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# Apostolic Evangelism

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# APOSTOLIC EVANGELISM

Radio Sermon delivered over Station KRLD  
June 8, 1947 \* 7:05 a.m. to 7:30 a.m.

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We hear a great deal today about the need of new methods and of a new gospel for a new age. Undoubtedly, we are living in an age which is quite different and we shall be more conscious of that as the years bring forth their fruit. However, if we believe that there is one God, and that He is the author of one Book—the Bible—as it was given through holy men of old, then the only new thing that we need is an ever renewed zeal for the same God and Christ and the same Book. We are seekers still seeking to find new treasures with renewed faith in the old paths.

With this in mind, let us study this morning the subject of Apostolic Evangelism. Naturally we come to the book of Acts, which is the fifth book of the New Testament and which describes the acts of the Apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If we can understand the message and the method and the results of those holy men of old and can apply the same principles and teaching today, then surely we shall have a wonderful new harvest as of old.

## MESSAGE

First, let us notice the message of the Apostles: they had only one. Every one of them had the same message and practically every sermon was built around it. It consisted first of all of certain facts. All of these men preached the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Paul describes it in I Corinthians 15:1-4, "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures." Peter preached it on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts the 2nd chapter. The Apostles preached it in Solomon's porch; and Peter preached it to Cornelius and his household; and Paul delivered the same message on Mars Hill, and before Agrippa in Judea. The message of the Apostles was centered in the person of Christ, and the emphasis was upon Him; not just as a great preacher and a noble martyr, but as the Son of God who died for our sins upon the cross and was buried and raised again on the third day, and is now at the right hand of God. If in all the preaching today every preacher emphasized these facts of the gospel, the power of God, through the power of the gospel, would accomplish greater results.



## COMMANDS

Secondly, the Apostles taught that there were certain commands which all men were to obey. Paul expresses the first command in Acts 16:31 when he speaks to the Philippian jailor, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." Peter tells believers in Acts 2:38 to "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Ananias told Saul, who was a penitent believer, to arise and be baptized and wash away his sins. Acts 22:16. In every example of conversion we find these same commands. Believe on the Lord Jesus, repent and be baptized. Today we need a renewed emphasis upon the commands of the gospel.

## PROMISES

In the third place, the Apostles all taught that there were certain promises contingent upon accepting Christ. We have already mentioned two of them—remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit; and also there is eternal life. In Titus 3:7 Paul writes that "being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." John speaks of the same promise in Revelation 2:10, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." We need to stress more on the promises of God, that we may encourage a multitude of men to follow after him.

## METHOD

Now, let us notice the method of the Apostles. First of all, they went about teaching. Jesus told them to go and teach all nations. They taught Jews and Gentiles. They presented sane, practical messages which appealed to the intellect as well as to the emotions. When early Christians were scattered abroad they went everywhere preaching the word. Following this teaching of alien sinners we find them baptizing the taught just as Jesus had told them to baptize. That is, "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matthew 28:19. On the day of Pentecost Luke writes, Acts 2:41, "They then that received his word were baptized." In this baptism Paul tells us that they were buried with him "through baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." Romans 6:4.

Following the baptizing there was a period of nurturing in which the Apostles did what Jesus had commanded when he said, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Elders were ordained in every congregation to have the spiritual oversight. Twenty one epistles were written by these inspired men to tell Christians how to grow in grace. We are told of the first converts that "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." Acts 2:42. How often today are we inclined to neglect this part of the Apostles' method and to leave new converts without the proper teaching and nurturing in the Lord.

## RESULTS

Finally, let us notice the results of Apostolic Evangelism. Multitudes were led to Christ. Three thousand people obeyed the gospel the first time it was preached. After their number came to be five thousand men. Then



the scriptures tell us that they were multiplied in number several times after that. Today, if one congregation of a thousand members were to be multiplied by two in one year, and then multiplied by two each time for six years, if no one were lost, that congregation would consist of sixty four thousand people. Secular history tells us that there were some one hundred thousand Christians in Jerusalem. From there the gospel spread like wildfire into Judea and Samaria and into the uttermost parts of the then known world. So many people were converted and so widely was the gospel preached, Paul could say that it had been preached to all the people of that world before his death. If we have the same faith, and if we have the same God and preach the same Christ today, surely great results will follow today.

In those days the preaching of the apostles made simple Christians, men and women who had been saved by Christ and added to his body — the family of God. Of the first converts Luke writes, "And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved." Acts 2:47. These saved Christians belonged to no religious sect or denomination—they were just Christians. So we, who bring you this message today, are striving to be Christians only. We are not members of any religious sect, and we recognize no ecclesiastical authority higher than the local congregation with its elders and deacons after the New Testament pattern. We are pleading for the unity of all believers in Christ.

Seed which brought forth wheat in Egypt in the days of the Pharaohs has been discovered and has been planted in our time, and the same wheat brings forth the same kind of harvest. So today, if we preach the same word, the seed of the kingdom, in the same spirit with the same method we should expect to reap the same harvest. The kingdom which Christ established on the day of Pentecost was a kingdom not to be shaken, "For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet." I Cor. 1:15-25. What we need today is not a new message, nor a new method, but a new zeal for the same Christ and His gospel. God has highly exalted him and given unto him the name that is above every name "that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:10-11.

Are you not willing to confess that Christ? Are you not willing to obey the simple gospel that was preached by the Apostles, and to trust God to add you to the same church to which he added them? To become a New Testament Christian a man needs only to read his New Testament and to obey the gospel which is taught there. When he rises from the watery grave of baptism to walk in newness of life, the Lord will add him to the body of Christ. The Lord will add you when you obey the same gospel. And Christ will guard and guide you and if you walk in the light his blood cleanseth you from all sin and you shall receive the crown of righteousness which the Lord shall give to you in that day. We are pleading with you to accept Christ today. Now is the day of salvation.