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A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO  
EFFECTIVE EVANGELISM

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A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO  
EFFECTIVE EVANGELISM

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of the problem

Effective evangelism in the Twentieth-Century is being defined by some churchmen as the "evangelism of identification;" i.e. the moving of church action from the sanctuary to protests and demonstrations associated with social equality, economic opportunity and the anti-war movement of our times. In this format of evangelism one need not confront individuals with the necessity of making a personal decision for Jesus Christ. The preacher and layman simply identify with the "underprivileged, or with the "altruistic," or with "doves of peace" assisting them to achieve their goals of social and economic advancement and world peace.<sup>1</sup> Is this concept of evangelism Biblically oriented? Does it line up with the teachings of Jesus and with the practices of the apostles as they and the early church served their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? The author feels it does not.

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<sup>1</sup>Harold B. Kuhn, "Twentieth-Century Evangelism," Christianity Today, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Oct. 14, 1966), 61.

Not only must the theological basis for evangelism be clearly identified, if the church today is to be effective in its evangelistic outreach; but the problem arising from the "How?" must be answered as adequately as possible. Therefore, the question facing the church is what method or methods can best foster a verdant evangelistic program? It has always been recognized by the alert student of evangelism that whatever evangelistic programs are adopted by the church, they must reach people outside of faith in Jesus Christ where they are.

#### B. Justification of the problem

Evangelism was meant to be an indispensable function of the church since its inception. It deals with the central purpose of the church's mission in the world. Heuss wrote, "The task of the parish was to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole world. Its job was to preach Jesus Christ, crucified and risen from the dead."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, today's committed pastors and laymen must understand and accept the theological foundations of evangelism, if they are to confront unregenerate men and women with the

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<sup>1</sup>John Heuss, "What Are Churches For?", Readers Digest (June, 1962), 53.

living Christ.

There are at least 70,000,000 Americans who never cross the threshold of any local church. They, therefore, must be reached with the Good News of the Gospel in and out of the church context. James wrote,

Churches must learn to go to the people where they are and the way they are. The city pastor who frequents only the places of unimpeachable respectability can hardly expect the needy masses to throng to his church on Sunday morning. The battle is out there. The man of God, though not of this world, must surely be in it. As Nietzsche has written, 'great problems are in the street.' So men and women of God must bring to the streets the message of deliverance for victims of sin.<sup>1</sup>

It is the author's expectation to show that evangelism in the open air has been and still can be an effective method of communicating the message of the Gospel of Christ to the unchurched.

#### C. Method of procedure

The project will begin with an examination of New Testament data from which a Biblical definition of evangelism can be formulated; with a consideration of some scriptural passages which show that the "gospel" is God's revelation to men; and with a general description of the theological content of the evangelistic message.

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<sup>1</sup>Gilbert James, "Reaching The 'Lonely Crowd'", Christianity Today, Vol. X, No. 10 (Feb. 18, 1966), 12.

Next, consideration will be given to the New Testament evidence which shows: that the work of evangelism is the primary task of the church as a whole and that that the local church must achieve an evangelistic outreach.

In the third section effort will be expended to show that an open-air witness of the gospel was used in the New Testament and by various persons in the course of the history of the church. From this data several conclusions will be drawn concerning this mode of evangelism. The author will attempt to show that these conclusions also are verified by the work of some church related organizations and a number of local churches using this method today.

The last section will present a number of varied procedures which are currently being used by open-air evangelism teams whose work is known to the author.



SECTION I

THE THEOLOGY OF EVANGELISM

## SECTION I

### THE THEOLOGY OF EVANGELISM

#### A. The Definition of Evangelism

##### 1. Biblical data

The term "gospel" as found in the New Testament is the English translation of the Greek term "evangelion." However, its use was not limited to the New Testament. Sweazey says: "Before Christian times a joyful proclamation from the Emperor was called in the Greek speaking provinces an "evangel" - a "good message."<sup>1</sup> The New Testament writers borrowed this term from the vernacular of their day and used it exclusively to express the "good news" of God's redemptive plan for men. Seventy-six passages in the Gospels, Acts and Epistles refer to this term.<sup>2</sup> It is frequently accompanied by a variety of prepositional phrases: "gospel of the Kingdom" (Matthew 4:23), "gospel of Jesus Christ" (Mark 1:1), "gospel of God" (Mark 1:14), "gospel of grace of God" (Acts 20:24),

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<sup>1</sup>George E. Sweazey, Effective Evangelism The Greatest Work In The World (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1953), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Young, Analytical Concordance to The Bible (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), p. 430.

