

TODAY we are going to revisit evangelism. We introduced these evangelism Practices last year and we want to revisit them.

Pray - Pursue - Prepare - Practice - Proclaim - Plan

We are not re-visiting evangelism as an underhanded rebuke.

“People are not being faithful in evangelism so we need to do training on it.”

Evangelism is not tacking another thing onto our busy lives. As You Go.

WE are not launching an evangelism initiative but we are revisiting these principles so that we might be intentional in living as Christ’s ambassadors.

Let me introduce you to our evangelism philosophy at River. Actually this won’t be an introduction because you already know the philosophy you just may not know that you know the philosophy.

Question- Anyone want to take a guess at our philosophy of evangelism?

One word.

Faithfulness.

1 Corinthians 3:6 (Paul) I planted the seed, Apollos watered, but God made it grow.

Paul and Apollos faithfully did their part and God brought the increase.

You might think of this as a Left - Column / Right Column approach to Evangelism.

Live in the Right Column and leave the Left Column to God.

Everything that we are going to talk about today belongs in the Right Column.

The left column is off limits because the results belong to God.

Why is it important to stay out of the results column?

Perfection

Perfection - If results belong to us, then we would have to make our presentation perfect.
 “My friend did not accept Christ. What am I doing wrong?”

When I take responsibility for the results, I begin **selling** instead of **telling**.

My focus becomes “closing the deal” rather than faithfully presenting the truth.

Be faithful to “Tell and Not Sell” Leave the results to God.

The Holy Spirit convicts and convinces, we present.

My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power so that your faith might not rest on man’s wisdom but on God. 1 Corinthians 2:4,5

These evangelism practices are in no specific order. They are not steps to evangelistic success! They are **disciplines** that you can build into your life to help you develop a missional lifestyle.

Partner up with someone you do not know well. Rather than you LIT of spouse partner up with someone “new” to you so that you can learn from them.

I’m going to talk through these practices and at the end of each section I will give you some time to discuss a question with your partner.

Pray

The results rest with God then we need to be talking to Him - praying!

Pray with eyes to see. God help me to see where you are at work.

Pray for three groups of People

Yourself

Keep in step with the Holy Spirit. Gal 5:16

Bill Hybels Quote - I'm more convinced than ever that the absolute highest value in personal evangelism is staying attuned to and cooperative with the Holy Spirit.

I was praying for a friend of mine and asking the Holy Spirit how to be his friend. We do not have a lot in common but we met because we were neighbors.

"God help me be a friend to this person, what should I do?"

"Talk to Him"

I texted him. Paused on my Quiet time. "Hey what's up?"

Other Believers (Your Group Members, River as a whole)

Paul prayed for others. I pray that you (others) maybe active in sharing your faith. Phil 6
Paul asked others to pray for him. Pray for me that I might have boldness to share as I should. Eph 6:19

Unchurched Friends

- God would draw them. John 6:44
- They would seek God. Acts 17:27
- Holy Spirit would convict them. John 16:8
- They would see the truth. 2 Cor. 4:4

Question with Your partner.

Think - Talk about - Share.

What does prayer regarding evangelism look like in your life or group? Do you have a list in your journal? 3X5 notecard? What has helped? What has hindered?

Pursue Trust Relationships

Forbes Magazine quoted a study that claims the number of Americans with no close friends has tripled.

Same survey - the number of people that Americans trust to talk to about important things has fallen from three to two.

The need for trusted friendship has not declined, but the resources have been cut by $\frac{1}{3}$.

There are people who come here on Sunday morning who are looking for friendships and connection

Pursuing trust relationships means that we notice people.

“You mean God could really be at work in that person’s life and he could actually use me in their life.”

* Story of the Chess Tournament at Brooks.

