



**Our Soul-Winning
Bottleneck**



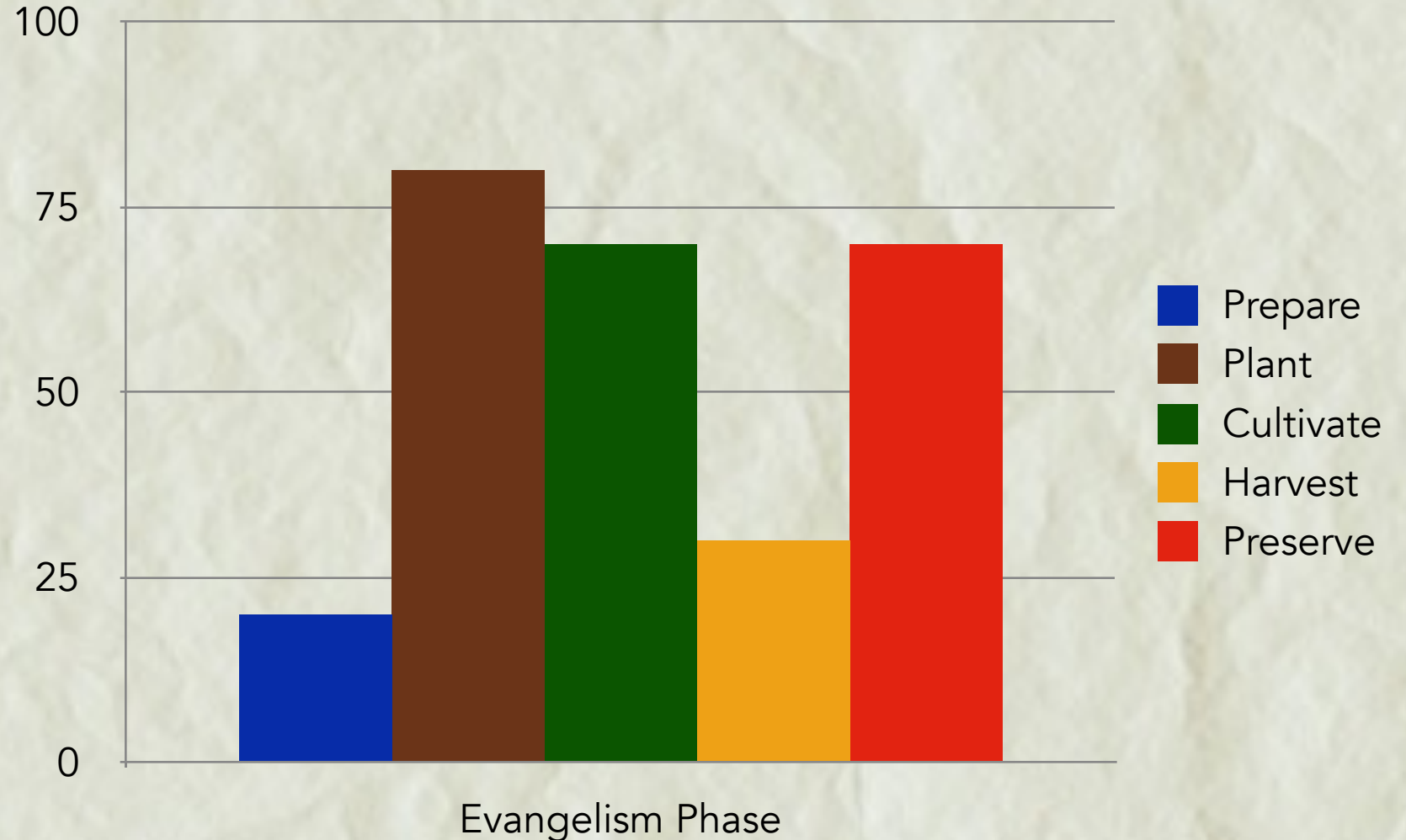
Just as agriculture is a cycle, the “Cycle of Evangelism” involves sequential steps that are each essential for true success in reaching people.



To make genuine disciples of Jesus Christ, we need to embrace the full cycle of evangelism—individually and corporately.

