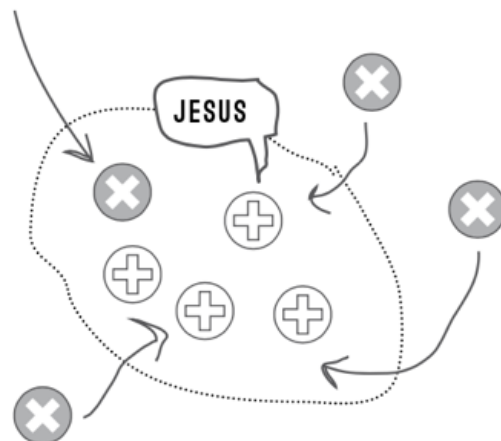
2. GO

It's good to meet with other Christians, but we also need to go out into all the world to teach people who don't yet know about Jesus.



3. INVITE

Once we've found people who don't know about Jesus, we can invite them to come and learn more from the Bible with us.



Plans: What are you aiming for?

A wise person once said, "If you aim for nothing, you'll hit it."

So, it often helps to have specific goals for your two audiences.

Here are some possible goals that you could consider. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these goals?

1. Goal for Internal Audience: Evaluate these goals...

- a. 54321 –
 - i. Friends with 5.
 - ii. Pray for 4.
 - iii. Invite 3.
 - iv. Come to 2.
 - v. Read with 1.

- b. ABC –
 - i. Adoration of Jesus.
 - ii. Boldness because of Jesus
 - iii. Conversations about Jesus.

- c. DOERS –
 - i. Desire
 - ii. Opportunities
 - iii. Equipped
 - iv. Replicating
 - v. Supported

- d. Pray. Invite. Read

- e. Glorify God, Grow in Evangelism, Share the Gospel

As you consider these goals (as well as come up with your own), these questions might be helpful to consider:

- How will you increase people's desires for Christ's glory and address the heart issues?

- How will you broaden people's understanding of evangelism so that people will continue evangelising all their lives, far beyond this year's mission?

- How will you nurture a culture of evangelism?

- How will you train people for the task?

2. Goal for External Audience: Evaluate these goals...

- a. That people will increase in their understanding of Jesus.
- b. That every person on campus / in our community knows about our Church / AFES group.
- c. 100 unbelievers are invited to meet Jesus.
- d. Many on our campus meet Jesus and are saved

As you consider these goals (and come up with your own), it might be helpful to intentionally consider these questions:

- Is conversion an appropriate goal? What might happen if we push this goal too hard?
- Should we use statistics or hard numbers in our goals? What might happen if we do or don't?
- Do you want your audience to know about your group or about Jesus? What difference might this make to both audiences?

Part C: Brainstorming

Now that we've done the all important work of thinking about our Mission Method and our Audiences and Aims, we can start to think about the actual substance of mission!

NB: At this point, it might be helpful to note that the brainstorming and planning for an evangelistic mission might not always be linear. For example, you might come up with a great 3-Part Goal for your internal audience only to decide that – after you determine your events and promotions plans – there's an even better 3-Part Goal for your insiders! So, just know to expect this, and don't fully sign off on all elements until the end of the planning process.

Despite this, earthly time is always linear, and so we suggest you brainstorm and decide things in this order.

1. **Main slogan:** Spend a decent chunk of time (maybe 30min) brainstorming your main slogan / theme (this will be the primary focus of all promotions and events). Try to refrain from filtering out ideas at this point and simply come up with as many as you can think of.
 - a. **Possible idea generators & Examples:**
 - i. Ask an intriguing question: Eg. "Is God dead?"
 - ii. Speak to audiences' felt needs or objections: Eg. "Why is there so much suffering?"
 - iii. Truth statements: Eg. "Jesus is better."
 - iv. Invitations: Eg. "Meet Jesus" or "Jesus is _____"

 - b. **Evaluate your slogan ideas** (start by evaluating the examples above if you don't have your own):
 - i. What does each slogan achieve?

 - ii. What does each slogan communicate?

 - iii. What's the tone?

 - iv. Is the gospel proclaimed?

Slogans can be tricky... Asking a question can spark curiosity, but it can also confirm negative perceptions. Addressing felt needs or trendy topics can resonate but lack distinctiveness. Gospel statements proclaim Jesus but can sound preachy or provocative. In recent times, it seems that mission campaigns have favoured the softer approaches. Perhaps try something different every now and then! Afterall, spending promotional resources on a message about Jesus (rather than an interesting question) does seem worthwhile!

2. **Main Event(s):** Assuming your mission is both attractional AND missional (you're running evangelistic events as well as doing walk up / door knocking), you need to work out what you're inviting people to! Here's some common ideas, but you might be able to think outside the box! No pressure though. Sometimes what's common is common for good reason.

- An Evangelistic Talk or series of Bible Talks
- A gospel drama (eg. [The Mark Drama](#))
- Dramatic reading of a gospel (eg. [Simon Camilleri](#))
- A public debate or forum
- Reading a gospel 121 (eg. [Uncover John or Uncover Mark](#))
- A Christianity explained course (eg. [Introducing God](#) or [Christianity Explored](#))
- An evangelistic dinner series (eg. [Taste and See](#))

2. **Decide dates of events:** Check the ministry calendar. Check public calendars. If other churches are running events at the same time you want to, perhaps you could consider joining forces! After all, "The world might believe that [God] sent [Jesus] ... if they are one." (John 17:20-21).

