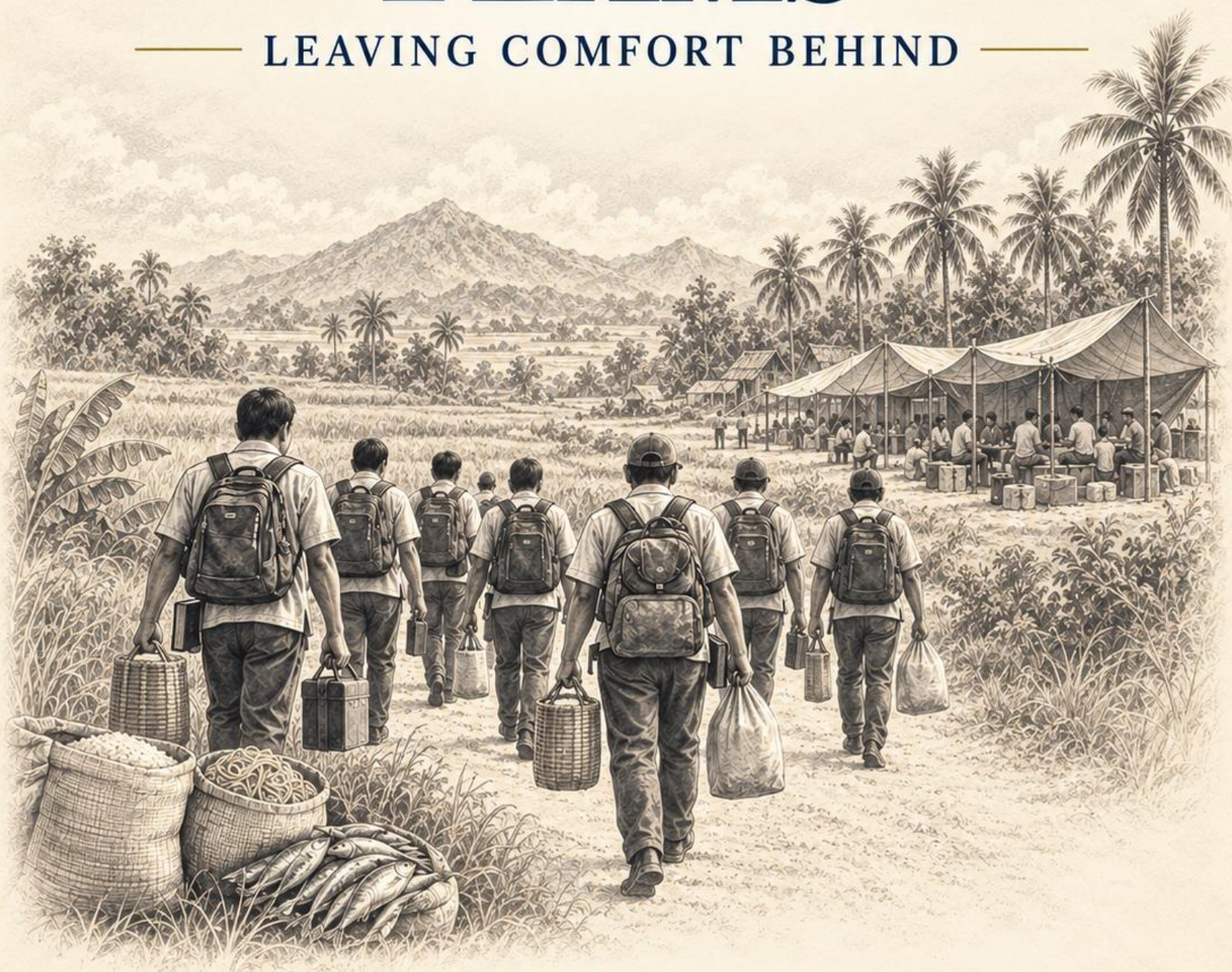


REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

SATURATION TEAMS

LEAVING COMFORT BEHIND



A REASON TOGETHER STUDY

DR. THOMAS W. HAWKSLEY

Saturation Teams

Sermon Transcript

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Aloha.

Welcome to Reason Together Church.

Whether you have been part of a church for most of your life,
whether you are visiting us for the first time
or whether you are returning after a long time away,
we are thankful that you are here.

We also want to recognize any honored guests who may be worshiping with us today.

You are not here accidentally.

You are among people who believe that honest questions do not frighten God.

So bring your questions.

Open your Bible.

And let us reason together the Word of God.

If you are visiting, there is a guest card available for you.

We ask only for your first name and email address.

We are not going to pressure you,
sell your information
or arrive unexpectedly at your home.

We simply want to thank you for coming and help you remain connected if you desire.

After our time together, please join us at the Reason Together Cafe.

The coffee is free.

The conversation is free.

And there are always free refills on conversations.

Let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father,
thank You for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Thank You for the person who first told each of us about Jesus.

Thank You for pastors,

teachers,
parents,
friends,
missionaries
and ordinary Christians who refused to keep the good news to themselves.
Forgive us for the times when fear has kept us silent.
Forgive us for the times when inconvenience has seemed more important than another person's soul.
Forgive us also for the times when Christians have spoken without love,
used pressure instead of truth
or treated people as statistics rather than individuals made in Your image.
Teach us today what You have entrusted to the whole Church.
Show each of us the particular part You have given us.
Keep Jesus at the center of everything that is said.
And allow the Holy Spirit to accomplish what no human speaker can accomplish.
In the name of Jesus we pray.
Amen.

Our Scripture reading is found in Acts chapter 8.

Beginning with verse 1, the Bible says,

"And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles."

Then verse 4 says,

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

Notice one small detail that we will return to later.

The apostles remained in Jerusalem.

But the believers who were scattered carried the Word wherever they went.

Before we continue, I want to briefly explain how giving is handled at Reason Together Church.

We do not pass an offering plate.

Our guests are never expected to give.

If you are a member of another church, we encourage you to support your home church faithfully.

For those who consider Reason Together Church their church home, a giving box is available in the back.

Give only as God leads you.

The Bible teaches that God loves a cheerful giver.

Giving is not a price paid for worship,
and it is never a payment for salvation.

Sometimes participating in evangelism means going.

Sometimes it means preaching.

Sometimes it means praying.

And sometimes it means purchasing the projector that allows someone else to go and preach.

We will return to that projector in a few moments.

But first I want to take you back to the church where my understanding of evangelism began.

I have attended church since I was one month old.

I grew up at Bangor Baptist Church in Maine.

It was a church that was on fire for God.

It was more common than exceptional for ten or more people to be saved during a week.

Every few years, the church needed additional space because attendance was growing so rapidly.

People heard about Jesus.

People responded to the gospel.

New Christians became part of the church.

As a child, I thought that was simply what churches did.

