

The Bible Pattern For the Evangelization of This World

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Text: Acts 1:4, 5 –

"And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost (Spirit) not many days hence."

The greatest **task of the church** is the **evangelization** of the entire world. Particularly is this true, at this momentous time in which we live, for the coming of our Lord and Master is at hand. Therefore, a tremendous responsibility rests upon the church in this hour because of the great need that exists, and time is running out!

Jesus said to work, for the night cometh when no man can work. God help us, to take His mercy and compassion to the lost masses of the world before the awful hour of judgment shall strike!

We have an immense job to do, but there is a right and a wrong way to do it. If we are to evangelize this, our generation, we must positively adhere to the Bible pattern. God, in His Word, has outlined the method the church must follow, if it is to successfully evangelize the lost.

In Acts 1:2-5, Jesus spoke to His followers (apostles) and commanded, ***"that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me . . . ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."***

Here the command is given and the pattern is set in a three-fold picture:

- 1. The Command**
- 2. The Experience**
- 3. The Results**

1. The Command

Picture Christ, as He stands before His disciples, after He had come to the conclusion of His great earthly ministry—He had demonstrated the method the church was to follow in the evangelization of the lost. The ministry of Jesus Christ was exemplary. The very word "Christian" means to follow in His footsteps.

Here, as Christ stood before His disciples, giving them their instructions, He laid aside His earthly ministry and placed on them the responsibility of continuing the dispensation of His glorious gospel. There He placed squarely upon the shoulders of His true followers, the task of carrying on this great work that He had begun on earth. As He spoke to them, He outlined clearly the pattern that they must follow to successfully evangelize their generation. The book of Acts gives us a perfect account and history of the ministry of the church, to which He gave this commission. God confirmed their preaching of His Word with signs and wonders. This statement made to His disciples was not a request; it was a positive command. To obey it meant success; to reject the command meant failure.

After the command, Jesus gave the disciples a great promise, as found in Acts 1:8, " . . . **Ye shall receive POWER, AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU: and ye shall be WITNESSES UNTO ME both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**"

The ministry of Jesus Christ was not propagated on a plan of human endeavor. It was supernatural. He brought the power of God's kingdom down to earth and displayed that power through the deliverance of the needy. Thereby, He demonstrated that His servants and followers were not to rely upon human ability.

In this hour in which we live, when there is such a tendency for us to rely upon our human capabilities, we are trying to effect the will of God in the earth by human means and methods. But, as Christ gave the positive command to His disciples, so does that same command hold true for us today. Jesus said, "**without me, you can do nothing.**" Therefore, if we are to effectively evangelize the world, we must not be workers **for** God, but co-workers **with** Him. We must rely upon His power and believe that He will confirm the preaching of His Word today with signs and wonders, even as in that day.

One may make the proper approach, in dealing with an individual about his soul. He may present a logical argument. He may use proper psychology. He may appeal to the mentality of that individual, **but if the Spirit of God is not there to convict, it will be to no avail.**

That's how it is within the church. We may have the finesse for the proper approach. We may present a logical argument, **but if we do not have the power of the Holy Spirit moving with signs and wonders in our midst**, to convince men and women that Jesus Christ lives and cares, our ministry will be fruitless.

The power of God is absolute. Everything else is relative matter. We may have Bible School training, proper pulpit etiquette, preach homiletic sermons, and use the proper psychology; but if we do not have that power that will stir men and women to the depths of their hearts, it will be of little effect.

In this day, when we rely so much upon what WE can do, we need to heed the command of Jesus Christ, find our way to the upper room and receive the reality of Pentecost, which is the mighty baptism of (in) the Holy Spirit. From there, go forth, **not working for God** but as **co-workers with God**. Then, where we go, God will go; and where God goes, His supernatural power is revealed, even as it was through the ministry of His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus testified that everything He did was by the Spirit of the Father that dwelt in Him.

If we reject the command of Jesus Christ and refuse to obey Him, then we sin, and the world goes to Hell because we are rendered weak and our ministry ineffective. ***“Obedience is better than sacrifice.”*** God help us to obey!

2. The Experience

We are living in a day of religious profession. Men seem to think they are what they claim to be, regardless of what they really are. Pentecost, however, is not a profession; it is a glorious experience. The thing that makes us **Pentecostal** is the **indwelling power of the Holy Spirit**.

In the upper room, as the disciples obeyed the Lord, we find that supernatural things took place. The very experience was a mighty supernatural manifestation of God. There is such a tendency today to draw away from the supernatural, as though we were afraid of it. I will be bold enough to say that, if you do not believe in the supernatural, you do not believe in God—for God is supernatural.

If you do not believe in the supernatural, you do not believe in God's Bible. We find the supernatural strain throughout the entire structure of the Word of God. You can read the Bible from cover to cover, and you will find that God Almighty has always condescended and delivered His people through supernatural means. As God delivered supernaturally then, He will deliver supernaturally now. If we take the supernatural out of Christianity, we have nothing left but weak, ineffectual religion.

On the Day of Pentecost, there were outstanding examples of the supernatural. First, there was the manifestation of the wind, which revealed the reality of God's power. God's power is real today! We will have the rushing mighty wind, as at Pentecost, if we will cease to be drawn away and will press in to the experience that God holds out to us.