- **NB:** Most missions take quite a bit of time to prepare. You probably want to plan your mission at least a year in advance. This will give you time to train your people, book venues and speakers and do all your promotions.

3. **Consider follow up:** It normally takes time for strangers to build trust between them and become friends. So, it's not surprising that it often takes a while for people to trust Jesus. Given this, people need multiple encounters with Christians, with the gospel and the Bible before they'll commit their entire lives to Christ. So, it's incumbent upon us to not just run a one-off event, but to consider follow up. It's a bit like visiting a website. Web developers often speak about 'the journey' of website visitors. You could try and work out what the likely 'journeys' people will have through your mission efforts! The trick is repetition of communication. Provide assurance and easy access for people to know that Jesus is the good and safe refuge to all those who humbly call upon him for forgiveness.

Here's an example of a journey through a typical mission...

- **First exposure** = Stranger sees a billboard, social media ad, poster, or t-shirt. These create background noise that helps build 'brand' trust and familiarity with your mission / group.
- **First contact** = Stranger sees your Market Day stall (eg. during Orientation Week) and remembers seeing that same coloured logo somewhere. They cautiously step closer.
- **First conversation** = Stranger is approached by a Christian wearing your colour and logo. They speak about faith, hear the gospel, and are invited to...
- **First event** =
 - i. Stranger attends a Bible Talk and hears about Jesus from John's gospel.
 - ii. They also hear a public announcement inviting people to explore more at an Uncover John group. They're also invited for refreshments and mingling after the event.
 - iii. Refreshments are tasty, the people are friendly, and they also know to invite the visitor to the Uncover John group.
- **Follow up email** = The visitor receives a friendly email from your group thanking them for the visit and inviting them to the Uncover John group. The email reminds them of the details and pencil the dates in their diary.
- **Follow up course** = The visitor attends the first night of the Uncover John course. They're not sure if they'll come the whole time, but everyone is friendly, the content is interesting, the food is nice. When someone asks if they'll return next week, they say yes.
- Once they finish the course, they're invited to a Bible Study or to read the Bible 121.

We could go on! But hopefully you get the idea.

Most Churches and campus groups are likely to have some of these systems in place. But it's good to revisit them during mission planning and to rearticulate the "journey" to your insiders.

NB: You may have noticed that we included some typical "follow up" courses under the "Main Events" heading above. This was intentional! Follow up can take quite a bit of effort and arranging! So sometimes you can give these follow up ideas a promotion and make them the main thing!

4. **Promotions:** There's lots of different ways to promote Christ and your mission events. Which of these might you major on for this mission?
 - In person:
 - i. Word of mouth
 - ii. Door to door invites (letterbox drops or door knocking)
 - iii. Walking up to strangers in a major thoroughfare (also might have Street Stall)
 - In print:
 - i. Leafletting
 - ii. Posters
 - iii. Banners, billboards, signs
 - iv. T-shirts, hats, hoodies (and other merch)
 - Online:
 - i. Website
 - ii. Facebook events
 - iii. Instagram
 - iv. Meta ads
 - v. YouTube videos
 - vi. Google Ads

5. **Train your people:** There's so much to do in running a Church or campus mission. So you want to mobilise as many of your people as possible! Here's a few things you may wish to consider:
 - **Conviction: How will you remind people of God's glorious plan to exalt Jesus as the sublime and superior Saviour King?** Doing this will help shift people's hearts from duty-bound to delight in God's plan to glorify his Son, Jesus. They might even become natural evangelists who speak about Jesus all day, every day, regardless of whether you're in 'mission season'.
 - **Character: What are the heart issues hindering people from overflowing with joy to proclaim Jesus naturally?** Eg. are they fearful, apathetic, defeated, concerned about their own reputation...
 - **Competency: What other practicalities are hindering people from evangelism?** Eg. are they too busy? Do they not know what to say? Practical training topics might include:
 - i. What is the gospel?
 - ii. What, why, when, how of evangelism.
 - iii. How to do welcoming.
 - iv. How to talk to strangers.
 - v. How to make friends.
 - vi. How to read Uncover with an unbeliever.
 - **Your Mission plans:** To state the obvious, in order for Christians to invite their friends to your evangelistic events and follow up courses, they need to know about them! How will you inform them of the mission and how it's all working and how you'd like them to be involved? You might consider running a 'Mission Launch' at your Church Camp or your students' Mid Year Conference.

6. **Tasks, deliverables, and delegation:** There's so much to do to make mission happen!
- Write a list of ALL the tasks needed to make mission happen. List them under categories and headings.
 - Who will do all these things? Put possible names of people who could take responsibility for each area or task.
 - Work out how to communicate clearly and helpfully so that people understand their tasks and responsibilities.
 - Create a timeline on your calendar, working backwards from the main mission events, to determine timelines for tasks and deliverables.
7. **Pray!** Of course, our efforts will be in vain if the Lord isn't working through us (Psalm 127:1). So...
- **Plan to pray!** Consider when you'll pray as a group, and how to encourage individual prayers.
 - **Plan to praise!** How will you share stories of God's work among you? How will you celebrate and praise God for his grace in calling people to salvation? You could consider a What's App group, or a segment in your monthly newsletter.
 - **Pray as you begin planning, and keep on praying.**
 - **Pray that the Lord will be glorified through the proclamation of his Son and that our hearts will seek his glory alone and not our own.**