

INTRODUCTION

At the World Mission Consultation held at Montreal, North Carolina, when they met to discuss the carrying out of our world-wide task in a new age - they concluded in this way:

He who gave His only son to become Man and to die and to rise again for the sins of the whole world, sends His church into all corners of the earth, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to proclaim the Good News until the Lord Jesus Christ comes again. He sends us to our neighbours and the ends of the earth to be the witnesses and servants of the Kingdom. There is no other King, there is no other hope, there is no other life. Without Him, man perishes. Thus we who hope in the Lord Jesus alone for salvation stand under the inescapable imperative to carry the Gospel to all those who do not know Him as Saviour and Lord.

Dr John Mott: “the primary work of the Church is to make Jesus Christ known, and obeyed and loved, throughout the world”.

So clearly then this inescapable imperative confronts us and is a reminder again of what must surely be the primary task before us.

The only sad thing of course is to see how this has today been almost totally neglected due to the many different meanings attached to it. From the Bible I would like to explain:

1. MEANING OF EVANGELISM
2. MESSAGE OF EVANGELISM
3. MOTIVE OF EVANGELISM
4. MEANS OF EVANGELISM

WHAT IS MISSION OR EVANGELISM?

Dr. Bavinck: “Missions is that activity of the Church - in essence it is nothing else than an activity of Christ exercised through the Church, through which the church in this the interim period, in which the end is postponed, calls the peoples of the earth to repentance and to faith in Christ, so that they may be made His disciples and through baptism be incorporated into the fellowship of those who await the coming of the Kingdom”

1. THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

The early Church understood its task to be the diligent and systematic proclamation of a message. If God's part was to give the power, their part was **to give the Word**.

Acts 6:4: “but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to ministry of the Word”

Acts 13:5: “And when they were at Salamis, they preached the Word of God.”

Acts 13:46: “Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly; “We have to speak the Word of God to you first ... “

Acts 13:32: “And when they heard of the resurrection”

Acts 18:11: “And he continued there a year and six months teaching the word of God among them.”

So it was “**the Word**” which was preached by those scattered after Stephen’s martyrdom

Acts 8:4: “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word.”

So Paul went to Perga:

Acts 14:25: “And when they had preached the Word”

Also with all the Apostles:

Acts 13:44: “And the next Sabbath day, came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God.”

It is clear then that the Apostle’s main task was the proclamation of the Word. Later on as Luke describes the advance of the Church, it is always with reference to the preaching.

Acts 6:7: “So the Word of God increased

Acts 12:24: “But the Word of God grew and multiplied.”

Acts 19:20: “In this way the Word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.”

RESPONSIBILITY

1. **AS STEWARDS:** (Responsibility)

1 Cor. 4:1: “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministry of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God”.

Paul then saw himself as a bond-slave raised to a position of high trust, as the steward of the household in the Old Testament times always was.

1 Thes. 2:4 “But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel.....”

Chambers Dictionary definition: Steward - “one who superintends another’s affairs”

The responsibility now rested on Paul to be faithful as a steward.

1 Tim. 6:20: “Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care”.

Being a steward then brought home the RESPONSIBILITY of guarding the truth and dispensing it.

1 Cor. 9:16: “Necessity is laid upon me, woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel.”

2. AS A HERALD (Authenticity)

A herald makes public announcements on another's behalf.

1 Cor. 1:23 "We preach Christ crucified...."

Now he is blazing forth what he has been told to make known.

1 Cor. 1:21: "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believed"

His Master had given him a message to proclaim, his whole business therefore was to deliver that message with exact and studious faithfulness, adding nothing, altering nothing, and omitting nothing.

1 Cor. 2:1-5: "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God".

3. AS AMBASSADOR (Authority)

He is the authorized representative of a Sovereign. He speaks not in his own name, but on behalf of the Ruler whose deputy he is, and his whole duty and responsibility is to interpret that Ruler's mind faithfully to whom he is sent.

