

**“The Culture and Practice of Evangelism”
 Adult Sunday Studies Class on Evangelism Training
 CPC Summer 2015**

Week 1, The Missionary God

1. What is God’s mission? To Spread His Glory and Presence!

1.1. “Be fruitful and multiply” - God’s Holy Presence spreads from one family, to one nation of families (Israel, starting in Exodus), to families of nations in Christ

1. *Humanity’s purpose as the Image of God* - Gen. 1:26-8; (cf. Gen. 9:1-7, with Noah after the flood);
2. *Unconditional Covenant with Abraham* - Gen. 17:1-8 - “... I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and **may multiply you greatly**. . . . my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for **I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful**. . . .” (cf. Gen. 28:3; 38:4; and 48:4; Deut. 7:13)
 1. What’s the key difference between what God said to Adam (and Noah) and what God said to Abraham about being fruitful and multiply?
3. *Fulfilled in Christ* - Jer. 23:3-6 - “Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and **they shall be fruitful and multiply**. I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the Lord. ‘Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when **I will raise up for David a righteous Branch**, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness’”.
1. “Fruitful and multiply” can be understood as being both God’s royal representatives who steward the earth on His behalf, as well as royal emissaries who declare His kingship and enact it through the gospel

1.2. God’s Word IS Redemptive History - the story of God chasing after sinners

1. *From Genesis to Revelation, the Covenant of Grace* - “Man, by his fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second [Gal. 3:21; Rom. 3:20-1, 8:3; Gen. 3:15; Isa. 42:6], commonly called the covenant of grace; wherein He freely offers unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ; requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved [Jn. 3:16; Rom. 10:6-9; Gal. 3:11], and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life His Holy Spirit, to make them willing, and able to believe” [Ezek. 36:26-7; Jn. 6:44-5]. (Westminster Confession of Faith, 7.3)

1.3. God's Mission in the OT Fulfilled and Climaxed in Christ's Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension

1. *Life* - Jesus fulfills the holy requirements of the law on our behalf, becoming human
2. *Death* - Jesus satisfies the punishment and death required by our sin
3. *Resurrection* - Jesus defeats death and exhausts the punishment of sin, to begin the new age
4. *Ascension* - Jesus is enthroned in heaven, in the heavenly tabernacle, so that we too may approach God in heaven

2. How does God accomplish His mission? In, with, and through sinners!

2.1. Ascension as the Launch Pad of the Church and Our Mission in Christ

1. **Acts 2** - Jesus has ascended and the apostles are waiting for "power from on high". As they receive the Spirit and speak in the languages of the global community present (thus reversing Babel, and beginning the global mission beyond Israel to all nations), Peter preaches:
 1. It is now the "last days"!
 2. Jesus has "loosed the pangs of death"
 3. Jesus is exalted at the right hand of God, on the throne
 4. Jesus sends the Spirit - "having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit"
 5. God has now made Jesus - the one crucified - the Lord and Christ
 1. **Our Response** - "cut to the heart", the crowds ask, "what do we do?!"
 1. Repent and be baptized and you will receive the Holy Spirit, forgiveness of sins, and the promise that is for you, your children and ALL who are far off
 2. **What does receiving the Spirit look like? Acts 2:42-7!**
2. **Matt. 28:17-20** - "And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

2.2. Is this mission to send out individuals as evangelists, to form churches as corporate evangelists, or both?

1. *Read Ephesians 4*
 1. Lose the false choices of: individual or corporate; pastors or laity; united or diverse; doctrine or experience. It's BOTH

1.3. What now?

1. *Prayer, for yourself and our church:*
 1. Deeper desire to serve God and see others come to know Him
 2. Those people to whom you want the Spirit to come and make new
 3. Opportunities to share the gospel clearly
 4. For discernment in how best to be involved, and who you would like to connect with outside the church
 5. **CPC to begin 5-6 new evangelistic small groups in homes in greater New Haven**
2. *Let's go!*
 1. "Mission begins with a kind of explosion of joy. The news that the rejected and crucified Jesus is alive is something that cannot possibly be suppressed. It must be told. Who could be silent about such a fact? The mission . . . is more like the fallout from a vast explosion, a radioactive fallout which is not lethal but life-giving." - Lesslie Newbigin

Excursus: A Glimpse into the Early Church - Notes from Michael Green's Evangelism in the Early Church on their Passionate, Offensive, and Radical Communities

1. **Passion and the Victory in Christ** - "The militaristic analogies favoured by Christian writers from St Paul to Tertullian, despite the fact that the Christians refused to enter the army, suggest a coherence, a recognition of spiritual battle, and a fierce (and frequently apocalyptic) commitment . . . The first Christians were rather like the early Communists: small groups bound together by an overmastering passion. . . . But our Western churches show little of that spirit. They prefer to see themselves as a hospital rather than an army. Yet this almost military vision, commitment and sacrifice is a major characteristic of the overflowing churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America today. Without something like it in the West, how will anyone in our jaded society be moved? They may be pardoned for reflecting, 'These people are Christians, are they? Very nice for them, if they like that sort of thing. But it has nothing to offer me.' Not until we in the West burn with a passion which is almost a pain to reach people with the gospel will they be likely to take the matter seriously." – 18
 1. "There was no trace of compromise in their preaching. They looked for nothing less than total surrender to the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Indeed they went out of their way to ridicule pagan gods. Had they been willing to practise their Christianity while remaining silent about other deities they could have had a comparatively safe passage. But they insisted that there was no other God than the Father of Jesus Christ. He was a jealous God. . . They lived in a world more relativist and far more pluralist than our own. And yet they would not make any compromise on this issue." – 21
3.
 1. **Radically Different Communities** - "The Church had qualities unparalleled in the ancient world. Nowhere else would you find slaves and masters, Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, engaging in table fellowship and showing a real love for one another. That love overflowed to outsiders, and in time of plague and disaster the Christians shone by means of their service to the communities in which they lived. . . . love without strings attached." – 20
 1. *On what a pagan man who's married to a Christian woman would have to put up with* - "If there is a fast to be observed, the husband that same day arranges a supper party. If a charitable journey has to be made, never is family business more pressing. For who would allow his wife, on the pretext of visiting the brethren, go round from street to street to other men's homes, and, worst of all, to the poorer cottages? Who will willingly put up with her being away from his bed at nightly meetings? Who will, without anxiety, endure her absence all night long at the Easter Vigil? Who will, without suspicion, send her off to attend that Lord's Supper of which so many defamatory things are said? Who will allow her to creep in person to kiss a martyr's bonds? Who will allow her to meet any of the brethren to exchange the kiss?" – 66