"gospel of Christ" (Romans 1:16), "the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13), and "gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15). In some instances the term "gospel" is used in a prepositional phrase modifying other terms: "word of the gospel" (Acts 15:7), "the truth of the gospel" (Galatians 2:5), "the equipment of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:15), "fellowship in the gospel" (Philippians 1:5), "defence and confirmation of the gospel" (Philippians 1:7), "the faith of the gospel" (Philippians 1:27), "served with me in the gospel" (Philippians 2:22), "hope of the gospel" (Colossians 1:23), "servant in the gospel" (I Thessalonians 3:2), "suffering for the gospel" (I Timothy 1:8), and "imprisonment for the gospel" (Philemon 13). Also, it is modified by these adjectives "glorious gospel" (I Timothy 1:11), and "eternal gospel" (Revelation 14:6).

The noun form of this term as just cited in the phrases quoted indicates that the gospel is God's "good news" of salvation; that this "good news" centers in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ; that the "good news" is contained in a word which is true and provides hope, peace, and fellowship; that this "good news" must be defended by those who serve God; that there are persons who need this "good news"; that this

"good news" presents God's Kingdom; and that the "good news" is of eternal worth.

In verb form "evangelizo" is found twenty-five times in the New Testament.<sup>1</sup> It means "to bring good news, to announce glad tidings."<sup>2</sup> The angel's message to the shepherds provides a well known instance of its use: "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy . . . for to you is born . . . a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."<sup>3</sup> When Jesus was invited to read the Scriptures in the synagogue at his home town, he turned to a passage which contained this verb. He read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor."<sup>4</sup> In two other passages of his gospel, Luke uses this same word. He refers in the first text to the assignment Jesus had given to the disciples. It reads: ". . . they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel . . ."<sup>5</sup> His second reference is Jesus' teaching during "Holy Week", "One day he was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Dean Fetterhoff, Dynamics of Evangelism (Winnona Lake, Indiana: Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1965), p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Luke 2:10, 11.

<sup>4</sup>Luke 4:18.

<sup>5</sup>Luke 9:6.

gospel."<sup>1</sup> Paul uses this same term to refer to his preaching to the Galatians,<sup>2</sup> to the Corinthians,<sup>3</sup> and to the Romans.<sup>4</sup> In any of the above passages the term "evangelize" could be substituted for the words "bring good news" or "preach good news." Illustrating this fact, Fetterhoff says that Luke 2:11 "could properly be rendered, 'Behold, I evangelize you with great joy.'"<sup>5</sup>

One other important verb which is used in the New Testament in association with the propagation of "good news" is the term "kerusso" translated primarily by the word "preach."<sup>6</sup> This word refers to the cry or proclamation of a herald.<sup>7</sup> The picture presented by this terminology "is that of a messenger of an ancient King going from village to village making known the King's decree."<sup>8</sup> It is found in fifty-two references. Six times the term "gospel" is the direct object of this verb and in thirty-five instances it is identified with the proclamation of various aspects of God's salvation in Christ. Better than 80% of its use is related to the dissemination of the "good news."

<sup>1</sup>Luke 20:1.      <sup>2</sup>Gal. 4:13.      <sup>3</sup>I Cor. 1:17.

<sup>4</sup>Rom. 1:15.      <sup>5</sup>Fetterhoff, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 6      <sup>7</sup>Young, p. 768.      <sup>8</sup>Fetterhoff, p.6.