When something surrounds you during childhood,
you begin to assume it is normal everywhere.

After completing graduate school, I moved to Florida.

I began attending a local church there.

At that church, it was a notable event when even one person came forward during the invitation.

I am not saying that to condemn that church.

We cannot measure the faithfulness of a congregation merely by counting how many people walk an aisle.

But the contrast was difficult to miss.

In Maine, I had grown accustomed to watching people respond.

In Florida, one response seemed extraordinary.

It raised questions in my mind.
Had the gospel become less powerful when I crossed a state line?
Had the Holy Spirit become less interested in saving people?
Or had different churches quietly developed very different expectations about what might happen when the gospel was proclaimed?
Years later, during missionary ministry, I saw the Holy Spirit work in remarkable ways.
There were occasions when I personally preached and more than fifty people came forward to accept Christ.
That experience did not make me feel powerful.
It made me feel small.
I knew I could speak.
I could explain Scripture.
I could extend an invitation.
But I could not reach inside a human heart.
I could not convict someone of sin.
I could not give spiritual life.
Whatever happened in those hearts was the work of God.
Then, on the island of Cebu in the Philippines,
I encountered a church that redefined my understanding of what could happen when evangelism became the work of an entire congregation.
My good friend Dr. Armie F. Jesalva served for many years as the senior pastor of Bible Baptist Church in Cebu City.
This was not merely a church whose story I read in a report.
I passed through those doors more times than I can remember.
I spent many hours in Dr. Jesalva's private office discussing the things of God,
personal concerns
and matters of the heart.
It was at that church that I publicly announced my commitment to become a missionary.
It was Dr. Jesalva who helped me arrange a special evening with my then girlfriend so that I could propose to her.
And it was at that church that Danielin and I were married.
Dr. Jesalva and his family became a special part of the lives of my family and me.

So when I tell you about the saturation teams,
I am not telling you about strangers in a distant missionary legend.
I knew the pastor.
I knew the church.
And I spoke with some of the people who participated.
In 2007, Bible Baptist Church was preparing to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary.
The leaders began discussing what they might give to God for that anniversary.
One suggestion involved giving money.
Another proposed a much larger financial gift.
Then the conversation changed.
Someone asked whether the most meaningful anniversary offering might be a concentrated effort to reach people with the gospel.
The church established a goal of seeing fifty thousand professions of faith during the months leading to the anniversary.
Dr. Jesalva gathered men from the church.
He divided them into sixteen teams.
Those teams went into communities.
They spoke in schools.
They went from house to house.
They spoke with individuals.
They addressed large groups.
They left their homes,
their routines
and their comfort zones.
They traveled with simple provisions such as rice,
noodles
and dried fish.
At times they slept outside or wherever they could find shelter.
They trusted God to meet their needs while they tried to help others hear about Jesus.
The campaign did not simply end when the anniversary celebration was over.
The teams continued.
They traveled into additional communities and additional islands.

Different accounts give different totals for the original campaign.

One ministry account reported more than fifty-five thousand professions during the first three months.

The magazine in which I later told this story reported more than one hundred thousand during that period and more than 2.2 million over the continuing effort.

I cannot independently audit every number today.

But every account agrees about something important.

Tens of thousands of people heard the gospel because ordinary church members were willing to go.

And every one of those numbers represented a name.

Every name represented a life.

Every life represented a soul for whom Jesus died.

When I personally experienced what was happening, I wanted to participate.

The teams needed equipment for presentations to larger groups.

So I purchased a projector for them.

I did not personally knock on every door.

I did not sleep in every village.

I did not preach every message.

But I could provide something the workers needed.

Someone purchased the projector.

Someone carried it.

Someone found electricity or connected it to a generator.

Someone set up the screen.

Someone gathered the people.

Someone preached the message.

Someone prayed.

Someone remained to answer questions.

Someone followed up after the team left.

Different people performed different tasks,

but they were participating in the same mission.

That brings us to our question.

Is telling people about Jesus the work of a few specially gifted Christians?

Or is it the responsibility of the whole Church?

Let us begin with the words Christians often call the Great Commission.

Matthew 28:18 through 20 says,

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

We should begin honestly.

Jesus spoke these words directly to the eleven disciples.

They had a unique apostolic calling.

Every Christian today is not an apostle.

But listen carefully to what the apostles were commanded to do.

They were to make disciples.

They were to baptize those disciples.

And they were to teach those disciples to observe everything Jesus had commanded them.

That means the commission was intended to reproduce itself.

Disciples would make disciples.

Those disciples would be taught to obey Christ.

They would then help still others become disciples.

Jesus also promised,

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

The eleven apostles would not remain physically alive until the end of the age.

The promise anticipated the continuing work of Christ's Church.

The apostles received the commission first,

but they received a commission intended to continue through every generation.

The commission belongs to the whole Church.

But the particular assignments within that commission differ.

Ephesians chapter 4 says that Christ gave some apostles,

some prophets,

some evangelists

and some pastors and teachers.

Notice the word "some."

Not everyone possesses the same gift.

Not everyone is called to preach publicly.

Not everyone can easily begin a conversation with a stranger.

Some Christians have an unusual ability to explain the gospel,
engage unfamiliar people

and invite them to trust Christ.

Scripture calls some of them evangelists.

But why were those gifted people given to the Church?

Ephesians 4:12 answers,

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Gifted leaders do not perform all ministry while the saints watch.

Gifted leaders help prepare the saints for ministry.

Some Christians possess a special gift for teaching.

But Christian parents must still teach their children.

Some possess a special gift of giving.

But generosity is expected from every Christian.

Some possess a special gift of mercy.

But no Christian is permitted to be merciless.

In the same way,

some Christians possess the gift of evangelism,

but every Christian should be ready to make Christ known.

Evangelism may be a special gift.

Christian witness is a shared responsibility.

Now return to Acts chapter 8.

Persecution had broken out against the church in Jerusalem.

Believers were scattered throughout Judaea and Samaria.

Luke includes a detail that is easy to overlook.

He says they were all scattered abroad,

"except the apostles."

Then he writes,

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

Who carried the Word?

It was not only Peter.

It was not only John.

The apostles were still in Jerusalem.

Unnamed believers carried the gospel wherever life took them.

They did not have church buildings waiting for them.

They did not have projectors.

They did not have professionally printed materials.

They did not have social media.

Many had lost their homes.

Some had fled with little more than they could carry.

Yet they carried the one possession persecution could not take from them.

They carried the good news of Jesus Christ.

Christianity did not spread only because famous apostles preached to enormous crowds.

It spread because ordinary Christians spoke about Jesus in ordinary places.

Andrew did not preach to thousands when he first appears in John's Gospel.

He found his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus.

Andrew reached one man.

But that one man became Peter.

The Samaritan woman did not graduate from Bible college before she began telling her city about Jesus.