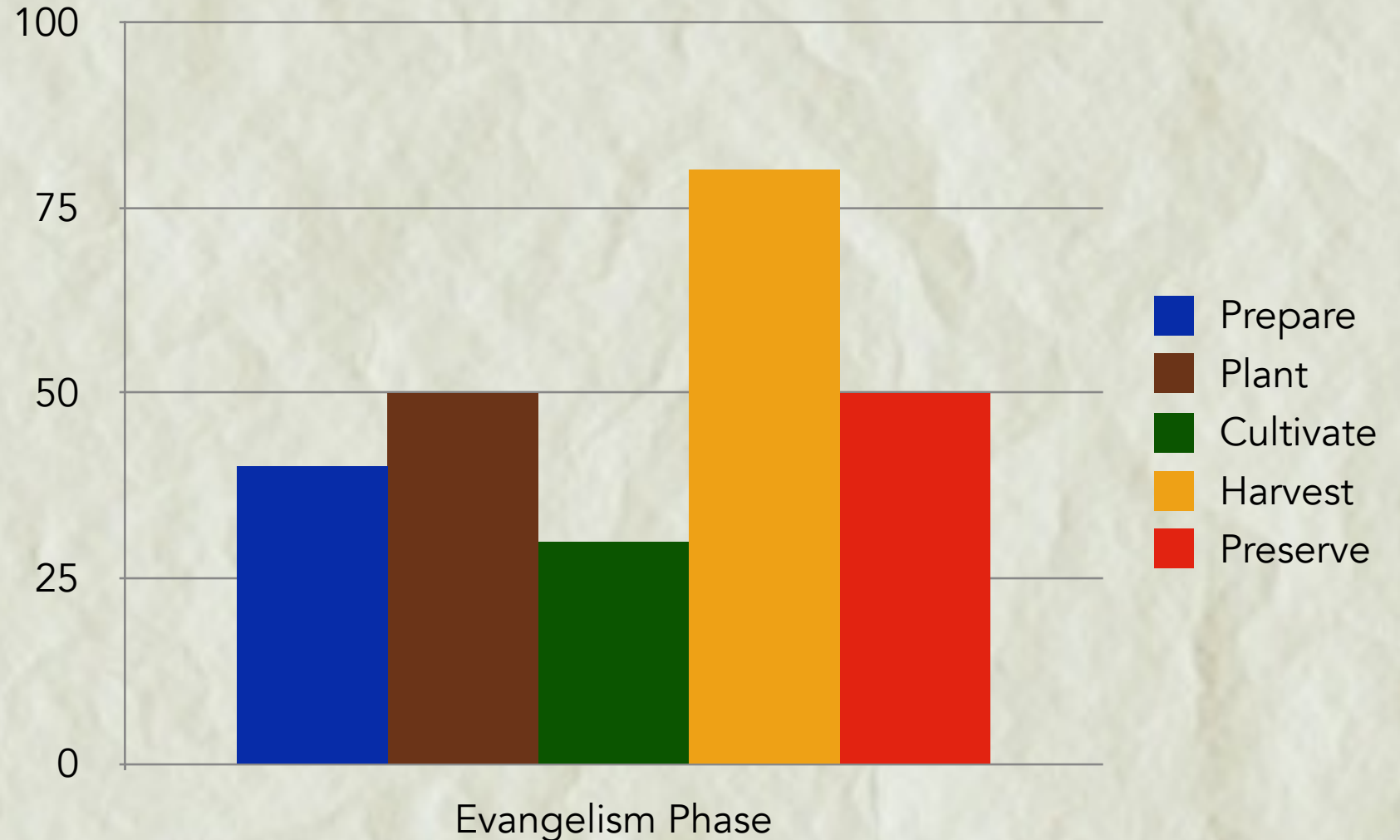
Local Church Growth Potential

Every church has different strengths & weaknesses.