## 2. Definition formulated

Considering the foregoing data, how is the term "evangelism" to be defined? Recognizing the value of this term Sweazey remarks:

Words are fragile things, easily damaged. The word 'evangelism' . . . is really one of the most beautiful in the vocabulary of religion. It has a rich heritage of Bible association . . . which the church cannot spare.<sup>1</sup>

If the meaning of "evangelism" is not to be distorted or damaged, it must be defined Biblically. Actually the term is derived from the verb "evangelizo" which has been defined in its New Testament context as the proclamation of God's "good news" of salvation in Jesus Christ. Concerning the geographical extent of this proclamation, Jesus said: "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to the nations."<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this proclamation is to give all men the opportunity to believe in Christ. John wrote his gospel for this purpose: "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name."<sup>3</sup> One further thought which must be added at this point is Jesus' directive to the first evangelists: "Go therefore

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<sup>1</sup> Sweazey, p. 19. <sup>2</sup> Matt. 24:14. <sup>3</sup> John 20:31.

and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."<sup>1</sup>

From what has just been mentioned, a Biblical definition of "evangelism" can be formulated. Evangelism is the preaching or heralding the "good news" of God's salvation in Christ to the people of the world so that they may have the opportunity to believe in Christ and once having believed be instructed in the teachings of Christ. The author feels that the following definitions are also Biblically oriented:

The Madras Foreign Mission Council -  
Evangelism is so to 'present Jesus Christ to the world in the Holy Spirit that men shall come to put their trust in Him as their Savior and serve Him as their Lord in the fellowship of His church.'<sup>2</sup>

The World Council of Churches at Amsterdam -  
Evangelism is 'so making Christ known to men that each is confronted with the necessity of a personal decision, Yes or No.'<sup>3</sup>

Archbishop Temple defines evangelism thusly:  
'Evangelism is the winning of men to acknowledge Christ as their Savior and King, so that they give themselves to His service in the fellowship of the church.'<sup>4</sup>

Dr. John A. Mackay's definition reads: 'Evangelism is the confrontation of men with Jesus Christ so that they may accept Him as their Lord in the fellowship of the church, is the church's primary task.'<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 28:19,20.    <sup>2</sup> Sweazey, p. 20.    <sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> T. A. Kantonen, The Theology of Evangelism (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1954), p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

## B. The Evangelistic Message

### 1. Came by revelation

An important question which must be answered with regard to the gospel message is: What evidence is there to indicate that the gospel is a revelation from God? To answer this question consideration will be given to the information supplied by the Apostles Paul and Peter, by the author of the book of Hebrews, and to the claims made by Jesus himself.

Six times the phrase "the gospel of God" occurs in the Epistles. Five of these are found in the writings of Paul (Romans 1:1, 15:6; I Thessalonians 2:2,8,9) and one in Peter's works (I Peter 4:17). In another instance, Paul expands this phrase to read, "the glorious gospel of the blessed God" when he wrote to Timothy (I Timothy 1:11). Commenting on this phrase, Haldane writes that: "It is the gospel of God, insomuch as God is its author . . . It is the supernatural revelation which he has given . . ." <sup>1</sup> Barnes, interpreting these words says: "It is called the gospel of God because it is his appointment; it has been originated by him, and has his authority." <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Haldane, Exposition of The Epistle To The Romans (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1856), p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>Albert Barnes, Notes On The New Testament - Romans (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1953), p. 18.



Paul and Peter referred to the "good news" as "the gospel of God" because they believed that it came from God.

A classic New Testament text in which the revealable character of the gospel is disclosed was written by the author of the book of Hebrews, it reads: "In many and various ways God spake of old to our fathers by the prophets: but in these last days he has spoken to us by a son."<sup>1</sup> The context makes it clear that the term "son" in verse one is Christ for in verse five he is referred to as "Jesus Christ our Lord." The term "has spoken" is "laleo" in the Greek which means "to talk or to tell."<sup>2</sup> The thought expressed here is that God has communicated his message by means of his Son, Jesus Christ. The Savior confirmed this fact when he said: "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me."<sup>3</sup> "But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God."<sup>4</sup> John the Apostle adds his testimony to Jesus' claim to be God's spokesman: "For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for it is not by measure that he gives the Spirit . . ."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hebrews 1:1.      <sup>2</sup>Young, p. 922.      <sup>3</sup>John 7:16.