* “These are not my people”

Jl Packer on Personal Evangelism

The truth is that real personal evangelism is very costly, just because it demands of us a really personal relationship with the other person. We have to give ourselves in honest friendship to people, if ever our relationship with them is to reach the point at which we are justified in choosing to talk to them about Christ and in speaking to them about their own spiritual needs-without being either discourteous or offensive. If you wish to do personal evangelism, then-and I hope you do; you ought to-pray for the gift of friendship. A genuine friendliness is in any case a prime mark of the man who is learning to love his neighbor as himself.

J. I. Packer. Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God (Kindle Locations 716-719). Kindle Edition.

Hybels Tips for Pursuing Relationships. He calls it “Living in 3D”

3D Living

1. Develop Friendships by engaging in the lives of people.
2. Discover Stories before sharing your own story or God’s redemptive story
3. Discern Next Steps by following the Holy Spirit’s Direction.

The groundwork in evangelism is done in these two disciplines - Pray and Pursue.

God is a Pursuer who meets needs.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

Ask God to Help you notice people

Smile at the grocery story

Talk to your waiter

Look for people you don’t know at church.

Take an interest in your co-worker or neighbor.

People really like to talk about themselves :) give them a chance to do so.

Ask God to show you needs that others have. Loving people is meeting people’s needs.

Question for Your Partner.

How have you effectively pursued others and made friends?

What are some barriers you’ve experienced in pursuing others?

How have you overcome those barriers?

Prepare your heart to share the Gospel.

Another way to say **Prepare** is to say **Preach the Gospel to yourself.**

You are preparing every time that you have a QT and you say, thank you God for your salvation.

What is the purpose of preparing? To Remember.

We remember - "I once was lost but now I am found."

God I was a sinner but you saved me. You can save this person I am pursuing.

We remember - "People are actually lost and separated from God."

We remember - "Ongoing sin is a normal part of an unbeliever's life." Sin is normal, but not OK.

This year, Emily started middle school. The first week she came home from school she was shocked. "Mom, they cuss a lot!" "They cuss all the time."

She was appalled. I am glad she was shocked and appalled.
She is still trying to be their friend.

I am not saying, embrace sin, but embrace and the people who are still slaves to sin.

No discussion this time. Here is how I am preparing. I am reading Ephesians 2:1-10 to myself regularly. I personalize it and slow down enough to picture what the passage is saying.

I focus on two important phrases.

BUT GOD

AND GOD

Let me read it to you.

Practice Sharing the Gospel

Have a clear presentation of the Gospel ready to share.

The Gospel is Good News. It is words to share. Yes it is demonstrated in our lives and shared in the context of trust relationship but it is still News.

Sharing the words is where most of the nervous, sweaty palms, knot in the stomach comes.

Will we practice enough and be polished enough to kill the nervousness? Probably not.

I stand in front of you guys every Sunday morning. Twice a Sunday and I'm still a little nervous.

Always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who ask you for a reason for the hope that you have, but do this with gentleness and respect. 1 Peter 3:15

Honestly I have looked down on practicing a gospel presentation. I want it to be natural and to flow with ease in the context of a conversation. I do not practice because I want it to be natural.

That is just silly.

The songs I sing on Sunday with the most clarity, emotion, and ease are the songs I have memorized and have sung a hundred times. It doesn't mean the songs are void of meaning but their meaning is more apparent to me because I know them really really well.

Think about this.

If God is the one drawing people to himself.

If God wants to use people as Ambassadors to make his love known.

Wouldn't make sense for God to lead people to those who are ready and willing to share?

Yes it would.

Don't be like me and look down on practicing. Live in the right column and do what you can to be prepared to give an answer.

Activity for Practicing Sharing the Gospel

Trace is going to share with us a Gospel presentation that they use in Christian Challenge called Two - ways to live.

Many of you use the Bridge Illustration and it is printed on the back of the bulletin.

Some of you use Share Jesus Without Fear.

Some of you use stories from scripture to share the gospel.

Some of you might have your own personal testimony written down.

