

Mass Evangelism: A Quick Guide

Advantages of Mass Evangelism

When purely thinking about the numbers, the main advantage of mass evangelism is its greater reach than one-on-one evangelism. But there are more advantages.

Cultural advantages

Mass evangelism is at times a more suitable and feasible option in certain cultures or contexts [within the 10/40 window](#).

In collectivist cultures, the community does almost everything for and with each other. Showing the *JESUS* film to the community together at a local church or gym corresponds with cultural norms instead of brushing up against them.

Consider cultures that are hierarchical with a tribal chief or leader. That tribal leader might need to grant his permission to allow his tribe to have a showing, and if they did, it would be in a controlled setting, with everyone, including the chief, in attendance. The showing would proceed only after he'd heard and approved the content. You can see a similar scenario play out in our short film series, [Walking With Jesus](#).

Bridging the gap and eliminating barriers

Pastor Greg Laurie ([Harvest Crusades](#)) argues that mass evangelism events actually bridge the gap for non-believers who would never step foot inside a church. It presents a low-barrier entry to Christianity, drawing someone to God's love outside of church walls.

What's more, by providing exposure to the message of the gospel, mass evangelism can pave the way for later personal conversations about Jesus.

Church unity and training

Another positive result of mass evangelism is that it brings local churches together, fostering unity and collaboration. These events remind the local community about the presence of God and the active

work of the church. In many instances, the events offer valuable training in prayer, counseling and personal evangelism.

Learn more about these advantages [in this article on the harvest.org website](#).

Common Misconceptions About Mass Evangelism

1. **Mass evangelism is the same as [digital evangelism](#).** Digital evangelism happens on a broad scale as it reaches people across borders and time zones. But digital evangelism specifically shares the gospel online through social media, blogs, podcasts, livestreams, online events, online forums, and virtual reality. Mass evangelism allows for evangelism to specific groups in person, not digitally.
2. **Mass evangelism only occurs in crowds of hundreds or thousands.** Mass evangelism events gather people, but can also reach groups already gathered. Groups don't have to be large, and evangelism can happen in a myriad of locations. Mass evangelism can happen at your church outreach events. That includes youth camps and prison ministry and outreach to local homeless shelters.
3. **Mass evangelism replaces personal evangelism and discipleship.** Many Christians detail a journey with Jesus that started with an evangelism event. They were invited by their friend and soon after had a gospel conversation. Mass evangelism won't provide all the answers. Getting personally discipled is what ensures the seed of the gospel message grows.
4. **Mass evangelism means or expects that everyone who hears the gospel at the event will choose to follow Christ**—essentially producing a group salvation decision.

Dr. Scott Pauley of the Enjoying the Journey podcast highlights this in [The Misconception of Mass Evangelism](#). While it's a joy to preach the gospel to crowds of people, people don't come to know Christ in a group. That spiritual shift happens inside each of us by way of the Holy Spirit. That awareness of our sin and God's redemption through Jesus alone happens individually. And sometimes it takes time.

We're hardwired to connect with God on a personal level. Mass evangelism plants the seed as a first step toward an encounter with Jesus. We rejoice when one person opens his heart to the possibility of following Jesus.

Cautions and Criticisms of Mass Evangelism

Mass evangelism has been controversial in the past, especially when the evangelist is famous or a celebrity in Christian circles. Some associate mass evangelism with healers and the prosperity gospel. Mass evangelism can also conjure up the traveling evangelist not following up with discipleship.

Throughout my life, I've experienced Christianity and evangelism across different denominations. I don't deny that mass evangelism that leans into charisma and promises of miracles and prosperity instead of the Word of God is harmful and yields negative results.

I would offer these brief cautions regarding any event:

- Keep it gospel-message focused and theologically sound. God can show up in miracles and healing with no help from us.
- Work with local believers. Ensure a local church is available to connect with new believers to provide discipleship or follow-up.
- Focus on the message, not the speaker. Be cautious of centering a mass-evangelism event around one speaker.