<sup>4</sup>John 8:40.      <sup>5</sup>John 3:34.

Identifying the overall preaching of Jesus, Mark said: "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying: 'The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the gospel.'"<sup>1</sup>

Paul's unique experience further testifies to the fact that the gospel is a revealed message. He wrote to the Christians at Galatia: "For I would have you know brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup> The first important observation noticed here is that the gospel Paul propagated did not come from human sources. One scholar's translation of the words "is not man's gospel" reads "is not according to the standard of man."<sup>3</sup> To this he adds his interpretation: "to be judged by human measure, and therefore human in all respects, in its nature and origin."<sup>4</sup> The second is that he was not taught the gospel message by other

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<sup>1</sup>Mark 1:14,15.

<sup>2</sup>Galatians 1:11,12.

<sup>3</sup>Charles John Ellicott, Ellicott's Commentary On The Whole Bible. Vol. VII (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House), p. 430.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

human beings. The meaning of this statement is interpreted in subsequent verses which indicate that Paul was not instructed by those who had already been apostles.<sup>1</sup> The third is that his knowledge of the gospel came by a direct revelation. The term "revelation" is the Greek word "apokalupsis" which means "an uncovering."<sup>2</sup> God by a divine act unveiled the "good news" to Paul. It should be observed that Paul is not implying here that all men are to acquire their knowledge of the gospel through a similar experience; but rather he is teaching that he as an apostolic preacher received his primary knowledge of the gospel by means of a revelation.

Expressing the importance of this aspect of the gospel, Kantonen remarks: "A major distinctive of the Gospel is its revelatory nature. The Gospel is revealed truth. It contains God's self-disclosure. We speak about God only because God has first spoken to us."<sup>3</sup> In order to communicate God's gospel, one must become familiar with its theological content.

## 2. Its content

Luke's account of Peter's witness in the early

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<sup>1</sup>Gal. 1:16,17.

<sup>2</sup>Young, p. 814.

<sup>3</sup>T. A. Kantonen, The Theology of Evangelism (Philadelphia: Nuhlenberg Press, 1954), p. 7.

chapters of Acts and Paul's words to the Corinthian believers provide a general description of the theological content in their witness to the gospel. A study of the Biblical record shows that the areas stressed were Christ's Person, Christ's Death, Christ's Resurrection, Christ's Ascension, Christ's Return, and the Call to Repentance.

Christ's Person - Peter said to the crowd gathered at Pentecost: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ."<sup>1</sup> In light of the fact that his audience was Jewish, it was important for Peter to show them that Jesus was the Messiah, God's anointed servant. This truth involved a theological fulfillment which the sincere Jew anticipated.

Christ's Death - Concerning this Peter said, "This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hand of lawless men."<sup>2</sup> Paul reminded the Corinthians that when he first preached the gospel to them he "decided to know nothing . . . except Jesus Christ and him crucified."<sup>3</sup> Later in I Corinthians, Paul wrote: "Now I would remind you brethren, in what terms I preached to you the gospel

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 2:36.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 2:23.

<sup>3</sup>I Cor. 2:2.

. . . for I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures."<sup>1</sup> In this text Paul makes clear the reason for Christ's death. He died for man's sins. Paul affirms that Jesus' substitutionary death was predicted by the Hebrew scriptures. Peter's comment on this point is: "But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled."<sup>2</sup>

Christ's Resurrection - Paul continued his reminder to the Corinthians by saying: ". . . he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures."<sup>3</sup> He emphasized the historical fact of Christ's resurrection by mentioning six separate occasions in which Jesus appeared to Peter, to the twelve, to five hundred believers, to James, and to Paul himself.<sup>4</sup> Peter's witness reads: "But God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it."<sup>5</sup> To impress his hearers with the importance of this event, Peter referred to David's word found in one of his Psalms which says: "For thou wilt not abandon my soul

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<sup>1</sup>I Cor. 15:1,3.      <sup>2</sup>Acts 3:18.      <sup>3</sup>I Cor. 15:4.