She said,

"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

She shared what she knew,

invited people to investigate

and allowed Jesus to speak for Himself.

In Mark chapter 5, a man who had been delivered wanted to travel with Jesus.

Jesus gave him a different assignment.

"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

His mission field began at home.

His message was what Jesus had done for him.

Priscilla and Aquila did not embarrass Apollos in front of a crowd.

They took him aside privately and explained the way of God more perfectly.

Some witnesses stand before thousands.

Some witnesses sit beside one person.

Heaven does not measure faithfulness by the size of the audience.

The book of Acts also gives us a remarkable picture of saturation.

Acts 19 tells us that Paul taught daily in the school of Tyrannus at Ephesus.

Verse 10 says,

"And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

Paul could not personally have spoken to every resident of Asia.

He remained in Ephesus teaching disciples.

Those disciples carried the message outward.

One person taught another.

One household told another household.

One church helped begin another church.

The Word multiplied through people whose names we may never know.

Earlier, the enemies of the Church complained in Acts 5:28,

"Behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine."

What an accusation.

They had filled Jerusalem with the teaching of Jesus.

Biblical saturation is more than visiting every street once.

It is more than distributing a paper and placing a check beside a neighborhood.

Saturation occurs when the gospel is faithfully proclaimed,

visibly lived,

repeatedly taught

and entrusted to people who carry it farther.

It includes proclamation.

It includes Christian character.

It includes compassionate service.

It includes continued presence.

It includes discipleship.

And it includes multiplication.

Jesus also understood the value of teams.

Luke 10:1 says that He appointed seventy and sent them two and two.

In Acts, we find Paul and Barnabas.

Then Paul and Silas.

We find Barnabas and Mark.

We find Priscilla and Aquila.

Teams provide encouragement.

They provide accountability.

They combine different abilities.

They share burdens.

They help one worker continue when another becomes discouraged.

Sixteen teams could reach farther than one gifted preacher because the mission had become the work of a church rather than the performance of an individual.

But before we tell Christians to share the gospel,
we must be certain we understand what the gospel is.

The word "gospel" means good news.

It is not merely good advice about how to improve your life.

It is not an invitation to become more religious.

It is not recruitment for a denomination.

It is not a promise that all your earthly problems will disappear.

Paul summarizes the gospel in 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

He says that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

He was buried.

And He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

The gospel begins with an uncomfortable truth.

We have sinned.

Romans 3:23 says,

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Sin separates us from a holy God.

We cannot erase our guilt by doing more good deeds.

We cannot purchase forgiveness.

We cannot become righteous by joining the correct organization.

But Romans 5:8 says,

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Jesus took upon Himself the judgment our sins deserved.

He was buried.

He rose from the grave.

Salvation is offered by grace.

Ephesians 2:8 and 9 say,

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Evangelism is faithfully helping another person understand who Jesus is,
what He has done

and how that person may be reconciled to God through Him.

It is not simply persuading someone to walk an aisle.

It is not getting someone to repeat words without understanding them.

It is not winning a religious argument.

It is introducing someone to the crucified and risen Savior.

Once we understand that,

we must understand who produces the results.

The church at Corinth had begun attaching itself to personalities.

Some identified with Paul.

Others identified with Apollos.

Paul responded in 1 Corinthians 3:5 through 7,

"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

Paul planted.

Apollos watered.

God gave the increase.
We can pray.
We can love.
We can speak.
We can explain.
We can invite.
We can serve.
We can provide resources.
We can answer questions.
We can follow up.
We can disciple.
But only God can convict the sinner.
Only God can open the heart.
Only God can give life to the spiritually dead.
Only God can produce genuine repentance and faith.
You cannot save the person you love.
That burden was never placed upon you.
You can faithfully introduce that person to the Savior.
This protects us from despair when someone does not respond.
It also protects us from pride when someone does.
If a person rejects what we say,
we have not necessarily failed.
Perhaps we planted a seed someone else will water.
If a person responds immediately,
we have not earned the glory.
God gave the increase.
That brings us to another necessary question.
What counts as success in evangelism?
Is success presenting the gospel clearly?
Is it getting someone to repeat a prayer?
Is it receiving a profession of faith?
Is it seeing someone baptized?

Or is it seeing that person continue as a disciple?

Acts 2:41 says,

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

That is an impressive number.

But the next verse is equally important.

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

They heard.

They received the Word.

They were baptized.

They continued.

The Church did not count them and forget them.

They became disciples.

Jesus warned in the Parable of the Sower that not every immediate response develops deep roots.

Some receive the Word with joy but endure only for a while.

Some allow the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches to choke the Word.

Some bear lasting fruit.

We should rejoice over every sincere profession of faith.

But we must not pretend that we can see perfectly into every heart.

And we must not confuse counting professions with completing the Great Commission.

Jesus commanded us to make disciples.

There is another danger when we speak about enormous numbers.

People can become statistics.

Jesus repeatedly brought the attention of the crowd back to the individual.

In Luke 15, one sheep was missing.

The shepherd went after the one.

One coin was lost.

The woman searched diligently for the one.

One son had left home.

The father watched and waited for the one.

Jesus said there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.

One.

Every number represents a name.

Every name represents a life.

Every life represents a soul for whom Jesus died.

Jesus does not look at fifty thousand and see a statistic.

He sees fifty thousand individual stories.

He sees their wounds.

He sees their questions.

He sees their families.

He sees the secret burdens no missionary can see.

The large campaign matters because each individual matters.

Evangelism must therefore be conducted with honesty and love.

Second Corinthians 4:2 says,

"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully."

First Peter 3:15 tells believers to be ready to give an answer,
but it also tells us how.

"With meekness and fear."

Christians may persuade.

We must never manipulate.

Persuasion presents truth honestly and invites someone to consider it.

Manipulation uses pressure,

fear,

deception

or dependency to obtain a desired response.

We must never exploit poverty.

We must never make food conditional upon a profession of faith.

We must never imply that medical help must be purchased with a prayer.

We must never use education or authority to pressure someone into saying words that person does not understand.

We feed people because they are hungry.

We help people because they need help.

We tell them about Jesus because He loves them.
And if they decline our message,
they remain people made in the image of God whom Christians are commanded to love.
The magazine article noted that the majority of the people in that part of the Philippines
identified as Catholic.
We should be careful with that statement.
We should not assume that every Catholic is unsaved.
We should not assume that every Baptist is saved.
A denominational label cannot save anyone.
Church attendance cannot save.
Baptism cannot purchase salvation.
Family tradition cannot produce the new birth.
Religious vocabulary cannot substitute for knowing Jesus Christ.
Jesus told Nicodemus,
"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
The question is not merely,
"What church claims you?"
The deeper question is,
"Have you personally trusted Jesus Christ?"
If this responsibility belongs to the whole Church,
why are so many Christians silent?
Usually it is not because we have carefully studied the Bible and concluded that witness is
unnecessary.
Often we are afraid.
I do not know enough.
I might say something incorrectly.
They may reject me.
They may be offended.
They may ask a question I cannot answer.
My past is too imperfect.
I am not outgoing.
I am not the evangelist.

