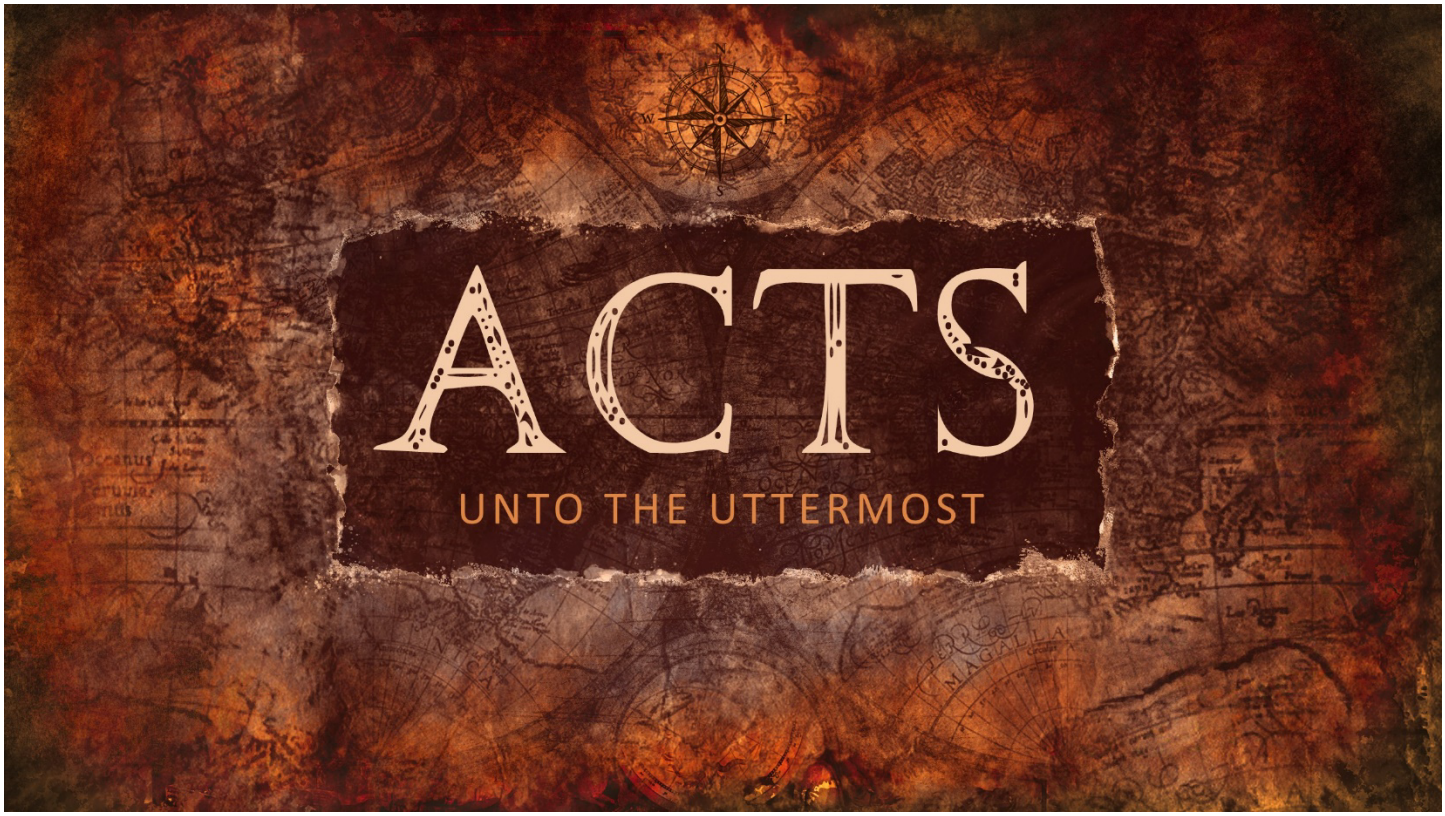

Session – Effective Evangelism
Scripture: Acts 2:1-42
Subject: Evangelism
Central Theme: Effective Evangelism
Objective Statement: God has called our church to be a fellowship of believers on mission. Here are seven qualities of effective evangelism.

Keyword:

1. Effective evangelism is Spirit empowered. (V.1-4)
2. Effective evangelism seizes opportunities. (V.5-14)
3. Effective evangelism declares the Scriptures. (v. 14-21)
4. Effective evangelism declares the Gospel. (v.22-36)
5. Effective evangelism calls people to repent. (v.37-40)
6. Effective evangelism calls people to go public. (v.41)
7. Effective evangelism sees conversion and baptism as the starting line, not the finish line. (v.42)

Introduction:

Connection:

- What makes you excited?
- What gets you really pumped up?

