

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY NOTES

September 24, 2017

Dr. Leslie Smith, Pastor

SERIES: Preparing the Church to Leave the Building

SERMON: Gospel Preaching 101...

TEXT: Acts 2:14-41

CENTRAL MESSAGE:

The central message in this lesson is that Pentecost was the catalyst for a new kind of preaching, inspired by the Holy Spirit and capable of transforming the lives of the men and women who heard it.

General Observations

Pentecost may not have been the birthday of the church, but it was the day that the Spirit of God descended with power to enable the church to continue the mission that Jesus started when He was present on the earth. Gospel preaching had a new power and a transforming influence after Pentecost. This lesson is intended to examine those transformational aspects of Gospel preaching that made it so unique and effective after Pentecost, and to seek to incorporate those principles into the preaching at Amity Bible Church.

Principle #1: Gospel preaching is Spirit-empowered preaching. (Acts 2:14-15)

Peter stood up on the Day of Pentecost to address those who witnessed the coming of the Holy Spirit. This was the same Peter who had been transformed from a "denier" to a "proclaimer". He had supernatural boldness, confidence and insights that he did not already possess. Before the coming of the Holy Spirit, this same Peter was insecure, his perception was dulled, and he focused more on the temporal than the eternal. This transformed Peter was prepared to allow the Spirit to use Him in a mighty way. There was no timidity. He raised his voice so that all who were gathered could hear what he had to say.

Principle #2: Gospel preaching is simple and straight-forward preaching. (Acts 2:15)

The very first matter that Peter addressed was the mocking of some of the people in the crowd. There were those in the gathered crowd who were truly amazed by what had transpired, but there were others who doubted. These mockers suggested that those who spoke in an unknown tongue were drunk with “sweet wine”. Sweet wine is partially fermented but still contains sufficient alcohol to dull the senses. The implication was that the people had to have been drinking all night. Peter did not appeal to theology or to custom...he appealed to common sense. He said that anyone who would suggest that such a large group of people could be drunk before nine o'clock in the morning were simply out of their minds. There had to be another explanation.

Gospel preaching has to rest upon the bedrock and authority of Scripture if it is to be effective, but there are times when the simplest and clearest explanation is an appeal to common sense.

Principle #3: Gospel preaching is biblical preaching. (Acts 2:16-21)

First and foremost, Gospel preaching is biblical preaching. After Peter had addressed the mockers, he wanted to give a clear biblical explanation for what had transpired on the day of Pentecost. He began by referencing a passage in Joel 2. In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God is the presence of God in the world to reveal himself by some action or word. Therefore, when Joel says that God will pour out his Spirit on all flesh, he means that God will draw near to men and women and make himself known and felt in a powerful way. Joel goes on to say that when God makes himself known and felt in people's lives, this can manifest itself in three ways: they may dream dreams, see visions, and prophesy (Joel 2:28).

The prophecy of Joel was not completely fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. There is a distinction between the “Day of the Lord” in Joel 2, a time of judgment that is yet future, and the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

Principle #4: Gospel preaching is Christ-centered preaching. (Acts 2:22-36)

The Lord Jesus Christ was exalted in Peter's gospel preaching. The substance of Peter's message was Christ (Acts 2:23). The Scriptures which he used pointed to Jesus of Nazareth, who was both Lord and Christ. Peter and the rest of the disciples were already convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, Christ the Lord, but he had to communicate that message clearly and accurately to his hearers so that they might be convinced as well. The Peter of Pentecost is filled with the Spirit and all Spirit-filled preaching lifts up Christ.

Peter spoke of the works of Christ that attested as to who he was. He spoke of the predetermined plan of God that Christ should suffer and die. But, he also laid the blame squarely upon those who were complicit in His death. He also spoke of how the psalms had predicted both the suffering of Messiah as well as His vindication. He closed this powerful portion of his message by declaring that this Christ that they had crucified had become both Lord and Christ.

Principle #5: Gospel preaching is confrontational preaching. (Acts 2:37-38)

When the crowd heard the gospel presented in such a clear and unambiguous manner, there was an overwhelming response. According to Acts 2:38, the reaction of the crowd was one of conviction: "Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?'"

Peter's response was direct and uncompromising. "Peter *said* to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.'" He did not say pray to receive Christ, he did not say get up and walk the aisle, and he did not ask if they wanted to join the church. Peter said repent. To repent is not simply to express sorrow or remorse...remorse leads to repentance. Repentance is a complete change of mind and heart. Through repentance, you agree with God that you are a sinner in need of a Savior and you acknowledge that Christ is the only sufficient Savior. The final aspect of repentance is that

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“Knowing God and Making Him Known”

you turn from trusting yourself and you turn to trusting Christ.

Those that received the word that day numbered about 3,000 souls. What a testimony to the power of gospel preaching.