Second Timothy 1:7 and 8 say,

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord."

Notice that courage is joined with love and a sound mind.

Christian courage is not loudness.

It is not rudeness.

It is not refusing to listen.

It is faithful love that refuses to hide the truth.

You do not have to know every answer before you can speak about Jesus.

You may begin by listening.

You may begin by asking a question.

You may begin by telling what Christ has done for you.

And when someone asks something you cannot answer,

you can say,

"I do not know the answer, but I would be glad to open the Bible and reason through it with you."

That is not weakness.

That is honesty.

God is not asking you to pretend to know everything.

He is asking you not to hide the One you know.

And please remember that participation does not always mean public speaking.

Some of the most important people in the work of God never stand in front of the crowd.

Someone goes.

Someone gives.

Someone drives.

Someone prepares the room.

Someone translates.

Someone welcomes.

Someone cares for the children.

Someone maintains the website.

Someone makes the coffee.

Someone answers the difficult question after the meeting.

Someone prays while another person speaks.

Someone encourages the worker who is ready to quit.

Someone purchases the projector.

The visible speaker is not the entire ministry.

The person working faithfully behind the scenes may be participating in evangelism just as genuinely as the person standing before the crowd.

God sees the hidden service that makes visible ministry possible.

The early history of Christianity reinforces this picture.

These historical writings are not Scripture,

but they help us see how early Christians understood their place in the world.

The ancient writing called the Didache describes traveling Christian teachers and the congregations that received and supported them.

Some went.

Others made their going possible.

The Letter to Diognetus compared Christians in the world to the soul distributed throughout the body.

Christians were dispersed through cities,

living among their neighbors,

yet belonging ultimately to Christ.

Justin Martyr described Christians gathering for teaching and worship,

caring for people in need

and living visibly changed lives.

Even Pliny the Younger,

a Roman governor who opposed Christianity,

acknowledged that the faith had spread through cities,

villages

and rural areas.

The early Church had no airplanes.

It had no internet.

It had no electronic projectors.

It possessed ordinary believers who believed the gospel was too important to keep to themselves.

Charles Spurgeon once preached a sermon called "A Gospel Worth Dying For."

He acknowledged that all believers are not apostles and all are not called to public preaching.

But he insisted that every believer has some ministry connected to the gospel.

He urged ordinary Christians to tell what the grace of God had done for them.

If the gospel has changed you,

you possess a testimony.

It may not answer every theological question.

It may not impress a scholar.

But you can truthfully say,

"This is what Jesus has done for me."

Many years later, Christian leaders meeting through the Lausanne Movement summarized the mission with a memorable expression.

The whole Church must take the whole gospel to the whole world.

The whole gospel,

not a thin promise of earthly success.

The whole Church,

not merely the professional evangelist.

The whole world,

including the person living beside us whom we have overlooked.

Now let us bring this home.

What would it mean for Reason Together Church to help saturate Waikiki with the gospel?

It would not necessarily mean copying every detail of the Cebu method.

We may never organize sixteen teams that live on rice,

noodles

and dried fish.

God has placed us in a different community with different opportunities.

Saturation in Waikiki might begin when a visitor receives a sincere welcome.

It might occur when a tourist hears the gospel and carries it home to another state or another country.

It might begin when someone who was hurt by a church discovers a safe place to ask an honest question.

It might happen when a difficult Biblical question is taken seriously instead of dismissed.

It might happen when a Reason Together Study is shared with someone who would never enter this building.

It might happen when a lonely person finds a conversation in the cafe.

One of our most meaningful places of evangelism may not be behind this pulpit.

It may be across a table,

with free coffee and free refills on conversations.

We do not need to imitate every detail of the saturation teams.

We need to imitate their willingness to make the gospel the shared mission of the Church.

So I want you to think of one person.

Not an abstract population.

Not an entire city.

One person.

Who has God already placed near you?

Who has asked a spiritual question?

Who appears discouraged or searching?

Who might accept an invitation from you?

Who needs someone to listen before anyone speaks?

Who might never hear your testimony unless you tell it?

Choose one person for whom you will pray.

Choose one conversation you will no longer avoid.

Choose one sincere question you can ask.

Choose one resource you can share.

Choose one practical act of love that can make the gospel visible.

Choose one part of the Church's witness that you can support.

Saturation begins when ordinary Christians stop assuming that someone else will do it.

Not every Christian is called to preach to thousands.

Not every Christian is called to knock on every door.

Not every Christian is called to travel to another island.

But every Christian has been entrusted with some part in helping someone hear,
see

and understand the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Before you can share that gospel,

you must personally receive it.

You may have attended church for years.

You may know Christian language.

You may have been baptized.

You may belong to a respected denomination.

But none of those things can substitute for personal faith in Jesus Christ.

The Bible says that all have sinned.

That includes me.

That includes you.

The wages of sin is death.

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus died for your sins.

He was buried.

He rose again.

He offers forgiveness as a gift of grace.

You cannot earn it.

You can receive it by turning toward Christ and trusting Him.

If you have never personally trusted Jesus Christ,

you can do so today.

I am going to lead in a simple prayer.

The words themselves cannot save you.

Repeating a prayer without faith does not create salvation.

But if these words express the sincere desire of your heart,

you may pray them to God.

Let us pray.

Dear God,

I know that I am a sinner.

I know that I cannot save myself.

I believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins.

I believe that He was buried and rose again.

I turn from trusting myself and place my trust in Jesus Christ.

Please forgive me.

Save me by Your grace.

Help me begin a new life as a follower of Jesus.

In His name I pray.

Amen.

If you sincerely trusted Christ today,
please speak with me or with another trusted Christian before you leave.

We want to pray with you,
answer your questions
and help you begin growing as a disciple.

And to every Christian listening today,
remember the saturation teams.

God may never ask you to sleep outside on a distant island.

He may never ask you to live on rice,
noodles
and dried fish.

He may never ask you to speak to a crowd.

He may ask you to cross a room.

He may ask you to begin a conversation.

He may ask you to invite someone for coffee.

He may ask you to share a study.

He may ask you to provide a tool.

He may ask you to pray faithfully for someone who is not yet ready to listen.

He may ask you to support another Christian who is able to go where you cannot.

He may ask you to stop hiding behind the statement,

"Evangelism is not my gift."

We cannot make anyone believe.

We cannot manufacture conversion.

We cannot give spiritual life.

But we can pray.

We can love.

We can speak.

We can go.

We can send.

We can support.

We can help someone open the Bible.