Eph. 6:19: "That utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak."

2 Cor. 5:19: "That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them, and He has committed to us the message of reconciliation."

In this evangelism the Apostles acted as the slave and the steward, the mouthpiece and the herald, the spokesman and the ambassador, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

PRESENTATION OF A PERSON

If the Apostles proclaimed, taught and argued the Word of God, the subject of this Word was Jesus Christ.

1) THE MAN

Acts 2:22: "Men of Israel, listen to this, Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did amongst you through him, as you yourselves know."

Heb. 2:17: "For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service of God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people."

They presented Jesus, the perfect, sinless Man who was human and so able to sympathize with us.

2) THE CRUCIFIED

Acts 2:23: “This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you with the help of wicked men put him to death by nailing him to the cross.”

Acts 2:23: “delivered up according to the determinate plan and foreknowledge of God.”

Acts 27-28: “had predestined to take place”.

Acts 5:3: “hanged Him on a tree”.

Gal 3:13: “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written ‘Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree’”.

3) THE RISEN LORD

Great prominence was given to the resurrection.

Acts 1:22: “a witness with us of the resurrection.”

Acts 4:2: “preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead”.

Acts 17:18: “Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the Resurrection.”

Only by raising Christ from the dead did God publicly vindicate Him who was under the curse, and raised from the dead. Jesus is exalted to God’s right hand as:

Acts 7:56: The Son of Man

Acts 5:31: Leader and Saviour

Acts 10:36: Lord of all.

So Jesus is seated on David’s throne 2:30-31 and thus the Kingdom of God has been established through Him . (8:12, 17:7, 19:8).

4) THE COMPETENT SAVIOUR

It is through Christ’s death and resurrection that He has acquired a saving Name.

Matt 1:21: “call his name Jesus for He will save His people from their sins”.

Also it is Jesus who sent the Holy Spirit from ascended glory.

Acts 2:33: “Therefore being at the right hand of God, exalted and having received of the Father, the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which you now see and hear.”

- He is a Saviour.

Acts 3:23: "From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Saviour, Jesus as He promised."

- Author of life.

Acts 3:15: "and killed the prince of life"

In His name people are saved and healed.

Acts 3:6: "in the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk"

Acts 3:16: "By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong."

Acts 4:12: "no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

5) THE COMING JUDGE

The offer of present salvation and the warning of future judgment are never far separated.

Acts 3:20-21

6) THE CHRIST

This Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and risen, the Saviour and the Judge is the Christ of Old Testament expectations.

Acts 3:22-23: For Moses said. "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people".

Evangelism then means proclamation of the Word presentation of the Person

THE OFFER OF A GIFT

So the apostles proclaimed the Word of God which centred on Christ, and presented Christ as the bringer of the gift.

Acts 15:7: "the word of the Gospel."

Acts 10:36: "the word of peace."

Acts 20:24: "the word of the grace of God."

Acts 14:3: "the word of this grace "It described what God in his free and undeserved love has done for the salvation of sinners. It is in fact the offer of salvation, which is two fold:

I. FORGIVENESS

Acts 3:19: "Repent, then, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."

Acts 5:31: “God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour, that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel”

II. HOLY SPIRIT

Acts 9:17 : “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 2:38 : “And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit..”

Acts 5:32: “And so is also the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

Acts 8:20,10:45,11:17,15:8,19:2

Therefore, forgiveness is a remission of all past sins, while the Holy Spirit introduces the believer into the new life, he will lead by His power. Brand new person and life.

DEMAND A RESPONSE

“The apostles proclaimed a word for men to receive, they presented a person for men to believe, they offered a gift for men to receive. It brings a challenge, a challenge which cannot be ignored”. (J. Stott)

Acts 2:37: “what shall we do”

1) REPENTANCE:

Kuiper: “Only he who knows himself to be guilty and foul will run to Calvary for pardon and cleansing”.

This is not what we so often see today. There is mere remorse, but not repentance.

