

Evangelism (outreach) is not an event. It's a sequential and cyclical **process** similar to farming. Harvests are always much greater after the ground has been cultivated, the seeds have been carefully sown and watered, the plants have been nurtured and pruned, and the fruits have been allowed to ripen. And just as important, all the work involved in properly farming the fields is rewarding only if each harvest is sorted and processed, and more seeds are reserved for more plantings with each consecutive season. As devoted Christian servants, we want to help produce the most bountiful harvests from the fields in which the Lord has sent each of us to work.

## **The Ten Commandments of Gospel Farming**

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**1. Thou shalt form a Social Action Leadership Team that will faithfully and humbly enable your church to conduct community-oriented outreach.**

Assemble a competent Farm Management Team.

**2. Thou shalt study the outreach method used by Jesus and pray for the church members to develop a Christ-like spirit of compassion for the people in your church's community.**

Refer to the Farmer's Almanac (Bible) and secure an endless supply of water (Holy Spirit).

**3. Thou shalt assess the resources in your church and consecrate them all to the Lord.**

Inspect and repair the farming equipment and take inventory of the farming supplies.

**4. Thou shalt define and describe your church's community and determine its general needs.**

Survey the land to be farmed.

**5. Thou shalt identify organizations and events in your church's community in which members of your church could participate.**

Attend to the crops that are already growing in the fields.

**6. Thou shalt ask the people in your church's community how your church could best serve their specific needs.**

Test the soil of the bear ground to determine its composition and farming potential.

**7. Thou shalt develop a strategic plan for community outreach in which the members of your church could serve in a variety of ways.**

Work out the details of the farming process: What to plant, and where/when/how to plant it.

**8. Thou shalt design community outreach services that are practical, relational, and continual.**

Obtain high-quality seeds.

**9. Thou shalt train volunteers and allocate resources in order to implement your church's strategic plan.**

Hire field workers and provide appropriate farming equipment and supplies for maximal growth.

**10. Thou shalt evaluate your church's community outreach efforts and results, and thou shalt adjust your church's strategic plan accordingly.**

Monitor the efficiency of the field workers and measure the quantity and quality of the harvest -- always learning how to be better farmers!

# Commandment #1 for Gospel Farming

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Thou shalt form a Social Action Leadership Team that will faithfully and humbly enable your church to conduct community-oriented outreach. (Assemble a competent Farm Management Team.)

**S.A.L.T. = Social Action Leadership Team**

**4-6 local church members** who are willing and able to:

- A) Work as a team that will help launch the church into ministry that will be meaningful to people in the community (outreach).
- B) Interview key leaders in the local community to discover the holistic (physical, mental, social, spiritual) needs.

**Goals:**

- 1) To provide a growing spiritual experience for church members.
- 2) To be intentional with a plan for church growth and use specific strategies.
- 3) To get involved constructively in the local community by providing significant services beyond the church walls.

-- Adventist Congregations Today: What Works for Church Growth. p. 33

**“Blend”**

Do not jump to the conclusion that the growing churches in this analysis focused entirely on community involvement at the expense of evangelism. Growing churches are very active in public evangelism, small group evangelism, and personal evangelism. They are also very involved in community service. **Warning:** The declining churches are the ones that eschew community service and focus entirely on evangelism, or eschew evangelism and focus entirely on community service. (or eschew both)

-- Balance and process: Plant ministries. Grow churches. p. 20

**Call:**

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. -- Matthew 5:13

**How are you going to answer the call?**

Who? \_\_\_\_\_

When? \_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

How? \_\_\_\_\_

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