



# PHOTOGRAPHY BEST PRACTICES

We want to actively empower you to be able to share the Story of what God is doing throughout your ministry and inspiring people to support and uphold you and the people you are reaching. Photos are an essential tool we need from you to best communicate this and as a part of our goal to be intentional we have a few simple practices that can help us help you share your story better. Please keep these pointers in your mind while out at church events, activities or on the mission field.

**Quality is better than Quantity** – imagine with me that you are a part of a team of 15 people going to Bolivia. All of you have a camera, at least on your phone. Each of you take the normal amount of photos these days of about 30 per day and you are there for 2 weeks. All those pictures are sent in that is a total of 6300 pictures. That is a lot of pictures we have to filter through, but we only really need 5-10. Now imagine if each of you took 20 good pictures and sent those in. That is still 300 but many of them would be usable pictures to help us tell the stories of what God is doing in the places you went.

# Photography Tips

## Rule of Thirds

First of all your Smart Phone has an option called the Grid that really helps with this rule.

**Grid** – The grid feature for phones is a very valuable tool to help make better photographs for you by making it easy to use the Rule of Thirds. Here's how to turn it on for iPhones and Androids.

- **iPhones:** Open the Settings app > Camera > Grid and tap/swipe to turn it on.
- **Android Devices:** Open the Camera app > Settings > Grid lines

The **rule of thirds** is not a definitive rule but a guide that often improves casual photographers perspective and the overall look and feel of there photos. The rule of thirds is essential dividing you view screen or 'frame' into thirds vertically and thirds horizontally. Key points can be summed up:

- Horizons should be placed along the Horizontal lines. Which line depends on the subject and can be experimented with.
- Dominant Vertical structures or trees or rock formation (as is the case below) should be placed along the vertical lines.
- The INTERSECTIONS of each line are often used to place the greatest focus. Often the head of your subject, or the centre of your subjects face, or the ball in a soccer game or whatever the focal point is.
  - Which one?
    - If you subject is facing, even just slightly, to the left then use the right intersections or visa versa. People tend to look at eyes and then follow the direction of the eyes to see what they are looking at. You don't have to show what they are looking at but having space for the viewers eyes to travel across the picture is important.
    - If it is an action shot of a boy kicking a soccer ball with the boy traveling from left to right then the boy/ball should be on one of the left intersections so that the view can have a glimpse as to where he is going.

In the picture below notice the location of the intersections, on the persons head and body. Notice how the person lines up with the vertical line and the horizon lines up with the horizontal lines. ALSO notice that it is not perfectly aligned. These are just guides and as you get familiar with them and comfortable it is totally okay to deviate from them for a creative look or to accommodate certain angles or lighting as mentioned in the sections below.



Seen in the picture below, the image on the left is a typical photograph where the main focal point is placed in the center of the frame. On the right is where the main focal point is along one of the 'dividing lines'. You can also notice where the horizon is.

Wikipedia states that "aligning a subject with these points creates more tension, energy and interest in the composition than simply centering the subject."<sup>1</sup>



Tadrart01.JPG: Pir6mon derivative work: Teeks99 (talk) (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RuleOfThirds-SideBySide.gif>), „RuleOfThirds-SideBySide“, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/legalcode>