Calvin: “the sorrow of the world is, when men dispose in consequence of earthly afflictions, and are overwhelmed with grief, while sorrow according to God is that which has an eye to God, while they reckon it the ONE misery to have lost the favour of God.”

Acts 5:31: “to give repentance to Israel” (gift)

Acts 26:20: “and they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance”

This moral change as seen in the Ephesians 19:18-19: “Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly...”

2) FAITH

Faith is an act of personal committal to Christ, which is mentioned often in Acts. It is by faith that men’s hearts are cleansed.

Acts 15:9: “purifying their hearts by faith”

Therefore both repentance and faith are described in terms of TURNING:

Repentance is turning from wickedness (3:26), whereas faith is turning to God 15:19. This then is conversion. Such was evangelism according to Paul ...going out in love, as Christ’s agent into the world to teach sinners the truth of the Gospel, with a view to converting and saving them. Paul’s ultimate aim in evangelism was to convert his hearers to faith in Christ.”

WELCOME INTO FELLOWSHIP

It is quite plain that the apostles were not satisfied when someone repented and turned to Christ. He might have received the Word; believed in the person; accepted the gift, and made the response, **but** there was still much more. They needed to be strengthened and taught.

Acts 14:22: “Confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith.”

Acts 5:32: “Judas and Silas who themselves were prophets said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers.”

Therefore, Paul would retrace his steps and revisit the churches and the appointed elders, to feed the flock.

Acts 20:28-29: “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the Church of God which He bought with His own blood.”

John Stott: “Now God’s purpose as revealed in Acts, was that the young converts should be strengthened and sanctified within the fellowship of the Church”

1. WORSHIP

Acts 2:42: “And they continued steadfastly in the Apostolic doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers.”

Acts 2:46: “Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts”.

2. INSTRUCTION

Once we have been used to lead a person to the Lord, it is only the beginning. Now we need to instruct them.

Acts 11:26: “They assembled themselves with the Church and taught many people”.

SUMMARY

Therefore, the Word was proclaimed and the Christ presented. The offer of salvation was given, and those who responded were drawn into the Christian fellowship of common worship and ministry of the Word. So the Church prospered and the Word of God prevailed.

WHAT IS OUR MESSAGE?

William Booth: “He named that a day was coming when there would be a preaching of religion without the Holy Spirit; a Christianity without Christ, a forgiveness without repentance, a salvation without regeneration and a heaven without a hell.”

This is an exact reflection of our situation today, and yet we cannot evangelize unless we know our message.

Prof. James Stuart: “The first axiom of effective evangelism is that the evangelist must be sure of his message, any haziness or hesitation there is fatal.

Not only must we know our message, but also our message must be Biblical.

F.B. Meyer: “The Holy Spirit’s power proceeds along the line of the Word of God, it is this sword the life giving seed which He has vitalized, the word in which the Word is incarnated. The ministry, therefore, which is most carefully based on Scripture and honours Scripture, and saturates itself with Scripture, is the ministry which the Spirit of Truth can co-operate with the most perfect abandonment”.

a) GOD

The Gospel is a message about God. It tells us who He is, what His character is, what His standards are, and what He requires of us. Evangelism must and always require preaching on the attributes of God.

John 4: Jesus at the well ... God is Spirit.

Acts 17:24-32 Paul on Mars Hill ... God as Creator.

So the Gospel begins with God and His Glory. He is not only Spirit and eternal, but He is a HOLY GOD.

Isaiah 6:5 “Woe is me for I am undone”

Ps. 51:4 “Against Thee, thee only have I sinned and done this in thy sight”

b) SIN

The Gospel then is a message about sin. It tells us how we have fallen short of God’s standard, how we have become guilty, filthy and helpless in sin, and now stand under the wrath of God. It tells us that the reason why we sin continually is that we are sinners by nature and that nothing we do, or try to do for ourselves can put us right, or bring us back into God’s favour.

All mankind by their fall, lost communion with God, are under His wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself and to the pains of hell forever.