Keep doing what you are doing but if you want another presentation or have not memorized one. Here is one that you can use.

If you'd like to know more about these other presentations let me know.

The key is not finding the "right" one but having one you can use.

Trace come on up.

Trace Share Two Ways to Live.

Questions for your partners.

Do you have a gospel presentation memorized?

If you've shared the gospel, How did the conversation turn to a gospel conversation?

Proclaim: Identify with Christ.

Spiritual potato chips. Saying something about your life or God's activity that leaves people wanting more.

Every spiritual conversation **does not** have to tell the whole story.

Someone may just need to hear one little bit of the truth of the gospel.

Proclaiming does not have to be getting the ball on the 25 yard line and moving the ball in one play the length of the field to score a touchdown.

Proclaiming is faithfully moving the ball as a you have opportunity.

5 yards at a time, 10 yards at a time.

Important for us to keep in Step with the Holy Spirit to discern how to move the ball forward and when someone might be right on the goal line.

Suggestions for Identifying with Christ.

1. Have single story conversations.
2. Invite your Friends to church, barn dances, parties at your house, Christmas Eve Service, Treat Street, Y Pool Parties, Easter Service etc. (*Example Challenge Student)
3. Pray for your friends' needs. (*Example Matt)

Question for Your Partner

What are some ways that you have identified with Christ in relationships?

Are there times that you've dropped the ball?

How have you responded if you dropped the ball?

Plan: Involve Others in Sharing the Gospel

Involving others is where group life intersects with sharing the gospel.

3 M's of Group Life?

Meetings -

Mission -

Member Care -

Mission. Looking to see where God is at work and joining Him.

Involving others in sharing the gospel is looking where Mission overlaps with Meetings and Member Care.

Meeting and Mission Overlap

- Who is one person in your life that you are praying would come to Christ?
- Who is one person that is not here tonight (at group) that you would like to be here?

Member Care and Mission Overlap

- Night Out - invite unchurched friends.
- Baby Shower / Wedding Shower - invite unchurched friends
- Serving One Another - invite unchurched friends.

John 4 Jesus has just had an encounter with the women at the well. A great demonstration of personal evangelism.

Then Jesus says this to his disciples.

35 Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. **36** Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. **37** Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. **38** I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

I have tended to focus on - **Look at the fields they are ripe for harvest!**

Jesus says - The sower and reaper will be glad together. This is a team activity.

It does not matter who gets to sow. Who gets to reap. They both rejoice together at the harvest.

Plan for ways for your church friends to be around your unchurched friends.

You might sow seeds in someone's life and someone else might get to be the harvester.

Bill Hybels calls this cross-pollination. Getting people close to God and those far from God in the same room and seeing what God might do.

Question for your Partner

Is there something that keeps you from “mixing” your church and unchurched friends?

What ways have you involved others in making God’s love known to your friends?

Concluding Activity

Place a checkmark next to the discipline that you currently practice.

Circle the one(s) that you want to begin practicing or improve in.

Conclusion

Our evangelism philosophy - Faithfulness.

Be faithful in the left column, trust God with the results in the Right column.

Pray - Pursue - Prepare - Practice - Proclaim - Plan

Incorporated these disciplines faithfully with an eye to help people come to faith in Christ.

As group leaders we want to be faithful with our responsibility to help people grow in evangelism.

In order to help you put this in front of your group, Jim and I will be putting a study guide together that you could use in your group in December to help train and equip people in Evangelism.

Let me leave you with this verse and then we will be through.

Let **love** and **faithfulness** never leave you. Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name with God and man.

Proverbs 3:3-4.

If we approach evangelism and our role as a leader with love and faithfulness we will always win. Regardless of the results, be faithful, that is what God has called us to.

Evangelism

-

- Pray
- Pursue
- Prepare
- Practice
- Proclaim
- Plan

Faithfulness

I planted the seed, Apollos watered,
but God made it grow.

