

## FIRST...SOME SOBERING STATISTICS

- Southeastern Assemblies of God University conducted a study that looked at church growth within Pentecostal denominations. It showed that only 6% of Pentecostal churches are growing through evangelistic conversion.
- Another study states that 78% of evangelical churches, representing the entire protestant community, have plateaued or are in decline. Of the 22% that are growing, 11% of that growth is through the transference of membership.
- Only 11% of evangelical churches across the board are growing through conversion. However, 8% of that number is biological growth—meaning children being disciplined in the home.

***The Kingdom is not growing as it should.***

**1** IF YOU WERE ASKED TO SHARE THE GOSPEL, DO YOU FEEL AS THOUGH YOU COULD SHARE THE MESSAGE EFFECTIVELY?

- A. Would you know how to present what the bible calls good news?
- B. Would you know why it is considered good news?
- C. Could you articulate the content in a manner that would lead someone to understand who Jesus is and why they have need of him?

**2** OUR NEED OF THE GOSPEL--THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN

Romans 3:23 (NKJV)

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,



## OUR NEED OF THE GOSPEL--THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN

- A. Man is hopelessly enslaved to sin and cannot save himself (man has never been more depraved and the gospel more urgent)
- B. Paul explicitly explains the depravity of man (Romans 1:18-32)
- C. We clearly see today the same condition Paul saw in Rome
  - i. In America today, morals are optional
  - ii. Divorce, along with those living together apart from marriage, is growing at an unprecedented rate
  - iii. Abuse and addiction is rampant
  - iv. Abortion is seen as something to be celebrated
  - v. In the state of California, a bill is being introduced in an attempt to ban the bible
  - vi. If there was ever a day the Gospel of Jesus Christ was needed—it is today.
- D. Due to the post-Christian state of America, this scripture is of the upmost importance:
  - i. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith’” (Romans 1:16–17)



## WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

- A. Lausanne Covenant Statement
  - i. A good source in defining the gospel comes from the Lausanne Conference held in 1974. Thousands of Christian leaders gathered together from around the globe. They assembled to discuss different topics. One being: What is evangelism? Billy Graham, who arguably was the most successful evangelist in our time, signed off on their conclusions. John Stott, noted theologian, was also a principal author of the document that disclosed their findings. That document is known today as the Lausanne Covenant. This meeting, with key-influential leaders, still carries strong weight among the body of Christ—in both Pentecostal and Evangelical circles. I believe their statement on evangelism is a stalwart definition that will be approved throughout the days to come. Their conclusion is found in the statement below:

a. The Nature of Evangelism

“To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that, as the reigning Lord, he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Savior and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world.”

B. Kerygmatic Gospel

- i. When Paul preached to people who did not know Christ, his content consistently encompassed six key points. The word used in theological circles today for this content is kerygma. A true proclamation of the gospel to unbelievers, as laid out by the apostolic Fathers, is called the kerygmatic gospel.



## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- A. Our testimony alone will not save people.
- B. A power encounter alone will not save people
- C. Salvation requires submission to the gospel.



## SHARING THE GOSPEL IS NOT...

- A. In most cases, evangelism requires a process
- B. It takes the average person 7 to 10 times of hearing the gospel before they respond.
- C. There are many activities we call evangelism that is in actuality part of the process. It should be known as pre-evangelism. The importance of pre-evangelism cannot be stressed enough. Please do not stop doing these things. But to understand what constitutes sharing the gospel, we must clarify the difference
- D. Pre-evangelism
  - a) Praying for someone
  - b) Inviting someone to church
  - c) Living a godly life in front of people
  - d) Giving a prophetic word
  - e) Healing the sick
  - f) Simply getting someone to recite the sinner's prayer
  - g) Sharing your testimony

## 6 WHAT CONSTITUTES PAUL'S APOSTOLIC CONTENT OF THE GOSPEL?

- A. Jesus is the promised Messiah (John 1:35-41)
- B. Paul preached the cross (Acts 2:23)
- C. Paul preached the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15)
- D. Paul called people to repentance (Acts 20:21)
- E. Paul preached to get a response, not just educate (Acts 17:16-34)
- F. Paul called his audience to live a life of continued repentance through sanctification (Colossians 3:5)

## 7 JUDE GAVE A CLARION CALL TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH. (JUDE 1:3)

- A. If there ever was a day to contend for the gospel, it is today. Although Christianity is not yet illegal, people do think you are crazy for believing in a God who is returning. We have to speak the truth no matter what people think. The reason America is in the shape that she is in is because there has been a lack of contending
  - i. The Greek word used for contend is epagónizomai. It is actually a compound word made up of two root words. Epi (focus on) Agon (a contest or competition). Agonizomai carries with it the connotation of contending earnestly.
- B. In using the word faith, Jude was not referring to the ability to believe for the miraculous.
  - i. The Greek word used here is pistis. Putting this word into proper context, faith can be defined as “the persuasion of the will of God.”
- C. What needs to be contended for is the content of the gospel

## 8 WHO IS QUALIFIED TO SHARE THE GOSPEL?

- A. Sharing the gospel is not just for 5-fold ministers. It is a commandment. It is not a suggestion. It's not a question of “Does this fit my personality?” You are qualified to share because you have been reconciled to God and entrusted with the message. (Matthew 28:16-20, 2 Corinthians 5:16-20)
  - i. We who are reconciled
    - a. The Greek word for reconciliation is katallagé. It means to restore to favor, an exchange, atonement. Specifically, in the New Testament, it means the restoration of the favor of God to sinners that repent and put their trust in the finished work of Christ.
    - ii. We have been entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation.
    - iii. We are Ambassadors of Christ

## 9 WHAT MAKES OUR GOSPEL PRESENTATION EFFECTIVE? (ACTS 1:8)

- A. The dunamis power poured out at Pentecost, according to Acts 1:8, is for the purpose of being effective witnesses of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
  - i. The Greek word dunamis means miraculous power, might, or strength
- B. Acts 1:8 says that those that receive the Spirit will be witnesses.
  - i. The Greek word for witnesses is martus. It is the same word that translates as martyr. It means either an eye-witness or an ear-witness. One who knows something first-hand.
- C. What is it that we know firsthand? —our need of the gospel.