<sup>4</sup>I Cor. 15:5-8.      <sup>5</sup>Acts 2:24.      <sup>6</sup>Psalms 138:10.

to Hades, nor let thy Holy One see corruption."<sup>1</sup> Peter declared that David being a prophet "foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption."<sup>2</sup> The apostle said that both he and those who were with him were witnesses to the fact that God had raised Jesus from the dead.<sup>3</sup>

Christ's Ascension - In three verses, Luke recorded Peter's witness to this triumph of the Savior. Peter said: "Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear."<sup>4</sup> Once again he applied a portion of another of David's psalms using it as an Old Testament prediction of the ascension of Christ.<sup>5</sup>

Christ's Return - Peter wished to impress the people of his day with this fact too. He said: ". . . that he God may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for establishing all that God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ps. 16:10.<sup>2</sup>Acts 2:31.<sup>3</sup>Acts 2:32.<sup>4</sup>Acts 2:33.<sup>5</sup>Acts 2:34,35.<sup>6</sup>Acts 3:19,20.

Call to Repentance - In Peter's preaching at Pentecost and a short time later at Solomon's portico, he issued a call to repentance. His charge at Pentecost was, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins;"<sup>1</sup> and at Solomon's portico, "Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out . . ."<sup>2</sup>

The above consideration of the content of Paul's and Peter's evangelistic preaching teaches that every time the gospel is proclaimed it must be associated with a message that is theologically oriented.

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 2:38.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 3:19.

SECTION II

THE AGENCY FOR EVANGELISM



## SECTION II

### THE AGENCY FOR EVANGELISM

#### A. The Great Commission

##### 1. The command

Before Jesus ascended to the Father's right-hand, he informed the disciples about the task which the church is to fulfill. He said:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. God 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 <sup>1</sup>lo I am with you always, to the close of the age.

The term "authority" is "exousia" in the Greek which means the "authority to do a thing."<sup>2</sup> The church is to acknowledge this commission and to carry it out because it was issued by Jesus Christ who is the Head of the Church.<sup>3</sup> It is readily observed from the content of the text quoted above that this commission involves the work of evangelism as defined in the previous section. In the three other Gospel accounts a similar charge is recorded:

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<sup>1</sup>Matthew 28:18-20.

<sup>2</sup>Oxford Greek Lexicon, (Oxford England: Oxford Press, 1888), p. 276.

<sup>3</sup>Ephesians 1:22.

Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46,47, and John 20:21.

Luke in his gospel account<sup>1</sup> and in the book of Acts<sup>2</sup> indicates that Jesus gave this commission in his last meetings with the disciples. Concerning this observation Sweazey says:

The one commandment which Jesus repeated in all of His final meetings with His disciples was the commandment to go out and tell others about Him. He made us His channels of salvation. We are the instruments of His love.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus has not terminated this commission; therefore, the church of the space age is obligated to do the work of evangelism as its primary task in the world.

## 2. The power

Just before he ascended, Jesus promised the disciples: ". . . you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses . . . to the end of the earth."<sup>4</sup> The term "power" in this text is the Greek word "dunamis" which means "strength, power, ability to do a thing."<sup>5</sup> Jesus' promise was fulfilled for it was in the strength provided by the Holy Spirit that Peter witnessed at

<sup>1</sup>Luke 24:25-51.  
Luke 24:25-51.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 1:6-11.

<sup>3</sup>Sweazey, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup>Acts 1:8.

<sup>5</sup>Oxford, p. 213.

Pentecost;<sup>1</sup> that all the apostles testified to the resurrection of Jesus;<sup>2</sup> and that Stephen witnessed to the Sanhedrin.<sup>3</sup>

In light of the fact that Jesus ordered the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received the power of God's Spirit before engaging in any evangelistic outreach,<sup>4</sup> and in light of the fact that they earnestly sought a continuous experience of this power;<sup>5</sup> it seems imperative that any current evangelistic endeavors be sponsored by believers who are empowered by God's Spirit.