1 Corinthians 3:6

Faithfulness in Evangelism

Left Column

Right Column

Results

- Pray
- Pursue
- Prepare
- Practice
- Proclaim
- Plan

Faithfulness in Evangelism

Left Column

Right Column

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“Tell Don’t Sell”

Pray

1. Yourself

2. Other Believers

3. Unchurched Friends

“I’m more convinced than ever that the absolute highest value in personal evangelism is staying attuned to and cooperative with the Holy Spirit.”

Bill Hybels

Just Walk Across the Room

Pray

1. Yourself

“I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith..”

2. Other Believers

“Pray for me that I may share...”

3. Unchurched Friends

Apostle Paul

Pray

1. Yourself

- *God would draw them.
John 6:44*

2. Other Believers

- *They would seek God.
Acts 17:27*

3. Unchurched Friends

- *Holy Spirit would convict them. John 16:8*
- *They would see the truth.*

Partner Talk - Pray

- What does prayer regarding evangelism look like in your life or group? Do you have a list in your journal? 3X5 notecard?
- What has helped? What has hindered?

Pursue Trust Relationships



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J.I. Packer

Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God.

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Partner Talk - Pursue

- How have you effectively pursued others and made friends?
- What are some barriers you've experienced in pursuing others?
- How have you overcome those barriers?

Prepare Your Heart to Share
the Gospel

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The purpose of preparing is
to **remember**

- *I once was lost but now I am found.*
- *People are actually lost and separated from God*
- *Unbelievers are slaves to sin. Sin is normal in their lives.*

Prepare Your Heart to Share the Gospel

Ephesians 2:1-10

But God who is rich in mercy...

And God has seated you in the heavenly realms...

Practice Sharing the Gospel

Have a clear presentation of the gospel memorized and ready to share.

“Always be prepared to give an answer...”