On the Day of Pentecost, tongues of fire actually appeared. Those present saw the fire. It was genuine. It was real--more real than the material things around them. As they received the mighty initial in-filling of the Holy Spirit, the place was shaken. They spoke in heavenly languages, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Men, who realized that in themselves they could not carry on the wonderful ministry that Christ had brought into the world, obeyed His command, and had now received the indwelling power and presence of God Almighty. This power was the answer to their great need. It was their enablement; it gave them their fluency. As they stood before men, they then could have power with men, for they had power with God. I do not care how well educated you may be. That is beside the point. It is irrelevant. **Each one** of us, great or small, capable or incapable, within ourselves, **must have power with God before we can have power with men.** This has certainly been proven to us undeniably over and over again.

Let's face it. There is only one thing that will deliver men and women from the hand of Satan. People today are supernaturally bound by a power greater than any human being; therefore, we must bring to the people the greater power of God, which alone can set them free. It takes more than words; **it must be by the power of His spirit.**

3. The Results

The proper method will bring definite results. If we are not having the results that we should have, then the method is wrong. When we follow the right plan, it will bring the desired results.

Let us recall the story of Peter and John as they came from the upper room, filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. There was an inner force compelling them. They were being guided by the Spirit of God. These were not ordinary men. They were true, God-called ministers of the Gospel, going forth, not with plans of their own, not following their pre-conceived notions and not doing that which they willed; but they were walking in the center of God's will. We find that the path they followed led them directly to the crippled man at the Gate Beautiful.

These men did not just happen upon the Gate Beautiful; they were being propelled (guided) by an inner force. If you have this force within you (meaning, the power of the Holy Spirit that God will give to anyone who seeks Him with his or her whole heart), you will follow that same path which leads to a suffering humanity.

We see Peter and John now, as they stand before the crippled man. We see that man as he sits there. He had been by-passed by the proud religionists of his day. Deliverance had never come to him. The religionists had rejected the miracle working

Christ of God. They said that He was false. They said, "We have the truth; we are God's true representatives." Yet the proof that they were wrong was the fact that the crippled man still sat there. Deliverance had never come through their hands.

Now, two powerful men, the true ambassadors of Jesus Christ, stand before him, and what takes place through the power of that Name is the positive, undeniable proof that Jesus Christ was the Messiah sent from God. He was not dead and in the grave, as some commonly supposed. For, in a moment's time, through the power of His Name another resurrection had taken place. Peter said, "**Such as I have, give I thee.**" Before we can give something to someone else, we must first have it.

Modern religion is trying to give the world something it does not possess. Peter knew what he had, and he knew where he got it. He also knew what it was for. Therefore, he could say with authority, "**Such as I have, give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.**"

Had Jesus not been the Son of God and had Peter not been His true representative, these would have been empty words. But, as Peter took this man's hand, the **POWER** that Peter had received in that upper room was actually imparted from his body into the body of the impotent man, even as virtue left the body of Jesus Christ, and He healed the sick.

Here we see God's power in action. We see the results. The crippled man felt the flame of God move down through every fiber of his being. A supernatural miracle was taking place. He began to exert upward pressure; he found that life had come into his legs. His bones began to crack, and he felt them receiving strength. He stood upright on his feet and danced, not realizing for a moment what had happened. When the truth dawned on him, he could contain himself no longer. He began to shout praises to God, and he ran. He ran down the main street and caused a tremendous commotion. People said, "It is the beggar," and they began to gather around him by the thousands.

God's Word Preached and Confirmed by Miracles Has Power

As the people began to question Peter and John about what had happened, Peter preached the most powerful message he had ever preached--the message of the resurrected Christ. He first said, ". . . **Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?**" (Acts 3:12). He then preached his powerful message, and the healed beggar stood before them as positive proof of what he was preaching.

This caused the people to reason among themselves. They said, "If this man, Jesus, was not the Christ, this miracle would not have taken place. This miracle is positive proof that He was resurrected from the dead. If He was still in the grave, there would be no miracle." They continued to reason, "If Jesus had not been the Christ, this miracle would not have taken place through the ministry of His followers. If He arose from the dead, then He was the true Messiah who was to come. If He was the true Messiah, then His teachings were true, and we must obey them if we are to inherit eternal life." As they reasoned thusly, five thousand men alone were converted to Jesus Christ. **The combination of the preached Word, confirmed by the miracle wrought, caused thousands to accept Christ.**

That combination today, the preached Word and miracles, will produce the same results. That is the pattern the church must follow. This is being proven. I have seen it with my own eyes. " . . . ***Ye shall receive POWER, AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU.*** "

I have seen nations that were never before touched by God, shaken from top to bottom and from center to circumference, through the preaching of the Word of God. God confirmed His Word with signs and wonders, as the power was given by the Holy Ghost to His servant, which enabled him to bring God's message effectively and convincingly to the people.

Men reason today as they have always reasoned. Men are longing for reality. What good is religion, if it cannot deliver? If we will obey the command of Jesus Christ, go to the upper room, and receive this dynamic experience, we will go forth with a powerful ministry. We will fulfill the commission of our Lord and His desire for the evangelization of the world before He comes again, the day of Grace is over, and our last golden opportunity to reach those who are still in outer darkness is gone forever.

God help us to face this fact. This is the Bible answer for humanity's needs today.