



Churches Of God Outreach Ministries

People working together to proclaim the Gospel

*"The Churches of God Outreach Ministries provides leadership, information, and biblical teaching in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Matthew 28:19-20"*

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# The Role of the Local Church in Outreach

**A major function of the local assembly is a corporate outreach with Christ's Gospel.  
Our mission is "to all the world" and not merely to achieve personal salvation!**

by James McBride

So it is understandable that brethren will want to do all in their power to reach out to neighbor, family, friends, acquaintances - and to all mankind - with the most exciting and satisfying story ever told. As wrote the apostle Paul "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to all that have faith" (Romans 1:16).

How can we approach this responsibility Jesus Christ has laid on each of us?

What we can do as individuals is addressed in the leaflets *Always Use Milk: an approach to personal evangelism* and in *Do You Just "Pray and Pay"?* and in the *Personal Evangelism* tapes by Ronald Dart They are available from the Conference Office. But what about corporate action?

There are two aspects of this: What can your local assembly do? and, How can we co-operate with other assemblies to do more than a local work?

## **Evangelism by the local assembly**

The larger the assembly, of course, the better placed it is to evangelize, for it takes resources to carry out even a small "campaign". If resources of personnel and finance are readily available then more can be achieved. There could, for example, be a "media blitz" using newspaper ads, billboards, hand-bills, radio and television etc. Or a large personal appearance campaign could be launched. Joint effort through Conference can release the resources for these.

But what about the small assembly? The foundation principle is - *get on with it!* Do something within the gifts and pockets of the handful who are dedicated to the work. And do it *now!* Remember Gideon!

Here are some possibilities:

- Try an "Open Day" or "coffee morning" etc - display literature, answer questions, and - especially! - provide refreshments.
- Or a poster/literature display in a Library or other public place
- How about segmenting your "territory" and systematically leafletting every home over a month or a year. Thompson's Directories are useful.
- Advertise your church services regularly, giving topics to be tackled
- Launch a course of public lectures on Bible-related topics. Don't be put off by a small turn-out!
- Make friends with your local newspaper and radio station personnel. Tell them what you are doing, what you are about - perhaps by writing short pieces for their hungry news columns and slots
- Prepare an "asset list" - assess the gifts Jesus Christ has placed in your assembly, and build a project around them
- Invite family, friends and neighbors to a church picnic or pot-luck
- Set up a stall at craft fairs, county shows etc
- Can you get a regular slot on local radio, a column in the weekly press?

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A good “brain-storm” session will undoubtedly highlight many other possibilities pertinent to your group, your area. As resources increase opportunities will multiply. Let’s know your ideas, successful and otherwise - write them up for the church newsletter.

### Prepare Well

Before initiating a project, large or small, be sure to consider your options. Ask: Does the ad - or other method of outreach - fit in with the overall objectives of the Churches of God? Is it cost effective? Are there resources available for follow-up? And a strategy planned for follow-up? Does it reach the right “consumer” with a suitable message? Is it appropriate for that particular area? Does it properly reflect the standards of the Church? Is the information (e.g. the address, title) in an ad accurate? And do you know if the ad or project was effective anywhere else? Is it safe? Is what you plan subject to local bye-laws? Are you insured? Etc. All of these have been ignored at some time or other!

For example, you place an ad in the local paper. But is enough literature available to fill the responses? Is there money in the kitty to service those who respond? If the ad uses a local contact number - will there always be someone to answer the phone? Is someone available and qualified to fill visit requests? Be sure to “count the cost” of every aspect.

Careful preparation helps with budgetary control, response assessment, stock control, work organization etc. It can be the difference between success and failure.

Remember, however, that every outreach project is a *spiritual* exercise. It must be accompanied by strong and persevering *prayer support*, seeking guidance and God’s blessing on your efforts, and always within the principles expressed in God’s Word.

These factors are important. But having planned the project, keep it simple - *and get on with it!*

### Co-operative evangelism

A large and strong and committed local assembly can resource a large and effective work. But for most local assemblies the commission to make disciples from all nations is a pipe-dream unless carried out in co-operation with other assemblies.

To this end we work through the Conference. Delegates from the local assemblies can present ideas which their own assembly simply cannot resource. If Conference delegates approve the idea and provide the resources then the project can be actioned. It could be an overseas mission activity - financing, for example, outreach in Ghana or Israel or Poland. Or it could be a radio broadcast in Albania - or England! Or a national speaking or advertising campaign here at home. Or the resourcing of an evangelistic magazine or a leadership training facility. Even the setting up of a church-operated radio station. Etc!

But all such need the pooling of effort, the dedication of many brethren, a willingness to submerge personal and local interests for the advancement of the larger objective.

A great work remains, brethren. Let’s work together, as the end of the age fast approaches, to fulfill our great commission.

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