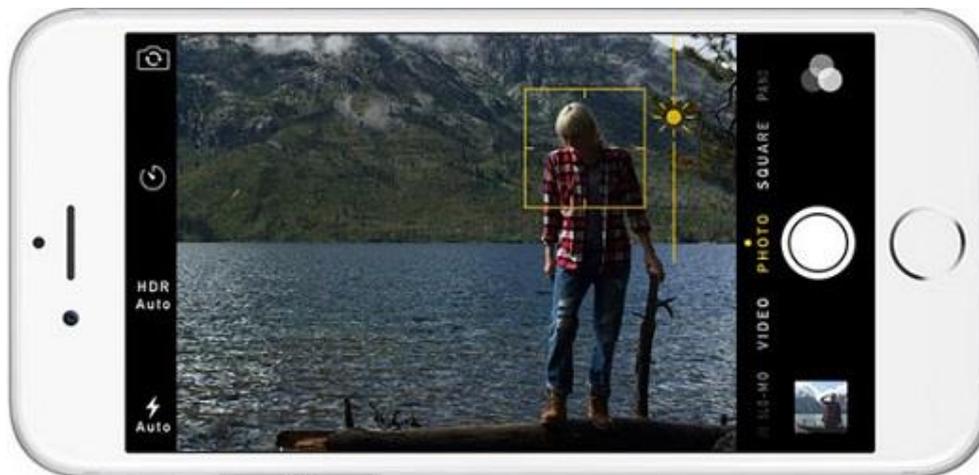
## Angles

Angles are important. What are angles? Mostly this pertains to the angle of your camera to the subject. For example let's imagine you are taking pictures of your favourite pet. A photo taken from your normal standing position looking down on your pet who is on the floor is a 'normal' and often described as a boring picture. But if you get on your knees or even on your tummy and take a picture from that angle all of a sudden you have a picture that has more depth and character. In the same way looking at people straight on is 'normal' but if you get up higher (or lower) and change the angle you can create some intriguing pictures.

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rule\\_of\\_thirds#cite\\_note-2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rule_of_thirds#cite_note-2) Accessed August 1, 2018

## Focus

What are you focused on? The focal point of your picture can create a unique picture. For example a picture with a flower in the fore ground (closer to the camera) with a mountain in the background can be made into a very creative picture by changing the focal point. Either focus on the flower or the mountain. The challenge is that by default smart phones try to focus on the average of the scene. You can accommodate that by simply tapping on the screen. Just tapping will create the yellow box seen below and sets your focus to that area of the photo. But tapping and HOLDING will lock that box in place. You see smart phones will auto adjust all the time. If there are things moving in your scene even if you tap to focus and then something moves, the phone will auto focus and change the focal point again. It will also reset your focus for each picture. TAPPING and HOLDING until you see the Lock notification at the top of the viewer will lock so movement won't change the focus and your focus stays so you can take a couple of pictures with the same focus.



## Lighting

Lighting is an important part of taking pictures. Smart Phones have a feature that allows you to brighten or darken your image and can create some intriguing things. If you Tap and Hold as mentioned in the Focus section you will see a sun or light image on the right side. This is actually a light slider. By touching it and sliding it up or down you can adjust the light. Your goal is to get the light to not be too bright or too dark anywhere. This allows for the most colour and data in your photo so that if we need to manipulate it we can do so with ease.

Here are some basic keys to lighting.

- The best time for landscape and outside pictures is the hours around dawn and dusk when the sun isn't in full force. The sun can be used to make great pictures during the day but it is harder to do so.
- During Mid-Day or high sunlight it is best to find a shaded spot to take pictures. Or if you are taking an action shot using high light times of the day help clear the image.
- Taking Portraits or close of face photos of people should not be done up against a wall. Be at least a meter away from a wall, preferably, not being too close to a wall,

especially in bright light. Bright light will create a dark shadow around the subject and makes for a almost unusable portrait image.

PLEASE think of your photos as an Envelope, in which to send a letter. You wrote a letter or a story to someone and you want them to read it, to see it. But if the envelope isn't made right, with the right postage and address, they will never get to the real letter. If your envelope isn't right it may even get returned to sender. But the right envelope, the right photo, will get the story shared with the right people in the right way.

## **OUR GOAL IS TO EMPOWER YOU TO TELL CHRIST'S STORY AS HE WORKS THROUGH YOU AND YOUR MINISTRY!**

Please consider helping us help you by taking these few important steps.

If you have any questions or need assistance please contact our Social Media Director;

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How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! – Luke 11:13b  
***Inspire...Equip...Develop...***