And then we can trust God to give the increase.

The question is not whether you can do everything.

The question is whether you will faithfully do the part God has entrusted to you.

May we become a church in which the gospel is too precious to hide,

the lost are too valuable to ignore

and no believer believes that the mission belongs to someone else.

Aloha Nui Loa.

REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

PASTOR'S COMMENTARY

Saturation Teams

Is Evangelism Only for People With the Gift of Evangelism?

Acts 8:1, 4

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Pastor & Teacher

www.ReasonTogether.Church

Bring your questions. Open your Bible.

Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

Introduction

The story behind this study is memorable because it refuses to leave evangelism entirely in the pulpit. Sixteen teams traveled through communities in and beyond Cebu. Some preached to groups. Some spoke in schools or homes. Some carried supplies, arranged meetings, prayed, answered questions or remained for follow-up. Dr. Hawksley's own part was to purchase a projector that helped other people communicate the Gospel. The story therefore asks a more searching question than whether one historical campaign was impressive. It asks whether evangelism belongs only to Christians who possess an unusual gift or public role.

The sermon answers that question by distinguishing a shared mission from an identical assignment. Christ did not make every believer an apostle, pastor, teacher or evangelist. He did place every believer within a witnessing Church. Some Christians possess unusual ability and calling in Gospel proclamation. Others make Christ known through personal testimony, careful explanation, hospitality, generosity, prayer, transportation, technology, follow-up or quiet conversation. The parts differ. The mission remains one.

Acts 8:1 and 4 supplies the controlling doorway. Luke reports that persecution scattered the Jerusalem church while the apostles remained. The scattered believers then went everywhere preaching the Word. This narrative does not prove that every believer used the same method or spoke with the same frequency. It does show that the Gospel moved through people who were not identified as apostles. The book of Acts presents the expansion of the Word as more than the work of a few famous leaders.

Controlling conclusion

Evangelism is not only for people with unusual evangelistic ability. Every Christian belongs to the Church's continuing mission and should be ready to make Christ known within the relationships, opportunities and abilities God provides. Shared responsibility does not require identical methods. Faithful witness presents the Gospel truthfully, treats people with dignity, pursues discipleship and trusts God alone to give the increase.

1. The Story Behind the Question

Different Expectations About Response

The sermon begins with a contrast between churches in Maine and Florida. Bangor Baptist Church was remembered as a congregation where people frequently responded to Gospel preaching and where growth created repeated need for additional space. A later congregation

treated even one public response as a notable event. The contrast is not used to condemn one church or canonize another. A person walking an aisle is not the only evidence of salvation, and visible response can be influenced by local custom, invitation practice and congregational expectation.

The contrast nevertheless raises a valid pastoral question. Churches can quietly develop expectations about whether people are likely to respond when the Gospel is proclaimed. Low expectations may discourage prayer, invitation and follow-up. High expectations may create pressure to produce visible results. The Biblical correction is neither pessimism nor manufactured enthusiasm. The Gospel remains the power of God unto salvation, faithful Christians should expect God to work and no congregation may claim control over the Spirit's results.

The Cebu Saturation Campaign

The supplied magazine article describes Bible Baptist Church in Cebu preparing for its fiftieth anniversary in 2007. Instead of treating a financial gift as the highest anniversary offering, the church organized a concentrated evangelistic effort. Dr. Armie F. Jesalva divided workers into sixteen teams. They traveled with simple food, accepted difficult accommodations and spoke in schools, homes, communities and larger gatherings. The campaign continued beyond the anniversary and expanded into other places.

This is not a detached story for Dr. Hawksley. He knew Dr. Jesalva personally, spent time with him in private conversation, announced his missionary commitment in that church and married Danielin there. He also spoke with participants in the saturation work. Those relationships make the first-person article especially valuable for narrative detail. They do not turn every recollection or published total into an audited statistic. The story is strongest as eyewitness testimony to the church's participation and willingness.

The Numerical Record Requires Attribution

Published accounts differ in their totals. One mission account reported more than 55,000 people saved during the first three months. The supplied article reported more than 100,000 professions in the initial period, more than 300,000 after the island effort and more than 2.2 million through continuing work. A contemporary Philippine Star report described more than 125,000 province-wide during a three-month period. Another later account referred to a goal of 50,000 and more than 200,000 professions after the anniversary.

Those figures may reflect different dates, territories or definitions, but the available record does not permit an invented harmonization. The responsible course is to preserve each figure as an attributed report. The sermon therefore avoids claiming that every number can be independently

audited. It uses the numerical record for the point on which the sources agree: a large number of people heard the Gospel through an unusually broad congregational effort.

Someone Purchased the Projector

The projector is the story's governing image because it enlarges participation beyond the visible speaker. A projector does not preach. It does not repent or believe. Yet it can help a speaker communicate to a crowd. Someone must purchase it, carry it, power it, set it up and protect it. Other people must gather listeners, translate, pray, counsel and follow up. The act of providing equipment does not become proclamation, but it may become genuine fellowship in the work of proclamation.

Third John 5 through 8 commends believers who received and supported traveling servants so that they might become fellowhelpers to the truth. Philippians 4 treats material partnership as participation in Gospel ministry. These passages do not erase the difference between sending and going. They show that support is not spiritually invisible. The church should honor public preaching without allowing the pulpit to conceal the many faithful people who make public ministry possible.

2. Acts 8: The Scattered Believers Carried the Word

Acts 8:1, 4

"And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. ... Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

Persecution Is the Setting, Not the Hero

Acts 8 follows the murder of Stephen and the eruption of severe persecution. Christian interpretation must not call the violence good merely because God brought good through it. Families were displaced, believers lost stability and Saul entered houses to drag men and women away. Luke's point is not that suffering is painless or that persecution should be romanticized. His point is that hostility could scatter believers without imprisoning the Word they carried.

The movement also develops the geographical program of Acts 1:8. Witness begins in Jerusalem, extends into Judaea and Samaria and moves toward the uttermost part of the earth.

The persecutors intend suppression. Providence turns scattering into wider testimony. God's sovereignty is visible without making the persecutor innocent or the sufferer unreal.

The Importance of Except the Apostles

Luke specifically says that the scattered church went into Judaea and Samaria except the apostles. He then says that those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the Word. The observation should be stated with precision. The text does not say that the apostles never traveled later. It does not say that every scattered individual delivered a formal sermon. It does intentionally distinguish the scattered believers from the apostles who remained in Jerusalem at that moment.

The verb translated preaching in verse 4 is related to announcing good news. It need not describe a pulpit, an ordained office or a scheduled service. Luke uses the same family of words for Gospel announcement in varied settings. The safest conclusion is that non-apostolic believers became active carriers of the message. Their names and exact methods are largely unrecorded, but the movement of the Word is inseparable from their movement.