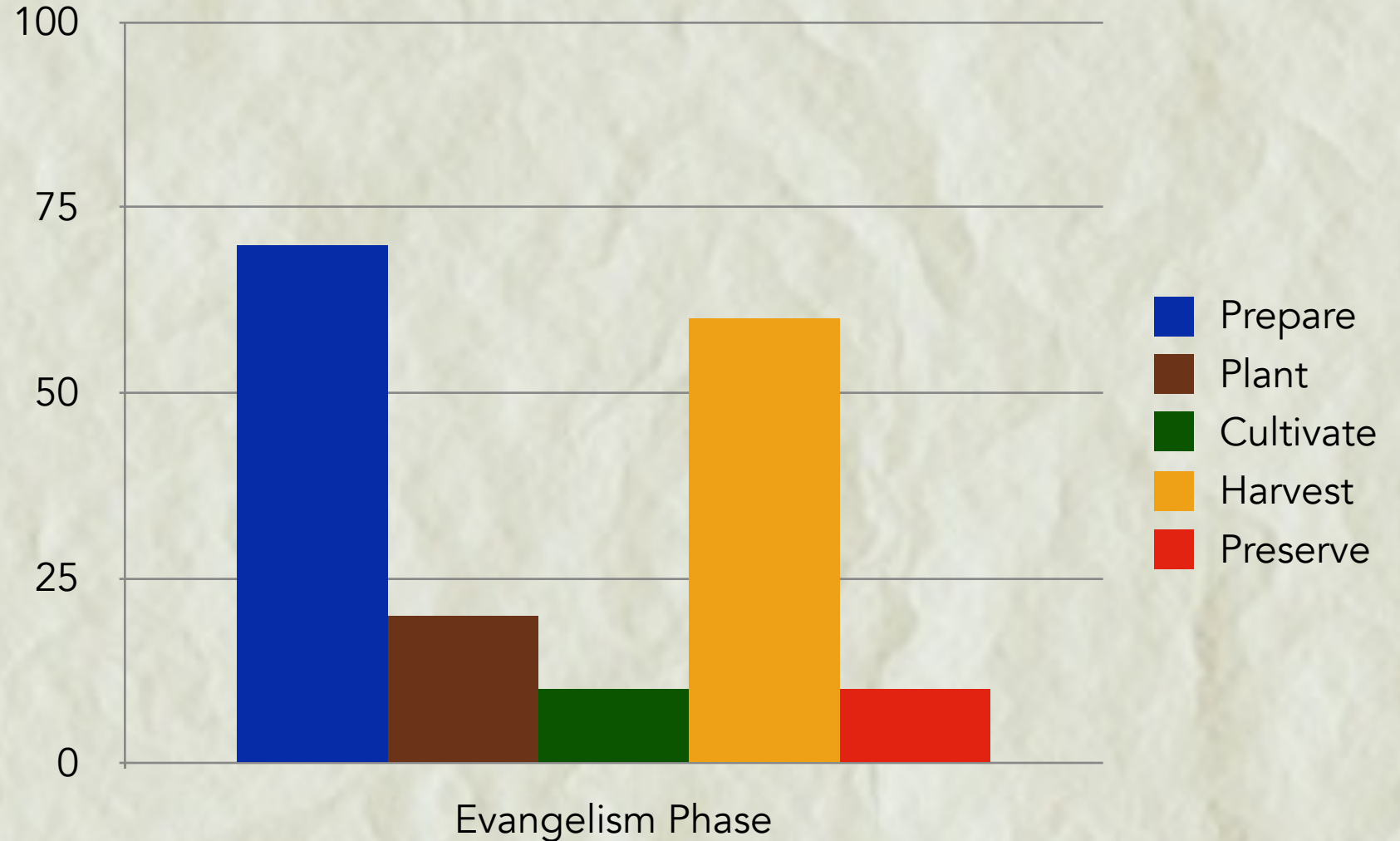
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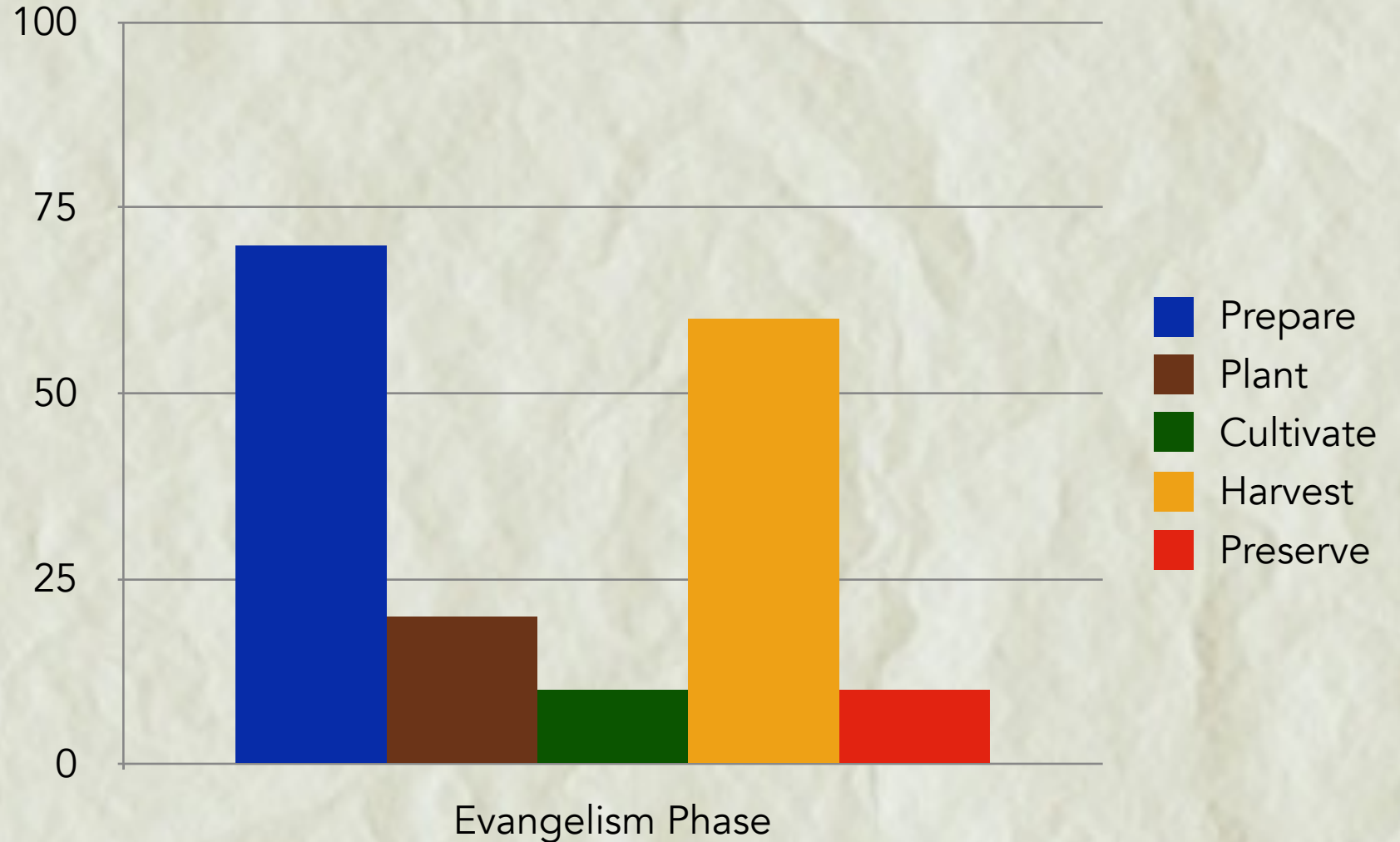