- This past week, I was at camp with our high schoolers. There were about 780+ teenagers there.
- We were on the green team. It was fun doing all the games, and the competitions.
- And throughout the week they would try to get the kids to scream and yell for their team.
- Kids lose their voices over stuff like that. I walked in to the "preaching competition" and there were kids in the middle school division that were preaching, and it was funny because they were losing their voices. 😊
- One of the things I love about camp is watching the progress of what happens in kids lives over the week.
- At the beginning of the week there are kids that are at least a little pumped up about the fun stuff, but not necessarily pumped about the God stuff.
- This year at camp though, we saw God move in incredible ways.
- *Tell the story about the kids coming forward…
- *We saw two kids get saved…
- I got a text from a mom that said, "These kids are so excited. They haven't stopped talking about camp."
- You see that makes me pumped!
- Who cares about sports? I want to see lives changed. I want to see people saved. I want to see disciples made.

Tension:

- You see, we started this series back in December in the book of Luke, and that has transitioned into a series on the book of Acts. They are two parts of one work.
- Luke is the story of Jesus coming from the uttermost, making disciples in His ministry, dying and rising again, and then sending them out to make disciples of all nations- in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost part of the earth.
- The acts of the Holy Spirit, through the apostles is exactly what this book is about.
- Disciples make disciples who make disciples as they go to the uttermost part of the earth. That is what it is all about.
- Jesus told His disciples, and therefore us, to make disciples of all nations.
- Making disciples has two distinct parts: Evangelism and discipleship.
- There must be a conversion, and then there is a growing in obedience.
- You cannot disciple a lost person. You evangelize a lost person.

- This is our mission. We reach the lost, and then disciple those who come to know Christ as Savior.
- In today's text, Acts 2, we see evangelism happening in an incredible way.
- At the end of this day of Pentecost, 3,000 people would be baptized and added to the church.
- How many people would like to see that happen here? I know I would as God allows us to steward that kind of responsibility.
- We want to see our Jerusalem saved, baptized, discipled and sent.
- So how do we reach the lost? How can we be effective in our evangelism.
- God has called our church to be a fellowship of believers on mission.

In today's text I want to highlight seven qualities of effective evangelism.

Quality #1- Effective evangelism is Spirit empowered. (v.1-4)

(1) *And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

- "day of Pentecost"-
- The day of Pentecost was so called because it fell on the fiftieth day after the presentation of the first sheaf to be reaped of the barley harvest, that is, the fiftieth day from the first Sunday after Passover (pentēkostos being the Greek word for "fiftieth").
- It was a feast of the firstfruits of the harvest
- "in one place"- It could have been the upper room that we see in Acts 1:13, but we do not know for sure.
- We know that it was not just the 12 that were there.
- In Acts 1:15 we are told that there are 120.

Acts 1:15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

- They had just finished naming the apostle to take Judas place. His name was Mathias.
- The qualification was that He was to be an eyewitness of Jesus' ministry, death, burial and resurrection.
- So, here they are, obeying Jesus. He had told them to go back to the Jerusalem and wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. This is exactly what they did.
- Look at what happened.

(2) And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. (3) And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. (4) And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

- First we see a sound. It was "sound from heaven". It sounded like a wind.
    - When Jesus made man out of the dust he breathed into him the breath of life.
    - In Ezekiel 37 there was a vision by Ezekiel of the breath of God that breathed life into the dead bodies.
    - And, probably with an allusion to Ezekiel's vision, Jesus said to Nicodemus,
        - Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. (8) The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." John 3:5-8
    - 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that all scripture is given by inspiration of God. The word is "theopnuestos" and means "God breathed". We know that the prophecy came not in the old times by the will of men, but holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.
    - Was there actual wind? We don't know. We do know there was the sound and it filled the room.
- There were also "cloven tongues like as of fire". Cloven means split. Tongues mean exactly what it sounds like- a tongue. They were "as of fire". Does that mean it was like the burning bush- burning hot but not consumed? Was it fire in the shape of a tongue that was split? We don't know. We do know each of these things sat on them.
- We do know that these were visible signs that they were being "filled with the Holy Ghost". It must have been so powerful. Can you imagine being there?
- "other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance". We know that these "other tongues" were other languages because of what we are about to read. These were not unknown "heavenly" languages, but actual languages that were not known to the speaker, but were known to the listener.
- Some have pointed out that this was a reversal of the tower of babel. At the tower of babel man was trying to get to God on his own terms, and God confused their languages. Here we find God coming into regenerated man, and using their language to point people to Jesus.