Gen. 3:8 “Adam and Eve hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden v.24. And so he drove out them out.”

Eph. 2:3 “And were by nature the children of wrath even as others.”....

Gal. 3:10 “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything which is written in the Book of the Law.” Rom 6:23 “The wages of sin is death”.

Matt. 25:41: “Then He will say to those on his left, depart from me you who are cursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”

c) CHRIST

The Gospel is not what God requires of sinners, but it is the glad tidings of what God in Christ, has done for the salvation of sinners.

Isaiah 53:5-6: “Was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of all.”

2 Cor. 5:21: “God made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

So he became our substitute:

Reconciliation : Forgiveness : Propitiation
In Christ the wrath of God is dealt with.

1 Jn. 2:2: “And he is the propitiation for our sins..”

Sacrifice:

Heb. 10:12 “But this Man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down at the right hand of God...”

*Man of sorrows, what a name
For the Son of God who came
ruined sinners to reclaim
Hallelujah what a Saviour*

d) GRACE

Titus 3:4-5: “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.”

Eph. 2:7-8 “By grace you are saved through faith.”

God the Father saves:

Eph. 1:4 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ....”
According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world....”

Rom. 8:30 “And those he predestined he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.”

John 10:28: Here their salvation is assured.

So from the foundation of the world He chose in Christ, all those who would eventually inherit eternal life

God the Son saves:

He paid the debt of sinners to the last farthing. On the cross He was crushed by the curse of God which was due to them. In the stead of hell deserving criminals, He was forsaken by God. But also by His perfect obedience to the Father He merited for sinners, righteousness, everlasting life, and glory (*Kuiper*)

*Nothing in my hand I bring
simply to the cross I cling
Naked came to thee for dress
Helpless lost to thee for grace
Foul I to the fountain fly
Wash me Saviour or I die.*

John 17:9, Matt 1:21 John 10:11 Acts 20:28 Rom 8:32-37
(Extent of atonement)

God the Holy Spirit Saves:

He now supplies salvation to sinners.

Eph. 11:19 He gives hearts of flesh for hearts of stone.

John 3:5-6: “Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit....”

Such then is the wonderful Gospel of grace.

NEW BIRTH

John 3:7: “You must be born again...”

Eph. 5:14 “Awake up O sleeper rise from the dead”

Again this is something they cannot do. They are dead in sin, and does not end there, but goes on to GLORIFICATION.

KINGDOM

Here of course, all will depend on the other five. But here we see the Lordship of Christ over society

Eph. 1:22: “The head over everything for the Church”

This we now refer to society as a whole. We are concerned for the social welfare of our people, but first seek to make them new people, and then bring society under the lordship of Christ.

WHAT A MESSAGE! THE RESULTS ARE:

GENERAL

a. Exclusive

It must be insisted that Christianity is the only true religion and that all other religions are false. (*Kuiper*)

John 14:6: “I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by me”

Acts 4:12: “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.”

1 Tim. 2:5: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus”.

Heb. 7:25

b. Offensive

1 Cor. 1:23-24: “But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God”

Ps. 22:27: “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the families of that nations shall bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations. “

MOTIVES FOR MISSION/EVANGELISM

1. APPEAL OF GOD’S WORD:

Matt 20:19 “Go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and I am with you always, even unto the end of the world...”

Matt 16:15 “Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every Creature.”

2. APPEAL OF MAN’S NEED

Francis Schaefer: “If there is to be a constructive revolution in the Orthodox Evangelical Church we must comprehend and speak of the lostness of the lost, including the man without the Bible ... orthodoxy without compassion stinks with God.”

All mankind by their fall have:

- Lost communion with God
- Under His wrath and curse
- Made liable to miseries in this life
- Death
- Pains of Hell forever

So we cannot afford to waste our time on trifling sermons in our pulpits. There are people going to hell, and we have the awesome task of reaching them.