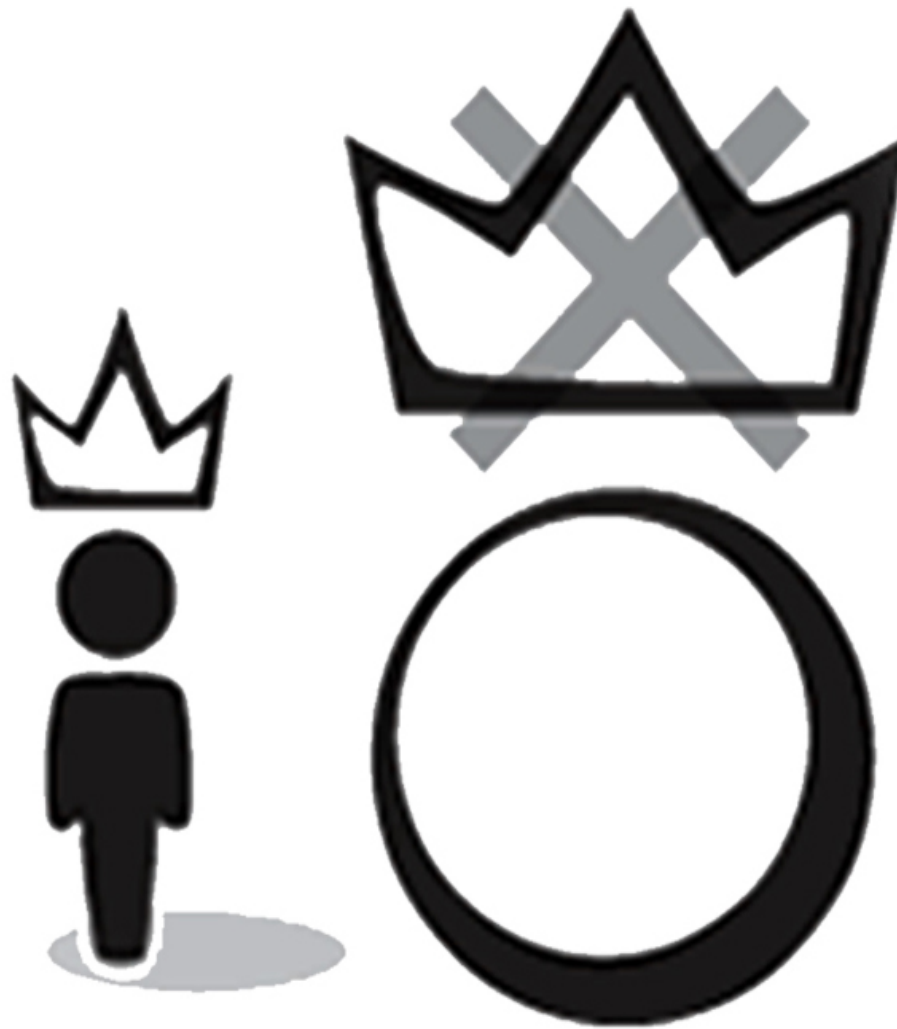
Two Ways to Live

Matthias Media

Mobile App: 2WaysToLive



“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.” -Genesis 1:31



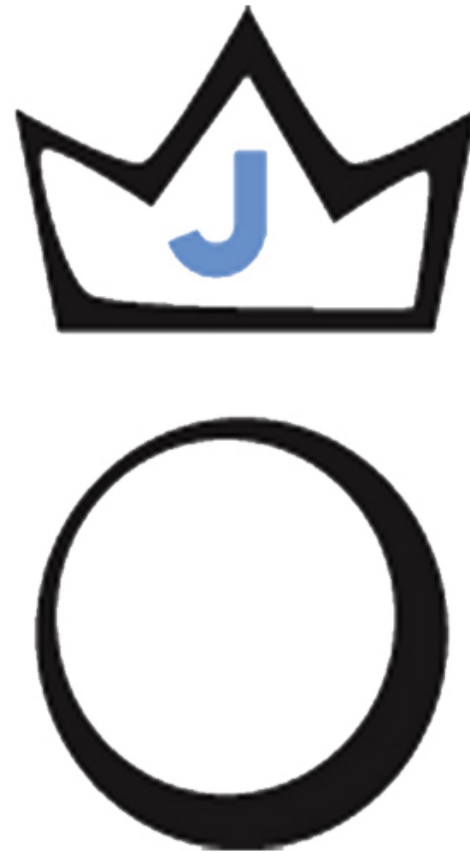
“...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” -Romans 3:23



“For the wages of sin is death...” -Romans 6:23



“God made [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in [Jesus] we might become the righteousness of God. -2 Corinthians 5:21



“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.” -John 3:36



My way



God's new way

“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” -Romans 10:9

Partner Talk - Practice

- Do you have a gospel presentation memorized?
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Proclaim: Identify with Christ