- We know that the scriptures say that tongues will cease. I believe that the sign gifts have ceased, not because God can not do that, but because God said they would. We have the Word of God made more sure, Peter tells us. By the end of the book of Acts we do not see miracles, signs and wonders in this same way.
- But the principle is this, we still have the same Holy Spirit. If we attempt to do evangelism apart from the powerful working of the Holy Spirit we will do ministry in vain. We will do ministry in our own power.
- How do I know what the Spirit wants to say? He wrote it down in a book.
- What was the point of this utterance from the spirit? Well, it brought about an opportunity, and that leads us to this next quality of effective evangelism.

Quality #1- Effective evangelism is Spirit empowered. (v.1-4)

Quality #2- Effective evangelism seizes opportunities. (v.5-13)

(5) And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. (6) Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

- Tongues were a sign to these that were there that God was up to something.
- Notice that they were known languages.
- They hear them speaking in the languages that they knew.
- This seems to be the point.

(7) And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? (8) And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? (9) Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, (10) Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, (11) Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

- They all heard it in their own language. What was being said?
- Verse 11 tells us. "…we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."

(12) And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? (13) Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

- Notice two statements:
    - "What does this mean?"
    - "These men are full of new wine."

- I've noticed in evangelism that when I see people asking questions, I see opportunity.
- These people are recognizing that something is happening and it's causing them to ask questions.
- All we have to do is answer people's questions with Biblical answers.
- We are not the author of the answers. We just deliver the mail.
- That leads us to quality #3.

Quality #1- Effective evangelism is Spirit empowered. (v.1-4)

Quality #2- Effective evangelism seizes opportunities. (v.5-13)

Quality #3- Effective evangelism declares the scriptures. (v.14-21)

(14) But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: (15) For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. (16) But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

- Peter- the one who denied Jesus- the one who was scared of the little damsel girl at the fire- the one who stuck his foot in his mouth so many times- He sees an opportunity.
- People are an opportunity.
- How do you see people? Do you see people as eternal beings? Do you know people are going to live forever somewhere?
- He sees these people asking questions, and it is a chance for Him to declare what God was doing, and what God had prophesied in Joel.
- By the way, there is a good chance He knew what to say here from the book of Joel because of the 40 days that Jesus had spent with them after the resurrection telling them how the whole scripture told of Jesus.
- He quotes from Joel 2:28-32

(17) And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh:

- The last days here refers to the era of redemptive history now being introduced.
- From Jesus first coming to the His return are the last days. (See Hebrews 1:2)
- God will pour out his Spirit on all flesh- That is whoever "calls on the name of the Lord" will receive the Holy Spirit, and everyone that enters into the millinial kingdom will be saved and indwelled by the Holy Spirit.

- What will happen during this time?

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and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams:
(18) And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy:
(19) And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:
(20) The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: (21) And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

- Dreams (Gen 20:3; Dan 7:1) and visions (Gen 15:1; Rev 9:17) were some of God's most memorable means of revelation since they were pictorial in nature.
- While they were not limited to believers (e.g., Abimelech, Gen 20:3 and Pharaoh, Gen 41:1-8), they were primarily reserved for prophets and apostles (cf. Num 12:6). While frequent in the OT, they were rare in the NT.
- In Acts, most of God's visions were associated with either Peter (chs. 10; 11) or Paul (chs. 9; 18; cf. 2Co 12:1). Most frequently they were used to reveal apocalyptic imagery (cf. Ezek., Dan., Zech., Rev.). They were not considered normal in biblical times, nor should they be so now.
- The time will come, however, when God will use visions and dreams during the Tribulation period as predicted by Joe 2:28-32.

Application:

- Peter saw an opportunity.
    - They were manifesting the outward signs of the indwelling and subsequent filling of the Holy Spirit.
    - People saw this and they were asking questions.
    - Peter took them to the scripture, and told them about the prophecy that was being fulfilled.
- Effective evangelism today is done in the same way.
- Our lives exhibit the fruits of the Spirit.
- We look for opportunities.
- When we get a chance to speak for Christ, we declare the scripture.
- Some of the most convincing proofs in the scripture are prophecies being fulfilled.

- Some have said we need to unhitch from the Old Testament. I say we need to "study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed; rightly dividing the Word of Truth.
- There is a power in the Word of God, written and used by the Spirit of God to a make a difference in the lives of people.