3. APPEAL FROM OUR OWN EXPERIENCE:

Evangelism is a consequence of conversion, the converted man must be a soul winner, he cannot help himself. If he does not evangelize, then one must question conversion !!!

Dr James Stuart: “When all is said and done the supreme need of the Church is the same in the twentieth century as in the first, it is men on fire for Christ.”

Jeremiah 20:9: “But the word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of holding it in, indeed I cannot”

THE MEANS OF EVANGELISM - PEOPLE NEEDED FOR THIS TASK

A. CONVERTED:

For Ministers -It is critical and vital to make sure that every Pastor is born again.

Spurgeon: “Whatever his natural gifts, whatever his mental powers may be, he is unworthy for spiritual work, if he has no spiritual life, and it is his duty to cease the Ministerial office until he has received this first and sanctified qualifications for it.

And how miserable such a man must be. He has to guide travellers along a road which he has never trodden, to navigate a vessel along a coast, of which he knows none of the landmarks. He is called to instruct others being himself a fool. What can he be but a cloud without rain, a tree with leaves only. As when the caravan in the wilderness ready to die beneath the boiling sun, comes to the long desired well, and horror of horrors! Finds it without a drop of water. So when souls thirsting after God come to a graceless ministry, they are to perish, because the water of life is not to be found.

For everybody – You cannot evangelize unless you are converted.

B. EMPOWERED

Acts 1:8: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witness in Jerusalem. And in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Matt 28:20 “Lo I am with you always.”

D.L. Moody opened the day each morning with a prayer for filling.

C. PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE:

Spurgeon: “We should be as familiar with the Bible as the house- wife with the needle, as the merchant with the ledger as the mariner with the ship.”

We must hold to the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible.

George Whitefield: “My mind being now more open and enlarged, I began to read the Bible on my knees, laying aside all other books, and praying over if possible every line and word this proved meat indeed, and drink for my soul and I daily received fresh life, light, power from above.”

John Rogers: “Lord whatever thou doest to us take not Thy Bible from us, kill our children, burn our houses, destroy our goods, only spare us thy Bible, only take not away thy Bible ... “

Calvin: “Scripture is the way God now speaks to us as through His own mouth. We must begin with the conviction that they have come from heaven as if in them the living will of God Himself is heard

D. PEOPLE OF PRAYER

David Brainerd: “Considering my great unfitness for the ministry, my present deadness, and total inability to do anything for the glory of God, feeling myself very helpless and at a great loss to do what the Lord would have me do, I set apart this day for prayer to God and spent most of the day in that duty...”

Acts 6:42:”They continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayer.”

Acts 6:2:”But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word.”
See also 1:14 - With one in prayer and supplication.

Acts 3:1: “Into the Temple in the hour of prayer.”

Acts 12:5: “Prayer was made without ceasing”

Acts 16:6: “As we went to prayer a certain damsel”

E. PEOPLE OF SINCERITY

F. PEOPLE OF HUMILITY

CONCLUSION:

God is Sovereign - therefore we must be faithful.

May God draw all of us nearer to Himself, that we as individuals may be greatly used to lead many souls from darkness into light.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Evangelism in the early Church - M.Green
2. Evangelism, its theology and practice - A Shevington Wood
3. Today's Gospel authentic or synthetic - W. Chantry
4. God centred Evangelism - R.B. Kuiper.
- 5 Evangelism and the sovereignty of God - J.I. Packer
- 6 Personal Evangelism - J. Stott
- 7 The meaning of evangelism - J. Stott
- 8 The Bible basis of missions - R.H. Glover
9. Death in the city - Francis Schaeffer
- 10 Sent by the Sovereign - W.D. Shepherd
- 11 Evangelize or fossilize - H. Lochyer
- 12 The Christian Ministry - Charles Bridges
- 13 Lectures to my students - Charles Spurgeon
- 14 The Reformed Pastor - Richard Baxter
- 15 The soul winner - Charles Spurgeon
- 16 Right with God - John Blanchard