We can reframe mass evangelism when we return to the truth that [evangelistic preaching can transform lives](#), and when multiplied exponentially through the wide net that mass evangelism casts, it can extend the reach of the gospel.

Planning and Preparation

When planning a mass evangelism event, our best advice is to build it around your audience and context. Think through where you're hosting the event and for whom. Consider the kind of event and plan to locate it where it's most convenient and beneficial for them.

Cultural sensitivity

We should always work within and not outside cultural norms.

- **Research** the people group on [JoshuaProject.net](#).
- **Look into the customs and traditions** of the community you're hoping to reach.
- Even better, **have a conversation** with someone from that community to learn what environment and style best speaks to them.

If you're holding a mass-evangelism event outside of your home country or in a community of people from a different country than your own, consider [3 Reminders at the Heart of Cross-Cultural](#)

[Evangelism](#), which features tips from staff member Connie Thomson on approaching evangelism from a cultural perspective.

Ethical considerations

Any planning for mass evangelism should include respect and sensitivity for the people you're trying to reach. Each is loved by the Father. Some people who attend may be coming from difficult situations or may be dealing with grief or the effects of being witnesses to war.

- **Choose a neutral location.** Plan your event in a location that's not exclusively tied to any particular denomination or is a source of controversy, arguments or disputes.
- **Seek out common ground in the community.** Take the time to learn about the people and meet with them to build genuine relationships.
- **Meet physical needs** before spiritual needs whenever you can, but don't make attending your event a condition to receiving aid. Learn more about [Evangelism through Humanitarian Aid](#).

Proving yourself earnest and trustworthy through your actions, along with proper planning and learning, will help ensure you don't unintentionally spark tension, division, pain or confusion. In this way we care well for the people we are trying to reach with God's love.

Trauma-informed evangelism

In her post [Trauma-Informed Evangelism in a Wounded World](#), Jennifer Eshleman-Huff, daughter of Jesus Film Project founder Paul Eshleman, tells the story of when Jesus Film Project teams showed the *JESUS* film in Rwanda, soon after the 1994 genocide.

When they heard the movie in the language of their enemy, they were visibly uncomfortable. This misunderstanding created a barrier to the gospel. The team pivoted to a different language more familiar and less painful to the people group. In her post, Jennifer also shares important principles to follow for trauma-informed evangelism.

Trauma-focused resources can help navigate and address traumatizing situations. [her.Bible](#) is a free audio Bible voiced by women from diverse backgrounds, offering women a way to hear God's Word in a voice that feels safe. It's ideal for women who have experienced domestic violence. [Stories in Grace](#) is fantastic to use in safe houses and with refugees.

Collaboration and partnership

Local contacts (churches and small groups)

The key to successful mass evangelism has always been getting the support of local churches. Anywhere you share the gospel, you'll want to connect grounded believers from nearby churches and new believers interested in learning more about following Jesus.

Work with local churches and pastors who are excited about sharing the gospel in their community. Share planning responsibilities and allow church attendees to volunteer. They may volunteer to host outdoor outreaches during which you can invite people to the main event.

Lastly, tap into parachurch or humanitarian organizations like [Unto®](#) and their connections for further assistance. None of us can do it alone. We're all most effective when we [partner](#) with the body of Christ.

Volunteers

Holding a mass-evangelism event will require plenty of willing hands, which means you'll need to recruit volunteers.

- Delegate large and small tasks to your volunteers, but also share insights into the nuts and bolts of your outreach. You never know how God has gifted volunteers with strengths that may be your weaknesses.
- Take the time to train your volunteers in prayer, counseling and personal evangelism.
 - Months in advance, your volunteers can be praying for the success of the outreach. How can you help strengthen their prayer life in the process?
 - Practice with your volunteers in sharing their story or testimony and in transitioning into one-on-one conversations about the gospel after your event.
 - Not everyone is a trained counselor, and they don't have to be. Connect with Christian counseling organizations for guidance and resources.

This guide originally appeared in [Mass Evangelism](#), on the [Jesus Film Project blog](#).