

GROW Tools & Tips



Evangelism FAQ

The GROW initiative is a broad and comprehensive approach to evangelism. The weakness in some popular models of evangelism is that they fail to see the importance of every soul-winning phase. They view different aspects of evangelism as competing methods rather than valuable phases of the same process. Consider how the GROW model of disciple-making helps to answer common questions about evangelism and clarify many misconceptions:

➤ **Question:** “Does public evangelism work anymore?”

GROW Response: It is important to recognize that public evangelism is only one important part of an ongoing evangelistic cycle. We can’t rely on public meetings to do everything or expect them to reap what we haven’t sown. When active ministries are fostered in EVERY PHASE of the disciple-making process, results improve dramatically. Most importantly, we must never allow discouragement to dampen our efforts: “In proportion to the enthusiasm and perseverance with which the work is carried forward, will be the success given” (*Christian Service*, p. 262).

➤ **Question:** “How often should we do evangelism?”

GROW Response: The way this is worded suggests that evangelism is an annual event, but successful evangelism is more than an event. It’s an active PROCESS with ongoing evangelistic activity such as ministering to people’s needs, sharing truth through literature and media, giving Bible studies, gaining decisions to follow Christ, and training and nurturing newly baptized believers to become disciples who make other disciples. True evangelism never really stops.

➤ **Question:** “Is friendship and compassionate service the best evangelism?”

GROW Response: It’s true that friendship and service is a vital PART of evangelism, but it’s only the beginning. Preparing the soil of the heart to receive the truth is only the first of many essential phases of soul-winning. Unless the farmer plants the seed after preparing the soil, for instance, there will be no harvest. The book *Christian Service* tells us that in addition to making friends and serving others, God has called us to “lead souls into the truth” (p. 69).

➤ **Question:** “Should we quit holding public meetings since personal ministry is more effective?”
Or, “If we do hold public meetings, should we just use personal invitations rather than mass mailings or other advertising?”

GROW Response: It is true that personal ministry is most effective. But public meetings and mass advertising can do things that personal efforts can’t do. That’s why when extensive meetings and personal effort are combined, “a more perfect and thorough work may be wrought” (*Christian Service*, p. 121). The comprehensive process outlined in the GROW model avoids an EITHER-OR mentality and encourages us to “sow beside all waters” (Isaiah 32:20).

➤ **Question:** “Are lots of baptisms evidence of successful soul-winning?”

GROW Response: Of course successful soul-winning will include a harvest. But if we fail to cultivate properly with sufficient Bible study and baptismal preparation—if we baptize too **HASTILY**—it can cause problems. “Great care should be exercised in accepting members into the church; for Satan has his specious devices through which he purposes to crowd false brethren into the church, through whom he can work more successfully to weaken the cause of God” (*Evangelism*, p. 313). Loving guidance and instruction before baptism is as important as baptism itself.

➤ **Question:** “Is baptism the ultimate goal of soul-winning?”

GROW Response: This is a common misconception that prevents churches from reaching their full potential for growth. Our mission is not to make members, but disciples (see Matthew 28:19). Baptism is significant, and it’s an important goal. But it isn’t the ultimate goal. We must still nurture and train newly baptized members to become active **DISCIPLES** who make other disciples. Only then will our growth pattern go from the plan of addition to the plan of multiplication! “One soul, won to the truth, will be instrumental in winning others, and there will be an ever-increasing result of blessing and salvation” (*Christian Service*, p. 121).

