

# BEST PRACTICES:

## HOW TO IMPLEMENT OUTREACH POST COVID-19

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Over the last several weeks, there is no doubt the current pandemic has caused each of us to adjust and adapt how we do youth ministry. Life and ministry, post COVID-19, will look different—but how different? There is no way of knowing. What we do know is that God is still in control and the message of Jesus needs to be communicated. The world needs us to lead boldly and courageously in these uncertain times. Will we, the Church, rise to the occasion to declare the hope and love of Jesus and lead people into a growing relationship with Him?

Implementing an outreach strategy for our youth ministries post COVID-19 starts the same way it started pre COVID-19: in God's Word. The methods may change but the message never will.

*"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19–20).*

*"And then he told them, 'Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone'" (Mark 16:15).*

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).*

*"But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you" (2 Timothy 4:5).*

Here are ten practices to implement outreach post COVID-19:

### 1. PRAY...PRAY...PRAY!

Ask God to reveal the needs; to increase the urgency in your spirit to meet the needs; and to equip you to do what needs to be done.

### 2. STAY TRUE TO YOUR WHY

This will keep you focused, motivated, and in line with God's purpose for you and your ministry.

### 3. DEVELOP A PLAN AND A STRATEGY

Determine the needs of the community, schools, people, etc., and what it will take to meet those needs. Meeting practical and physical needs will lead to the greatest need being met: lost souls coming face-to-face with the Savior of the world.

### 4. EQUIP AND RELEASE YOUR TEAM

Equip and release your students, leaders, and whoever else may be part of your team to be who God created them to be so they can leave their mark on the world around them.

### 5. MAXIMIZE WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE IN YOUR TOOLBOX

Identify what resources your church already has that you can utilize: facility, relationships in the community, finances, etc.

### 6. IDENTIFY AND KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

This will help you determine your methods and approach. It will also assist you in recruiting specific people to be part of the team. For example, if you are doing a kids outreach, you want to supplement your team with people who are gifted in working with kids. Not everyone will thrive in every situation.

### 7. PUT THE PLAN INTO ACTION

Now it's time to take your plan from the whiteboard and execute it.

### 8. SPREAD THE WORD

Get the word out to where it needs to go. Utilize social media, word of mouth, your website, signs, banners, announcements, and any other viable mode of communication. Make sure you have communicated the details clearly: who, what, when, where, and why.

### 9. DEVELOP A PLAN TO FOLLOW-UP

You need to have a follow-up strategy in place to connect with the people you will be ministering to. Remember, Jesus not only said to go, but followed that with "make disciples." Our job is not done after we tell them about Jesus.

### 10. TAKE TIME TO EVALUATE AND DEBRIEF THE EVENT

Plan a date and time to meet with your team to debrief: share testimonies, discuss what worked and what didn't work, and share any other observations. The event may have been a tremendous success, but there is always room for improvement.