#### B1 The Jerusalem Church

It was just shown that the work of evangelism is to be the task of the church as a whole. Further observation in the book of Acts indicates that the Jerusalem church was actively engaged in evangelism. Its work in Jerusalem and at Antioch in Syria shall be presented as illustrations of this evangelistic zeal.

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 2:1-4.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 4:23-33.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 7:1-55.

<sup>4</sup>Luke 24:49.

<sup>5</sup>Acts 4:23-31.

## 1. Work in Jerusalem

Under the pastoral leadership of the apostles the witness of the Jerusalem church was strong and effective. Luke says that through their ministry, ". . . more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of men and women."<sup>1</sup> As time went by lay leadership was developed which contributed to its evangelistic outreach. Stephen, a prime example of this achievement, preached the gospel before the Sanhedrin.<sup>2</sup> Another lay leader of the Jerusalem church who became an evangelist was Philip who "went down to a city of Samaria, and proclaimed to them the Christ."<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Outreach to Antioch

Luke's record concerning the initial evangelistic efforts at Antioch reads:

. . . Those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as . . . Antioch . . . some of them . . . on coming to Antioch spoke to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number that believed turned to the Lord.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 5:14.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 7:1-60.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 8:6.

<sup>4</sup>Acts 11:19-21.

The first persons to evangelize the citizens of Antioch were believers from the church at Jerusalem. That this church was well schooled in the total meaning of evangelism is evidenced by their immediate response to instruct the new believers in Antioch, "News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch . . . he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose."<sup>1</sup> The extremely large number of converts impressed upon Barnabas the need for help to properly instruct them. Therefore, "Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul; . . . he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church, and taught a large company of people."<sup>2</sup> This church through adequate teaching became evangelistically concerned. When the time came under the leading of God to contribute workers to the evangelization of other people they were willing to do so.<sup>3</sup>

The evidence presented here suggests that local churches are responsible and should evangelize their own communities and contribute to the efforts of evangelizing new areas fulfilling the "go" of the authoritative Command.

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 8:22,23.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 11:25,26.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 13:1-3.

SECTION III

EVANGELIZING IN THE OPEN AIR

## SECTION III

### EVANGELIZING IN THE OPEN AIR

#### A. Historical Precedent

##### 1. Evidence from the New Testament

A careful reading of the Gospel accounts will evidence the fact that Jesus often confronted people with the gospel in an out-of-door setting. He taught or preached on a mountain,<sup>1</sup> by the seaside from a boat,<sup>2</sup> in the open fields,<sup>3</sup> in the streets,<sup>4</sup> and by the side of a town well.<sup>5</sup> Often there were large crowds and in some cases, such as the woman at the well who trusted in Christ, there was only one person. Concerning the ministry of the apostles, Wood says: "When the apostles were driven from the synagogues, they took to the streets and squares of the town and cities of Asia Minor and later of Eastern Europe. Most of the sermons of Acts were delivered in the open."<sup>6</sup> Luke records one of Paul's open air

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<sup>1</sup>Matthew 5:1,2.    <sup>2</sup>Mark 4:1,2.    <sup>3</sup>Mark 6:34,39.

<sup>4</sup>Luke 8:48.    <sup>5</sup>John 4:7-26.

<sup>6</sup>A. Skevington Wood, Evangelism Its Theology and Practice (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966), p. 100.

ventures in Athens. He says: "Now when Paul was waiting . . . at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. So he argued . . . in the market place every day with those who chanced to be there."<sup>1</sup> Paul could speak to the Jews at Athens in the synogogue, but to have an initial contact with the philosophers and other Athenians he had to find another place from which to herald the gospel to them. In his day such an opportunity was provided for in the "agora" or market place of this city. Conybeare and Howson describing this location in Athens said:

. . . the Agora . . . was the centre of a glorious public life, when the orators and statemen, the poets and the artists of Greece, found there all the incentives of their noblest enthusiasm, . . . (it was) the meeting-place of philosophy, of idleness, of conversation, and of business . . .