Narrative Example and Christian Responsibility

Acts 8 is a narrative, and narratives must not be converted carelessly into universal rules. No Christian is commanded to reproduce persecution, abandon a home without cause or use the same evangelistic method as the scattered church. Yet narrative can reveal the character of faithful discipleship. These believers did not treat witness as the exclusive property of the apostles. When circumstances changed, the Gospel remained part of what they carried.

This provides a strong Biblical pattern for a witnessing Church. It should be joined to direct teaching about confession, readiness, testimony, service and the ministry of the body. The argument does not rest on one verse alone. Acts 8 supplies the memorable picture, while the wider New Testament supplies the continuing theological structure.

3. The Great Commission and Its Continuing Design

The Eleven Must Be Acknowledged

Matthew 28:16 identifies the immediate hearers as the eleven disciples. They occupied a foundational apostolic role that later believers do not inherit. Responsible preaching should not speak as though every modern Christian stood on the Galilean mountain in precisely the same office. The distinction protects the uniqueness of the apostles and prevents careless claims of equal authority.

The distinction does not end the Church's mission. Jesus commands the eleven to make disciples among all nations, baptize them and teach them to observe all that He commanded. The work therefore contains its own continuation. New disciples are not merely counted. They are baptized, instructed and brought under Christ's commands. The original commission reproduces obedient disciples beyond the lifetime of the first hearers.

Matthew 28:18-20

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations ... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Authority, Presence and Reproduction

The commission begins with Christ's authority and ends with Christ's presence. Evangelism is not an attempt to manufacture spiritual authority through activity. The Church goes because the risen Christ possesses all authority. It continues because He promises to be with His people to the end of the age. The mission is Christ-centered before it is method-centered.

The command commonly translated teach all nations carries the disciple-making purpose. Baptism and continued teaching belong to that purpose. A campaign that generates professions but neglects the formation of disciples has not completed the commission. A church that teaches believers but never seeks new disciples has also narrowed it. Gospel announcement and sustained instruction belong together.

The Whole Church Does Not Mean Every Member Does Everything

To say that the commission belongs to the continuing Church is not to say that every member must cross a national border, preach publicly, baptize independently or establish a congregation. The body carries out the mission through differentiated members under Biblical order. Some go across cultures. Some witness locally. Some teach children. Some receive visitors. Some give, translate, organize or pray. The Church obeys corporately as members obey personally within their actual callings and opportunities.

4. Evangelists and the Equipping of the Saints

Ephesians 4:11-12

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Scripture Recognizes Evangelists

Ephesians 4 prevents the study from flattening every Christian into the same role. Christ gave some evangelists. Philip is expressly called an evangelist in Acts 21:8. Timothy is instructed to do the work of an evangelist in Second Timothy 4:5. Scripture therefore recognizes concentrated evangelistic labor and people whose ministry has a distinctive Gospel-announcing character.

The popular phrase gift of evangelism is useful if it refers modestly to an unusual God-given ability or calling. The New Testament does not present that exact phrase as the name of a gift in the same form as every item in Romans 12 or First Corinthians 12. The commentary therefore prefers to speak of evangelists, evangelistic gifting or unusual evangelistic ability. That wording affirms the reality without claiming more precision than the text supplies.

Gifted Workers Equip Rather Than Replace

Ephesians 4 places Christ's gifts within the building of the body. The punctuation and syntax of verse 12 have generated discussion about the relation among perfecting the saints, the work of ministry and edifying the body. The wider paragraph resolves the pastoral issue even when interpreters debate the precise construction. The body grows as every joint supplies and as every part works in its measure. Gifted leaders are not a permanent substitute for an inactive congregation.

A pastor teaches without relieving parents of all responsibility to teach. A generous giver does not excuse other believers from generosity. A Christian marked by mercy does not give the rest of the Church permission to become merciless. In the same way, the existence of evangelists does not authorize every other believer to hide the Gospel. Special gifting concentrates and equips a ministry that still belongs to the life of the Church.

Shared Responsibility Is Not Identical Assignment

The distinction protects two people at once. It protects the gifted evangelist from pretending that visible success belongs to personal talent. It also protects the quiet believer from being forced

into an imitation that ignores temperament, maturity, circumstance or role. A hesitant Christian may need courage and training. That Christian does not need to become a copy of the most outgoing person in the congregation.

The question is not whether every believer can do everything. The question is whether each believer will faithfully do the part God provides. Some parts require direct speech. Other parts support speech. Every visible life should agree with the message, but conduct alone does not explain Christ's death and resurrection. The Church needs credible lives, intelligible words and many kinds of faithful service.

5. Ordinary Witnesses and Varied Methods

Andrew and One Relationship

John 1:40 through 42 presents Andrew finding his brother Simon and bringing him to Jesus. Andrew does not know the future influence of the man he invites. He acts within an existing relationship. The passage dignifies personal invitation without turning it into a formula. A believer may not know whether one conversation will appear consequential, but faithfulness does not require foreknowledge of the result.

The Samaritan Woman and Honest Testimony

In John 4 the Samaritan woman returns to the city and says, 'Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?' Her testimony is incomplete but truthful. She directs attention to Jesus and invites investigation. The townspeople later say that they believe not merely because of her saying but because they have heard Christ themselves. Personal testimony can open a door, but Jesus remains the object of faith.

The Delivered Man and the Mission Field at Home

The man delivered in Mark 5 wants to travel with Jesus. Jesus instead sends him home to his friends to tell what the Lord has done and how He had compassion. A desire for dramatic ministry does not determine assignment. For some believers, the first field is family, friendship and neighborhood. The message begins with Christ's mercy rather than the witness's importance.

Priscilla, Aquila and Private Explanation

Acts 18 records Priscilla and Aquila hearing Apollos, taking him aside and explaining the way of God more perfectly. Their witness is relational, informed and appropriately private. They do not humiliate him before the synagogue. This example widens the imagination beyond public appeal.

Some of the most important Gospel conversations occur across a table or in a quiet room where questions can be heard carefully.

Visible Life and Intelligible Content

First Peter 3 connects readiness to answer with a life that prompts inquiry. Colossians 4 joins prayer for an open door with gracious, wise speech. First Thessalonians 1 says that the Word sounded out from a congregation whose changed life was already known. Biblical witness therefore includes conduct and words, but the two are not interchangeable. A loving life adorns the Gospel. It does not by itself tell a neighbor that Christ died for sins, was buried and rose again.

6. Teams and Biblical Saturation

Two and Two

Luke 10 records Jesus sending workers two and two. Acts repeatedly presents paired or team ministry: Barnabas and Saul, Paul and Silas, Barnabas and Mark, Priscilla and Aquila and larger traveling companies. Teamwork provides companionship, accountability, varied ability and practical resilience. The number sixteen in the Cebu story is historical rather than prescriptive. Scripture supplies the principle of shared labor, not a required campaign size.

