



## Is Your College Ministry Ready for “Reopening”?

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With the rollout of vaccines, reopening is starting and speeding up quickly. This includes colleges and universities. 2 Timothy 4:2 says, “Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and teaching.” God calls us to be ready for this complicated time. So, how do we prepare our college ministries for what is coming?

- 1) Acknowledge we are not “getting back to normal.” Sure, we will have more freedom and fun options like eating out and going places without masks, but our students have changed. We have changed. Our perceptions, mindset, rhythms and goals have changed. The pandemic has pulled people back into themselves and made us all re-assess how we’re living and what is important. We have to realize that what is about to come will be different. Do not expect to go back to the ideas, methods and goals of 2019.
- 2) Don’t bring back things you dumped for a good reason. The pandemic helped us scrape off many unnecessary parts of our college ministries. We have come to realize that we wasted lots of time on less important ministry tasks. It has also helped us reclaim the priority and importance of personal ministry with students and teaching God’s Word in its simple beauty. Before you mindlessly walk back into old patterns stop and ask the question “do we really need this in order to effectively reach the lost and make disciples?”. If the answer is ‘no’ or ‘maybe’ don’t restart it.
- 3) Plan to recast the vision boldly. The last year has not be a waste, but it has erased some of the vision we had worked to right on the hearts of our students. Students may come to an event without knowing WHY, but they will not stay unless they know WHY. It’s time to tell them WHY again. And again. Remind them WHY your college ministry exists, WHY we make disciples and share the Gospel verbally, WHY students reach students, WHY we send students on mission to places with less Gospel, WHY we love and learn God’s Word. If we know WHY we are part of a group, we are more likely to invest and thrive.
- 4) Relentlessly focus on your ‘scorecard’. Your ministry needs a Biblical scorecard. It helps you set goals and know when you win and, more importantly, when God is moving. Our scorecard has 3 core questions. We work to align all our ministry to answer these questions.
  - Are we going onto campus to meet new students and verbally share the Gospel?
  - Are we implementing a disciple-making plan for every student in our ministry?
  - Are we mobilizing our students to invest their lives in places with little Gospel access?

What’s your scorecard? Make sure your scorecard is Biblical and true.

- 5) Prepare to engage this fall with freshmen and sophomores. We know the importance of engaging with freshmen and, if we’re honest, we know we missed connections this year with the freshman class. We can chock it up as a loss or we can be very intentional this fall to do sophomore outreach. They are harder to find, but they are there and they deserve someone to focus on reaching them with the Gospel.
- 6) Don’t abandon personal ministry. COVID-19 forced us to think smaller groups. We’ve learned to thrive in investing in small groups of students. Most college ministers have had more time to give to discipling



- 7) students instead of coordinating activities. Don't give up this change. Remember, the multiplying effect of investing in a few and challenging them to do the same. That is a much better use of our time than designing social media graphics, podcasting or ordering swag. We are called primarily to equip our college saints for the work of the ministry. As we reopen, commit to not falling back into activities that don't make disciples.
- 8) Pray hard. God knows your campus is reopening. God has big plans for the students you see each day. He has commanded us to pray for them – for unity among Christians, for salvation for the lost, and that laborers will be called out. Without prayer, our effectiveness at each of these things will be limited. I don't want to be limited in my effectiveness for Jesus. We may feel more empowered by reopening because we can do more, but we need more of God's work not our work.

Let's pray for God to move in power and for us to see an awakening and revival on college campuses. May God bless your efforts and may you see many students move from death to life and from apathy to abandon.