. . . . .  
This . . . was the common meeting place of a population always eager<sup>2</sup> for fresh subjects of intellectual curiosity.

Paul took advantage of this ready-made open-air situation in which people could be contacted each

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 17:16,17.

<sup>2</sup>W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, The Life and Epistles of St. Paul (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), pp. 273, 287.



time that "he preached Jesus and the resurrection."<sup>1</sup> Through his witness Paul gained the attention of certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers some of whom immediately ridiculed him, and others, whose curiosity was aroused granted to him the opportunity of addressing a large number of fellow philosophers in the Areopagus.<sup>2</sup>

The above texts as well as others which are not cited indicate that the open-air mode of evangelizing unreached peoples was considered by Christ and the apostle Paul as a workable means of propagating the gospel.

## 2. Evidence from church history

Did the use of open-air evangelism cease with the close of the New Testament era? Spurgeon's writings on the history of open-air preaching clearly indicate that it did not. He says that during the dark ages of the church, ". . . the best preachers of the gradually declining church were also preachers in the open air; as were also the itinerant friars and great founders of religious orders who kept alive such piety as remained."<sup>3</sup> He relates that the pre-Reformation

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 17:18.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 17:18-34.

<sup>3</sup>C. H. Spurgeon, Lectures to My Students (London, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1954), p. 235.

reformers such as Wycliff and his followers,<sup>1</sup> as well as the preachers of the Reformation in England,<sup>2</sup> in Germany,<sup>3</sup> and in the Netherlands<sup>4</sup> made use of open-air locations to witness for Christ.

He continues his history by mentioning that in the eighteenth century John Wesley and the Methodist leaders who followed in his train often preached out-of-doors;<sup>5</sup> also in the same century George Whitefield began an open-air witness in England,<sup>6</sup> and later he preached in a similar style as he traveled throughout the Eastern seaboard of America.<sup>7</sup> Spurgeon claims that America had her own evangelists who worked in the open air such as Peter Cartwright, Lorenzo Dow, Jacob Gruber and Father Taylor.<sup>8</sup> Spurgeon himself successfully engaged in this type of ministry in England during the nineteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

Most of the above mentioned gospel preachers took to the open-air because they were denied the right to preach in the established churches of their

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 236.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid.      <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 237.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 237, 238.      <sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 235, 247.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 245.      <sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 251.      <sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 236.

respective countries.<sup>1</sup> A primary reason for this denial involved the exposition of scripture which exposed the unbiblical character of the established church's doctrinal teachings and practices.<sup>2</sup> While others chose the out-of-door pulpit because they could speak to more people than a church-confined ministry would allow.<sup>3</sup> The locations which they chose included fields, hillsides, large trees, markets, church yards, streets, commons, and most any other place where people could congregate to hear them.<sup>4</sup> Of most significance is the fact that thousands of people were evangelized through this mode of witness.<sup>5</sup>

Four general conclusions regarding open-air evangelism which may be drawn from the information just presented are: this type of ministry affords opportunity to reach people outside of the church; it can be used in a variety of locations where people of a given culture will congregate; it can lead to subsequent opportunities to minister; and it can be an effective means by which people come to place faith in Christ.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 236, 238, 245.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 236.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 237, 245.      <sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 236, 237, 247.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 236, 237, 239, 245, 247.

## B. Present Efforts

Can the four conclusions drawn from the use of open-air evangelism in the past be validated by current efforts being made by the church to evangelize in the open air? To show that this question is to be answered in the positive, the author will present a report of the work being done by several church related organizations and by a number of local churches in the New York and New Jersey area.