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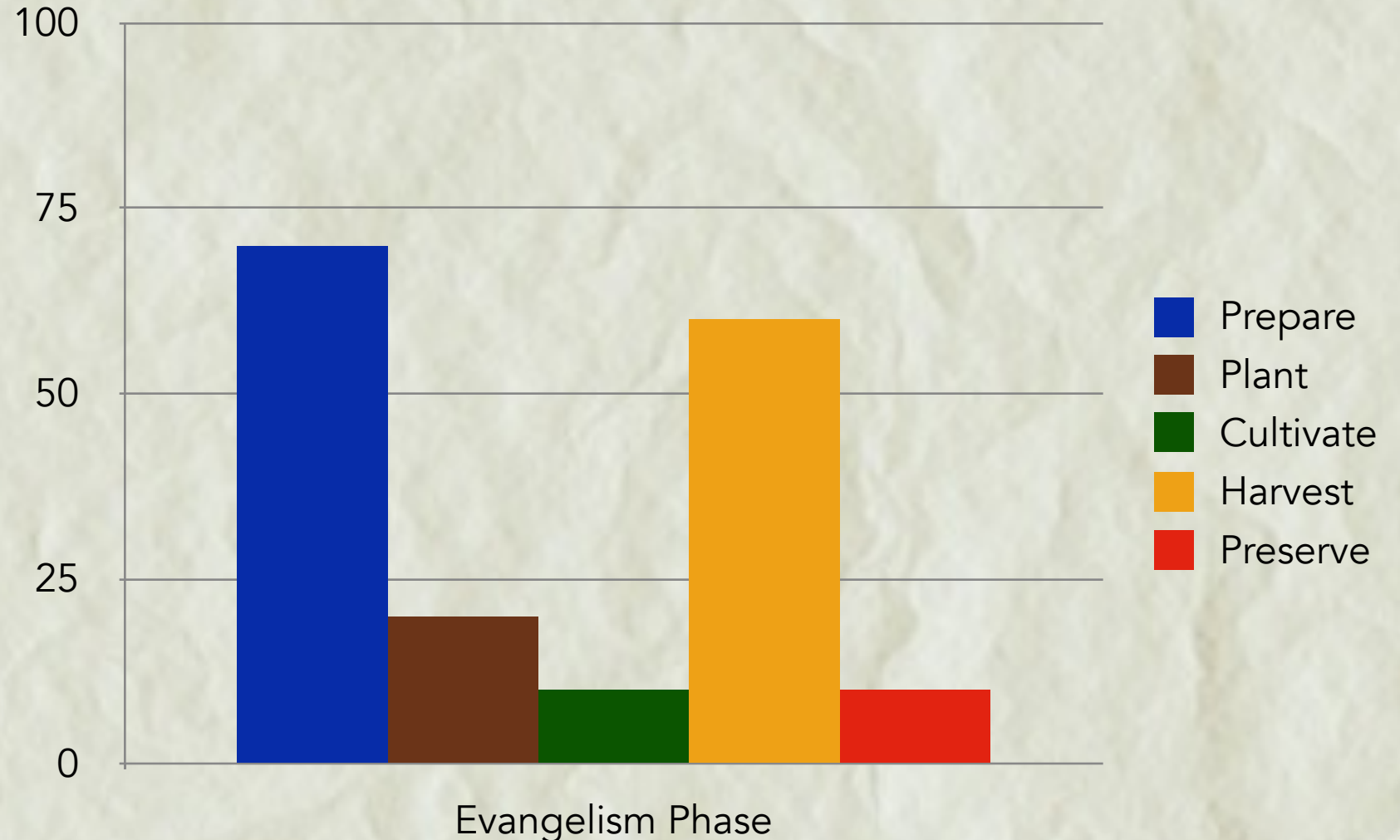
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The key is to recognize that **every phase of soul-winning is essential.**