Quality #1- Effective evangelism is Spirit empowered. (v.1-4)

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Quality #3- Effective evangelism declares the scriptures. (v.14-21)

Quality #4- Effective evangelism declares the Gospel. (v.22-36)

(22) Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

- There is no such thing as effective ministry that is separated from the Gospel.
- Ministry is Gospel ministry.
- If something is called ministry, and that ministry never speaks of Jesus to those who need to hear it, it can not be called effective.
- Spirit filled ministry will always lead to testifying of Jesus.

John 15:26-27 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: (27) And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

- This is exactly what was happening.
- When these men and women were indwelt and filled with the Holy Spirit, they began to declare the Scripture, which always includes the Gospel.

(23) Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

(24) Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

- This is the core of the Gospel.
- Jesus died for our sins, he was buried and rose again for our sins, according to the scriptures.
- In verses 25-31, Peter points out yet another prophecy proclaimed by David about the death and resurrection of Christ.

- And then in verse 32, he brings it to a climax.

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(32) This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. (33) Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. (34) For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, (35) Until I make thy foes thy footstool. (36) Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

- He claimed to be the Messiah- you heard that.
- He performed miracles- you saw that.
- He was crucified- you did that.
- He was buried and risen again- He is Lord and Christ! God did that!

Application:

- There are churches all over our nation that are dying.
- Why are they dying?
    - Evangelize or fossilize.
    - Evangelism comes from the same root word as "gospel"- euongelion. It means good news.
    - To evangelize is to proclaim the Gospel.
    - If people do not hear the Gospel and get saved, they will not be filled with the Holy Spirit. They cannot be discipled. They don't know the scriptures. They can't rightly divide the word of Truth, and they most certainly will not be sent.
    - Our churches die when we keep our mouths shut.
    - Our churches die when we proclaim another gospel.
- Why is the Gospel good news?
    - Because there is bad news. We are sinners. Look at quality number 5.

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Quality #5- Effective Evangelism calls people to repent. (v.37-40)

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(37) Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

(38) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (39) For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. (40) And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

- Notice what the people asked. They asked, "What shall we do?"
- They did not ask, "what is necessary for salvation?". They asked what they should do.
- What was the answer?
- Repent and be baptized. We'll talk about both of those.
- First, repent.
- This refers to a change of mind and purpose that turns an individual from sin to God (1Th 1:9). Such change involves more than fearing the consequences of God's judgment. Genuine repentance knows that the evil of sin must be forsaken and the person and work of Christ totally and singularly embraced. Peter exhorted his hearers to repent, otherwise they would not experience true conversion.
- Unless there is an understanding that you are a sinner in need of a Savior, and that we must turn from our sin to Christ by faith then there is no salvation.
- We are in need of saving because our sin separates us from God. Jesus kept the law on our behalf so that He could justly pay for our sins.

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Quality #6- Effective Evangelism calls people to go public.

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

- Those who repented and believed were baptized.
- This is always the order.
- This is not in opposition to the rest of scripture. This is very much in keeping with the whole of Scripture.
- Those who believed were baptized.
- The word for baptism is "baptizo" and means "to immerse, or to submerge".

- It was commanded by Jesus.

Matthew 28:18-19 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

- Baptism is an identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.
- It is an outward expression, of an inward change.
- To not be baptized is to be disobedient.
- To be baptized is to go public with your faith.
- You are identifying with Christ and with other Bible believing Christians.
- Notice also that 3000 people were named as having been saved and baptized.
- They counted the people. They knew who they were.
- Notice that word "added unto them". They knew who were a part of them and who was not.
- You know what that is called- membership.
- You know why that was important to them, because they understood the Commission of Jesus Christ to go and make disciples.
- That leads us to this last quality:

Quality #1- Effective evangelism is Spirit empowered. (v.1-4)
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Quality #6- Effective Evangelism calls people to go public.

Quality #7- Effective Evangelism sees conversion and baptism as the starting line, not the finishing line.

Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

- Those that were saved were baptized. Those that were baptized were added to the church.
- Those that were added to the church were discipled. How? It says it in verse 42.
- This is exactly what people who were sent would do.

Matthew 28:18-19 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) 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.

- You see evangelism sees the work of discipleship as the necessary second part of making disciples who can be sent to the nations.
- It's not enough to help people believe and get baptized and stop there.
- We must help people "continue"!
- Why? So that they can be sent!

So let's summarize this into a sentence:

Quality #1- Effective evangelism is Spirit empowered. (v.1-4)
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Quality #7- Effective Evangelism sees conversion and baptism as the starting line, not the finishing line.

Effective Great Commission ministry is ministry done by people who are empowered by the Holy Spirit as they seize opportunities to declare the Gospel found in the scriptures that calls people to repent, go public with their faith, and to grow so that they can be sent to do the same mission.