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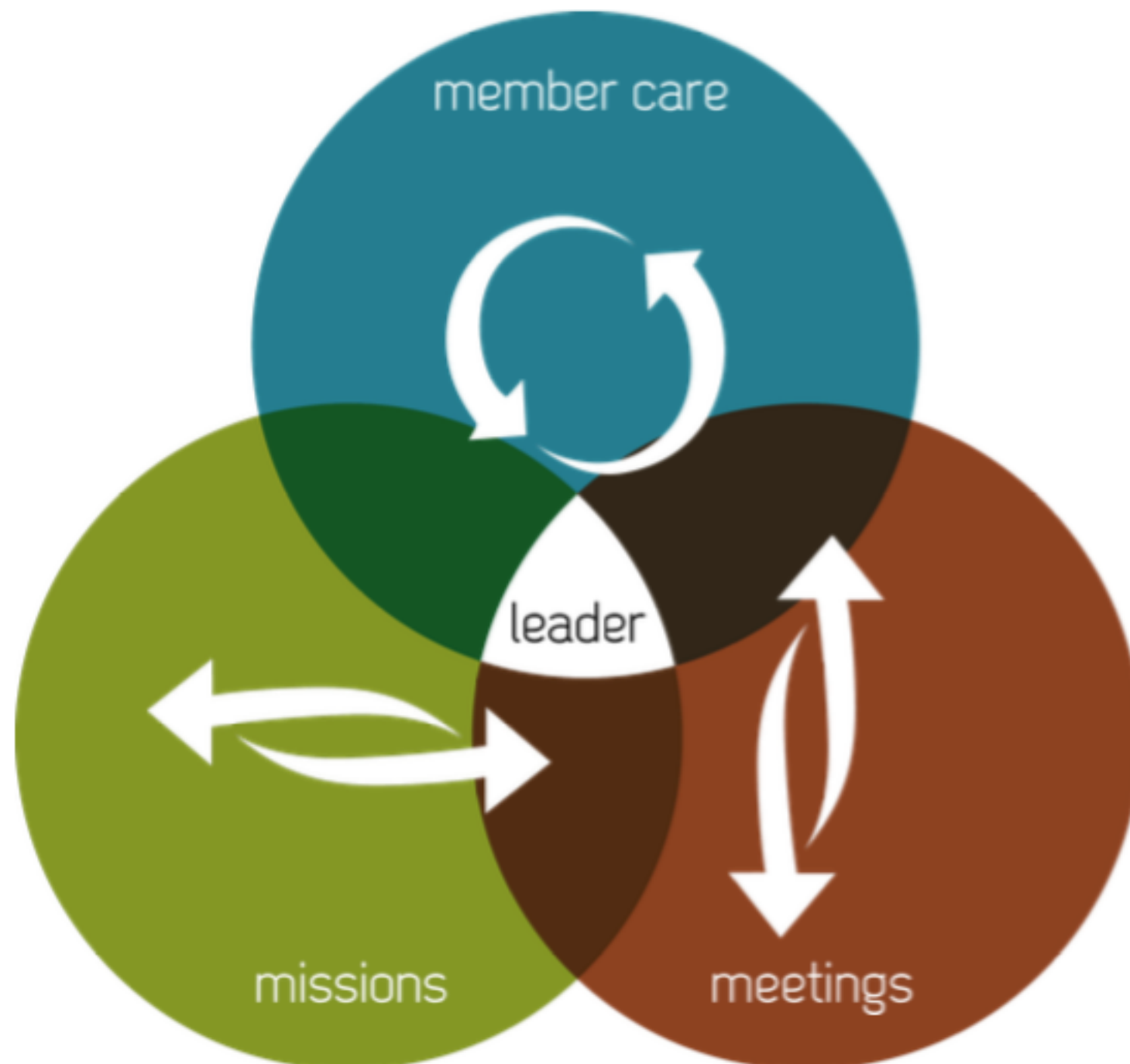
Partner Talk - Proclaim

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Plan to Involve Others

Mission: Looking to see where God is at work and joining Him.

Plan to Involve Others



Plan to Involve Others

Meeting and Mission Overlap

Who is one person
in your life that you are praying would come to Christ?

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that is not here tonight (at group) that you would like to be here?

Member Care and Mission Overlap

Night Out

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Concluding Activity

- Place a checkmark next to the discipline that you currently practice.
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Evangelism

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Evangelism Practices - Leadership Community 11.5.17

Pray

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Practice

Have a gospel memorized.

1. Bridge Illustration
2. Share Jesus without Fear
3. Use bible stories
4. Write and memorize your own before and after story.
5. Two-Ways to Live (Trace)

Pursue

Bill Hybels calls this "Living in _____"

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Proclaim

_____ with Christ.

Leaving Spiritual Potato Chips

Suggestions for Proclaiming

Prepare

Purpose of preparing is to _____ .

Plan to Involve Others

Mission and Meetings overlap

Mission and Member Care Overlap