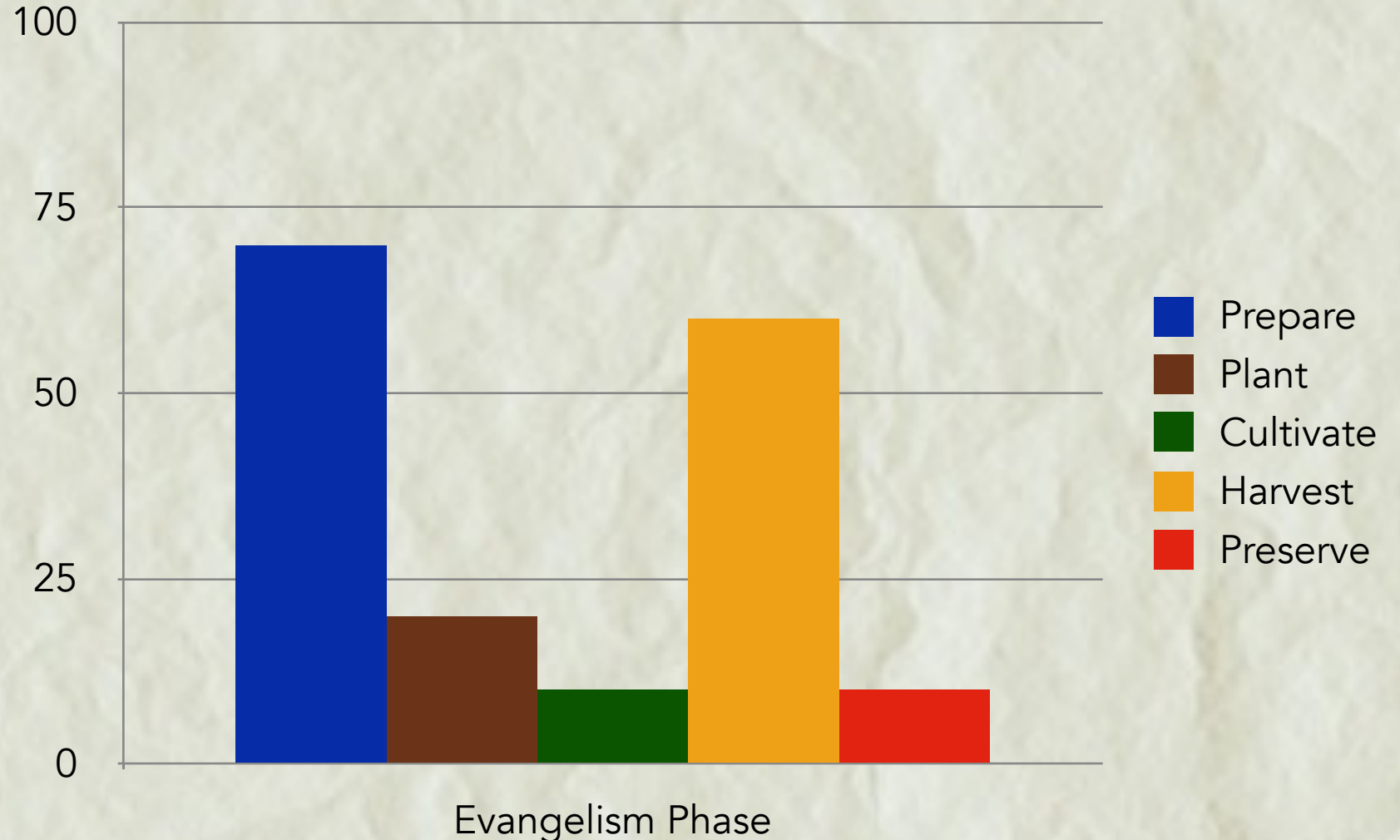
Local Church Growth Potential

We can't just focus on one or two areas and neglect the others.



Local Church Growth Potential

This results in a growth bottleneck that limits church growth.



Step 1: Prepare the Soil of the Heart



Building friendship and trust opens the heart to receive truth. We do this by drawing close to people through being kind, intentionally social, and ministering to practical needs.

Step 2: Sow the Seed of Truth



While building friendship and trust, we should test the heart soil by planting seeds of truth.



Ministry of Healing, p. 143

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. **Then He bade them, "Follow Me."**





Desire of Ages, p. 92

Jesus was the healer of the body as well as of the soul. He was interested in every phase of suffering that came under His notice, and to every sufferer He brought relief, His kind words having a soothing balm.





Desire of Ages, p. 92

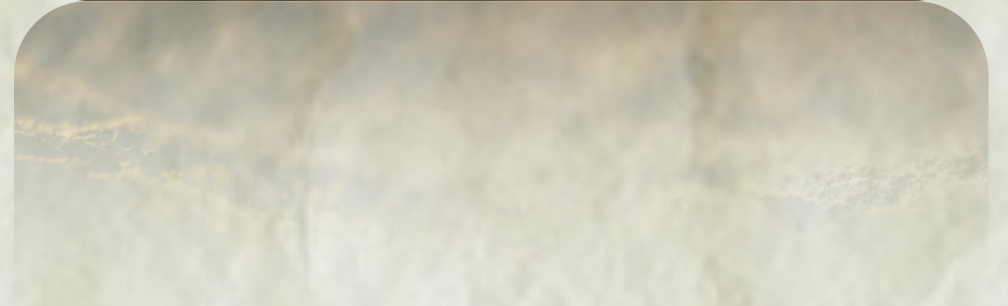
None could say that He had worked a miracle; but virtue--the healing power of love--went out from Him to the sick and distressed. Thus in an unobtrusive way He worked for the people from His very childhood. **And this was why, after His public ministry began, so many heard Him gladly.**



Matthew 5:16



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works **and glorify your Father in heaven.**





Good works give our message **credibility**—and our message gives our good works eternal **significance**.

But isn't making friends with the intent to share the Gospel disingenuous? Isn't it dishonest "bait-and-switch?"



Penn Jillette

“I’ve always said that I don’t respect people who don’t proselytize. I don’t respect that at all.”



Penn Jillette

If you believe that there's a heaven and a hell, and people could be going to hell or not getting eternal life, and you think that it's not really worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward...