Teams also guard against personality-centered ministry. One person may speak while another notices a distressed listener. One understands the language while another understands the equipment. One begins contact while another sustains follow-up. A healthy team does not erase leadership. It places leadership within interdependence.

Filling Jerusalem With Doctrine

Acts 5:28 records the accusation that the apostles had filled Jerusalem with their doctrine. The language suggests more than one impressive meeting. The teaching had become broadly present and difficult to contain. The enemies' complaint unintentionally testifies to the persistence of the Church's witness.

All Asia Heard

Acts 19:8 through 10 describes Paul teaching in Ephesus over two years so that those dwelling in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus. Paul remained in a strategic place while the message traveled through people shaped by the teaching. The statement should not be pressed into a modern census claim that every individual had a documented presentation. It does describe remarkable breadth produced through sustained teaching and multiplication.

A Working Definition of Saturation

Biblical saturation is not merely territorial coverage. A church might visit every street once yet leave little understanding, presence or discipleship. Saturation describes repeated Gospel presence through proclamation, credible Christian life, compassionate service, teaching, relationships and multiplication. The Word becomes difficult to avoid because believers carry it naturally and faithfully through ordinary life.

Pastoral definition

Gospel saturation is the broad, repeated and multiplying presence of the message of Jesus through a faithful Church. It seeks meaningful opportunity for people to hear, see, question and understand the Gospel while refusing coercion or statistical reduction.

7. The Gospel Must Be Defined Before the Method

First Corinthians 15:3-4

"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

Good News Has Content

Evangelism cannot be defined only as religious activity, church invitation or moral encouragement. The Gospel announces an event and its saving meaning. Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again according to the Scriptures. Romans explains the universal reality of sin and God's justifying grace. Ephesians 2 excludes human works as the ground of salvation. The method serves this message; it cannot replace or revise it.

The Gospel is not a promise that belief will remove every earthly problem. It is not recruitment into a favored denomination. It is not a technique for improving behavior while leaving a person unreconciled to God. It announces the crucified and risen Christ and calls the sinner to receive salvation by grace through faith.

Invitation and Understanding

A public invitation may be a useful opportunity to respond, but walking an aisle does not save. A prayer may express sincere faith, but the repetition of words does not create life. Baptism is

commanded for believers, but water does not purchase justification. Good evangelism explains enough for a person to understand whom he or she is trusting and why Christ alone can save.

This requires patience. Some hearers need basic explanation of God, sin, judgment, grace and resurrection. Others carry church vocabulary but have never personally trusted Christ. A faithful witness listens for misunderstanding rather than racing toward a reported decision. Clarity matters more than speed.

Christ Is the Savior of the Story

The saturation teams are not the saviors. Dr. Jesalva is not the savior. The person who purchased the projector is not the savior. The preacher, counselor and supporter are servants through whom another person may hear. Jesus Christ alone died for sins and rose again. Evangelism matters because Christ is worthy and people need reconciliation with God through Him.

8. God Gives the Increase

First Corinthians 3:5-7

"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed ... I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

Human Labor Is Real and Limited

Paul does not dismiss planting or watering. Both are real forms of labor. He does deny that either worker produces spiritual life. This distinction permits strong effort without spiritual pride. Christians may prepare, pray, speak, explain, invite, answer, serve and follow up. None can enter the heart, regenerate the sinner or manufacture genuine repentance.

The doctrine relieves the discouraged witness of a burden God never assigned. A faithful presentation may be rejected. A seed may be watered by someone else years later. Immediate silence does not prove that the Word was useless. The same doctrine relieves the successful preacher of boasting. If many respond, gratitude belongs to God rather than the personality at the microphone.

Expectation Without Manipulation

A church may pray expectantly and invite plainly while still confessing that God gives the increase. Expectation becomes dangerous when visible results must be produced to protect a ministry's reputation. Then invitations lengthen, social pressure rises and ambiguous responses

are counted as certainty. Biblical confidence does not need these devices. God is free to work quietly, gradually or immediately.

Response Cultures Require Care

The Maine, Florida and Cebu experiences arose in different cultures of response. Public movement in one congregation may carry a meaning different from movement in another. A wise pastor observes those patterns without assuming that the largest visible response proves the deepest work. The Church should make response possible, personal and safe, then provide real care after the moment has passed.

9. From Profession to Continuing Discipleship

Acts 2:41-42

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized ... And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

The New Testament Sequence

Acts 2 gives a fuller picture than a response total alone. People gladly receive the Word. They are baptized and added to the community. They continue in doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers. The Church does not count them and forget them. The initial response opens a life of discipleship.

The sequence does not require suspicion toward every profession. Heaven rejoices over repentance, and the Church should rejoice when someone sincerely confesses faith. It does require humility about the human ability to know every heart. The word profession accurately records what a person has expressed. Continuing fruit supplies later evidence without turning salvation into a reward for endurance.

The Warning of the Sower

Jesus' Parable of the Sower describes varied responses to the Word. Some seed never takes root. Some is received with joy but withers under pressure. Some is choked by competing cares and riches. Some bears fruit. The parable warns against treating immediacy as the whole story. It also warns against despair when the same faithful seed meets different soils.

Counting Can Serve Care

Records can help a church remember names, arrange follow-up and evaluate whether promised care occurred. Numbers become harmful when they are detached from people, inflated to protect prestige or treated as proof that every heart was converted. Honest measurement states what was counted, preserves uncertainty and points beyond the event toward baptism, teaching and fellowship.

10. Every Number Is a Person

The One in Luke 15

Luke 15 repeatedly returns attention to one lost person. One sheep is sought, one coin is recovered and one son is welcomed home. Jesus does not use the crowd to erase the individual. The large number in a campaign matters because each number represents a name, each name represents a life and each life represents a soul for whom Christ died.

This truth corrects both indifference and spectacle. The individual is too valuable to ignore, but also too valuable to exploit as publicity. Testimonies should be shared with consent.

Vulnerability should not be staged for fundraising. People should not become photographic evidence that a ministry is successful.

Persuasion Without Manipulation

Second Corinthians 4:2 rejects dishonesty, craftiness and deceitful handling of God's Word. First Peter 3:15 joins readiness to answer with meekness and fear. Biblical persuasion presents truth clearly and invites a real response. Manipulation uses deception, authority, fear, dependency or exhaustion to obtain an appearance of agreement.

The ethical line is especially important where poverty, medical need, childhood or institutional power is involved. Food must not be conditional upon a profession. Medical care must not be exchanged for a prayer. Children must not be pressured to satisfy adult expectations. Assistance is given because love requires it, and the Gospel is shared because Christ is worthy. If a hearer declines, that person remains an image-bearer who must be treated with dignity.

Pastoral guardrail

Christians may persuade. Christians must never manipulate. A faithful invitation protects truth, understanding, consent and the continuing dignity of the hearer.