Penn Jillette

how much do you have to hate somebody to not proselytize? **How much do you have to hate somebody to believe everlasting life is possible *and not tell them that?***



Penn Jillette

“I mean, if I believed, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that a truck was coming at you, and you didn’t believe that truck was bearing down on you, **there is a certain point where I tackle you. *And this is more important than that.***”

Too often “friendship evangelism”
means “friendship *is* my evangelism.”



That would be like saying
“tilling soil *is* my farming.”



Our goal is not to win people to us but
through us to win people to Christ.



Don't turn *disinterested* benevolence
into *uninterested* benevolence!



Many make the mistake of not sowing the seed of truth because they're afraid they'll do it poorly.

Ecclesiastes 11:4-6

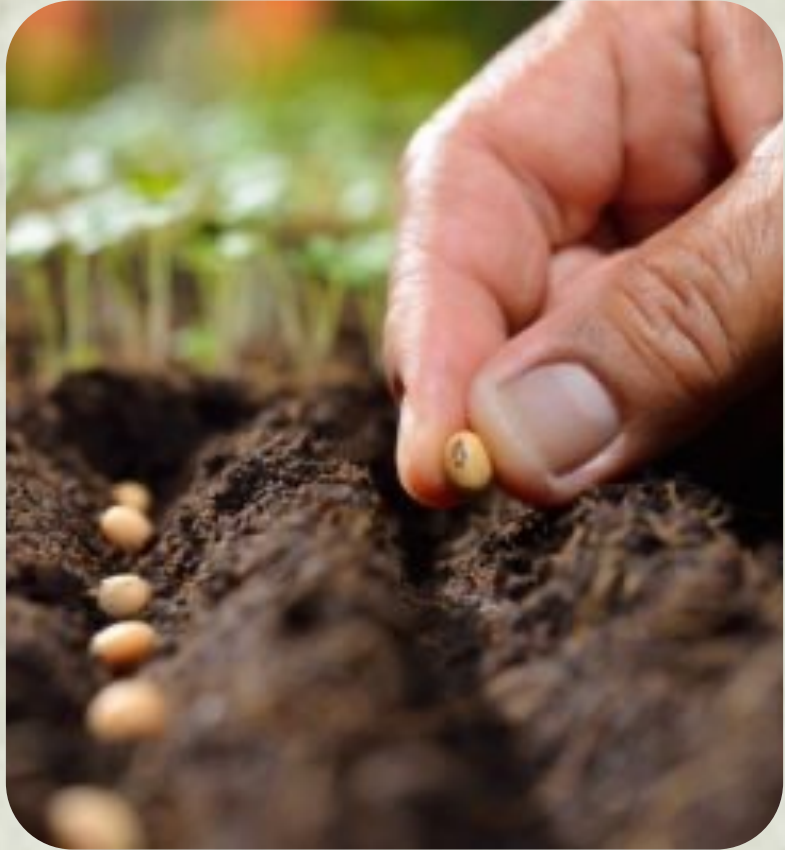


He who observes the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not reap... **In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening do not withhold your hand;** for you do not know which will prosper, either this or that, or whether both alike will be good.





It is better to ***risk*** failure because of a poor approach than to ***guarantee*** failure for making no approach at all!



To get a sense of people's interest in spiritual things, you can sow spiritual "test seeds."

“First the pandemic, now
war in Ukraine... *what
next?*”



**“I know, right? Plus,
they’re the *exact* things
Jesus told us to watch
for!”**

”My teenager is really stressing me out!”



“That can be so frustrating! Our pastor gave a sermon on family and parenting that you I think you would really enjoy.”

“I’ve been feeling really
down lately.”



**“I’m so sorry.
Sometimes prayer is
the only thing that
helps when I feel
discouraged. Do you
mind if I pray for
you?”**

Step 3: Cultivate through Bible study



When someone responds positively to spiritual seed, that interest needs to be cultivated by the Word of God. This is best accomplished through weekly personal Bible studies.

1 Peter 2:2



As newborn babes,
**desire the pure milk of
the word, that you may
grow thereby,** if indeed
you have tasted that the
Lord is gracious





Evangelism, p. 338

It is not preaching alone that must be done. Far less preaching is needed. **More time should be devoted to patiently educating others, giving the hearers opportunity to express themselves.** It is instruction that many need, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little.





This nurturing work is by far the most time-consuming, labor-intensive, and potentially disappointing phase of the growing cycle.

Where soil preparation and seed sowing may take a day or two, cultivation requires continued effort over weeks or months. **This is the greatest need in soul-winning today.**

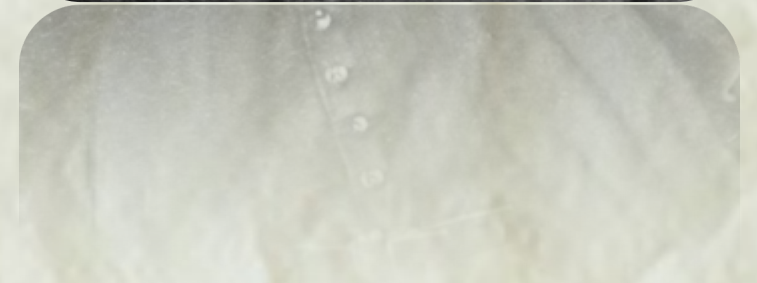






Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 126

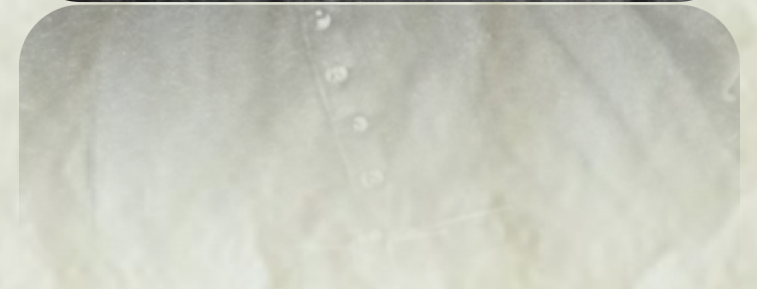
“In visions of the night representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God’s people. . .





Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 126

“Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families, and opening before them the Word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest”





Who might be open to taking
Bible studies?



- ✓ **Family and friends**
- ✓ **Missing members**
- ✓ **Regular visitors**
- ✓ **Church interests**
- ✓ **Neighborhood outreach**
- ✓ **Bible study mailings**
- ✓ **Divine appointments**



Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 3, p. 240

Here is a lesson to all who have a message of truth to give to the world: Their own hearts must first be imbued with the Spirit of God, and **their labors should commence at home;**





Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 3, p. 240

their families should have the benefit of their influence; and the transforming power of the Spirit of God should be demonstrated in their own homes by a well-disciplined family.





Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 3, p. 240

Then the circle should widen; the whole neighborhood should perceive the interest felt for their salvation, and the light of truth should be faithfully presented to them; for their salvation is of as much importance as that of persons at a distance.





Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 3, p. 240

From the immediate neighborhood, and adjoining cities and towns, **the circle of the labors of God's servants should widen, till the message of truth is given to the uttermost parts of the earth.**





Mark Finley

“God doesn’t call you to be a missionary where you *aren’t* until you’re a missionary where you *are*.”



When and where should I
approach them?



Desire of Ages, p. 151

Jesus saw in every soul one to whom must be given the call to His kingdom...





Desire of Ages, p. 151

He sought them in the **public streets**, in **private houses**, on the **boats**, in the **synagogue**, by the **shores of the lake**, and at the **marriage feast**. He met them at their daily vocations, and manifested an interest in their secular affairs.





What should I say when I ask
them to study the Bible?



“I recently came across a set of Bible study guides that address some of the most commonly asked questions about the Bible. I’d like to go through them, and I’m wondering if you would like to do them with me.”



“I am looking for someone who would be interested in studying the Bible with me, and I thought of you. Would you be interested in meeting once a week for an hour or so to study God’s Word?”



“I have been going through a discipleship program at my church, and one of the things they are asking us to do is go through a series of Bible lessons with someone. Would you be willing to go through a set of Bible study guides with me?”



Christ's Object Lessons, p. 229

We are not to wait for souls to come to us; we must seek them out where they are. When the word has been preached in the pulpit, the work has but just begun. There are multitudes who will never be reached by the gospel unless it is carried to them.





Evangelism, p. 547

You are in need of vital energy from heaven. **We must in our work not only strike the iron when it is hot but make the iron hot by striking.**





Manuscript Releases, vol. 18, p. 284

I want to say, brethren and sisters, that we must labor for the wandering where they are. **You need not expect those who have the chilling influence of the world upon them to manifest anxiety for their own souls. We must manifest it for them.**