Denominational Labels Cannot See the Heart

The historical setting included many people who identified as Catholic. That fact may describe the religious environment, but it cannot settle the salvation of an individual. Not every Catholic is unsaved, and not every Baptist is saved. Membership, baptism, family tradition and religious vocabulary cannot replace the new birth. The responsible question is not merely which church claims a person but whether that person has personally trusted Jesus Christ.

11. Historical Witness Beyond the Canon

Authority Must Be Stated First

The KJV text of canonical Scripture controls the study's doctrine. Early Christian writings, later sermons and mission statements may illuminate historical practice or provide memorable summaries. They do not carry apostolic authority and must never be used to repair a doctrine Scripture does not establish. Their proper role is corroborative and comparative.

The Didache: Going and Supporting

The Didache reflects communities receiving traveling apostles and teachers while applying tests against exploitation. Some Christians traveled. Others supplied temporary hospitality and support. The writing is useful because it joins generosity with discernment. It shows that early Christian mission depended upon both mobile workers and settled congregations, but its precise rules are historical evidence rather than binding church law.

Diognetus and Distributed Presence

The Epistle to Diognetus portrays Christians living throughout the cities of the world while belonging to a higher citizenship. Its image of the soul distributed through the body provides a useful analogy for Gospel presence. Christians live among neighbors, share ordinary social locations and yet display a distinct allegiance. The passage does not define evangelistic technique, but it helps explain how ordinary Christian presence could become widespread.

Justin Martyr and Visible Congregational Life

Justin Martyr describes Christian gatherings for reading, exhortation, prayer, the Lord's Supper and care for people in need. His account joins teaching, worship and generosity. It reminds the modern reader that witness was not only a traveling speech. The communal life of believers made Christian claims publicly visible.

Pliny and an Unfriendly Confirmation

Pliny the Younger wrote as a Roman official investigating and punishing Christians. His report is not sympathetic testimony, yet he says the movement had reached cities, villages and rural districts. A hostile source cannot verify the Church's theology, but it can confirm the surprising geographical spread of Christian allegiance early in the second century.

Spurgeon and Lausanne

Charles Spurgeon distinguished apostolic office and public preaching from the wider ministry of believers. He urged Christians to tell what grace had done for them. The Lausanne expression that the whole Church must take the whole Gospel to the whole world provides a later summary of the same broad responsibility. Neither source governs exegesis. Both help articulate a conviction already grounded in Scripture: the Gospel is not entrusted only to a professional class.

Authority statement

Canonical Scripture establishes doctrine. Noncanonical Christian writings and later sermons may provide historical texture, comparison and memorable language. They remain subordinate witnesses and should always be identified as such.

12. Pastoral Conclusions for a Witnessing Church

The Shy Believer

A shy believer should not be shamed into pretending to possess another person's temperament. Fear and limitation are not identical. A Christian may genuinely lack skill in beginning conversations with strangers while still being able to pray, listen, invite, testify or speak when trust has formed. Growth may involve taking one step beyond comfort, but the step should be faithful rather than theatrical.

Second Timothy 1 joins courage with power, love and a sound mind. Christian courage is not loudness or refusal to listen. It is love that does not hide truth. Training should help believers explain the Gospel clearly, ask sincere questions and admit when they do not know an answer. 'I do not know, but I would be glad to open the Bible with you' is an honest form of witness.

The Behind-the-Scenes Servant

The person who prepares the room, maintains the website, welcomes the visitor, makes the coffee, drives the worker, cares for children or purchases the projector may share genuinely in

the mission. Support should not be confused with verbal proclamation, but neither should it be treated as spiritually secondary. The Church needs both visible and hidden servants.

This conclusion fits Dr. Hawksley's own preference for accomplishing meaningful work behind the scenes. The projector did not make him the central figure in the campaign. It allowed him to provide something useful so that other people could do what God had equipped them to do. That pattern can free many believers who assume the only meaningful role is the one in front of the crowd.

Saturation in Waikiki

Reason Together Church should not copy every feature of the Cebu campaign. Waikiki has a transient population, tourists from many nations, local residents, church-hurt visitors and people carrying private questions. Saturation may occur through a sincere welcome, a careful answer, a shared study, an invitation to the Cafe or a conversation across a table. A visitor may hear the Gospel in Hawaii and carry it home to another state or nation.

The Church's own commitments support this approach. Guests are not pressured for money or unnecessary personal information. Coffee and conversation are offered freely. Questions are treated seriously. These practices do not replace Gospel words. They create honest places in which those words may be heard without coercion.

One Person and One Faithful Part

The local application should move from enormous totals to one person. Who has God already placed near each believer? Who has asked a spiritual question? Who may accept an invitation, receive a study or welcome prayer? One person prevents the congregation from hiding behind an abstract concern for the whole world while overlooking the neighbor within reach.

The final application also asks each believer to identify one faithful part. It may be prayer, conversation, hospitality, giving, technology, transportation, teaching or follow-up. The part must remain connected to the actual Gospel and the disciple-making life of the Church. Saturation begins when ordinary Christians stop assuming that someone else will do everything.

Pastoral Summary

The governing question requires a qualified no. Evangelism is not only for people with the gift of evangelism. Scripture recognizes evangelists and varied gifts, so the Church must not require identical forms of witness from every believer. Yet the presence of gifted evangelists does not turn other Christians into spectators. Acts 8 shows unnamed believers carrying the Word.

Ephesians 4 shows gifted servants building and equipping a body in which every part works. Matthew 28 gives the Church a disciple-making mission designed to continue.

The story of the saturation teams gives this doctrine human shape. Some workers traveled. Some preached. Some supported. Someone purchased the projector. Their willingness should be admired without turning sixteen teams, door-to-door work or reported numerical results into the Biblical standard for every church. The method is historical. The principles of shared labor, clear Gospel proclamation, prayerful dependence and continuing discipleship are transferable.

The Church must define the Gospel before praising evangelism. Christ died for sins, was buried and rose again. Salvation is received by grace through faith, not by religious performance, denomination or repeated words. Human servants plant and water, but God gives the increase. Professions deserve joy and follow-up, not presumption. Every number is a person whose dignity must be protected.

Final answer

No, evangelism is not only for people with unusual evangelistic gifting. Every Christian should be ready to make Christ known and every believer can participate in the Church's witness. The form will differ according to gifting, opportunity, maturity and calling. No Christian can save anyone. No Christian may manipulate anyone. Every Christian can faithfully pray, love, speak, go, send or support while trusting God to give the increase.

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First Corinthians 3:5-9; 9:19-23; 12:4-27; 15:1-4

Second Corinthians 4:1-7; 5:11-21

Ephesians 2:8-10; 4:7-16; Philippians 1:12-18; 4:10-19

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