### 1. Church related organizations

Campus Crusade For Christ, an organization dedicated to evangelizing college youth has adopted the open-air witness as one of its many approaches. When a large number of students of Berkeley revolted, this organization sent to the university an open-air team consisting of speakers and folk singers who testified to the spiritual revolution Christ can bring to all men who trust in him. Through this venture many students were confronted with the claims of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Another phase of the work of Campus Crusade For Christ is its beach evangelism which is an out-of-door ministry. "Each year thousands of students on beaches

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<sup>1</sup>"March On The World", Collegiate Challenge, Vol. VI, No. 3 (Fall, 1967), 6.

across America hear from staff and students trained by Campus Crusade For Christ how they can know Christ in a personal way."<sup>1</sup>

Another organization which uses the open-air approach to contact gang leaders, dope addicts, prostitutes, et cetera is Teen Challenge Incorporated. The founder and executive director David Wilkerson himself has evangelized notorious gang leaders on a street corner just outside of a public school which they attended.<sup>2</sup> Converted dope addicts who have "kicked" the dope habit proclaim the Gospel of Christ to their former addict friends in street meetings. Many reached in such contacts come to Teen Challenge centers "for shelter, food, vocational and spiritual guidance."<sup>3</sup>

A third organization is the Open Air Campaigners which had its birth seventy-five years ago and is currently witnessing for Christ "at piers, parks, projects, outside schools, colleges, universities,

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<sup>1</sup>"A Strategy To Help Reach The World For Christ", Collegiate Challenge, Vol. V, No. 4 (Winter, 1966), 7.

<sup>2</sup>David Wilkerson, "Two Strange To Be Coincidence", Guideposts (December, 1961), 20, 21.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

and key city positions."<sup>1</sup> It reports that two staff men working with trained church teams were able in the course of one year to present the gospel in the Greater New York area to about 35,000 people.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Local churches

In the previous section, it was pointed out that the Jerusalem church played an important role in the program of evangelism. In the light of this fact, the author was impressed with the work of eleven local churches over the past five years in the suburban and metropolitan areas of New York and New Jersey which have used the open-air approach as one facet of their evangelistic thrust. The information concerning their work has been gathered from the records of the Open Air Campaigners Incorporated<sup>3</sup> which directed the training of the pastors and laymen of these churches upon their request. To accomplish this training, area seminars were sponsored in Newark, New Jersey; Manhattan, New York City; and Hicksville, Long Island. Also, local church seminars meeting one evening or

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<sup>1</sup>James Duffecy, "You Can't Catch Fish In A Bathtub!", Good News From Goodwill (March, 1967), 8.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>The author received his information in an interview with the secretary of this organization.

afternoon each week from four to six weeks, were held in interested churches.

The geographical distribution of these churches is as follows: one is located in West 57<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan; one in Elhurst, Queens; two on Staten Island; one in Nassau County, Long Island; two in Hudson County, New Jersey; two in Newark, New Jersey; one in Lodi, New Jersey; and one in Hawthorne, New Jersey. The denominational representation includes five Baptist churches, one Reformed church, one Assembly of God church, and three Independent churches. The locations in which the open-air meetings are held include such places, as Harlem, ghetto areas in Newark, vacant lots, housing projects, schools, pool halls, bowling alleys, parks, and shopping centers. The number of the persons reached varies from five to as many as two hundred in a single meeting. The testimony of the pastors is that in one open-air meeting they often reach more people who are outside of the faith than they reach within the walls of their church all year. Also, people who were not mindful of the existence of a given church before their contact with its open-air witness came later to the church services to find out more about the Christian gospel.

A noticable feature of this open-air effort is that the gospel is proclaimed by members of a carefully organized team rather than by just one person. Usually a team consists of four to seven members one of whom serves as its leader. At first, the pastor found it necessary to lead the meetings, but as lay workers gained experience this post was shared with them. The team leader is responsible for issuing assignments a week to several days before the actual meeting so that the team members can prepare carefully for their responsibilities. These responsibilities involve the use of music or some other attention getting device at the start of the meeting as a means of drawing a crowd; the use of interviews testimonies in which one of the team personnel interviews one or more of the other members concerning their faith in Christ; the use of a panel which should be prepared to answer question concerning the gospel put to them by individuals in the crowd; and the presentation of a sermonette which may or may not be illustrated on a chalk or paint board. The length of time for a given meeting depends on the attention which the crowd shows. Some meetings may last only ten to fifteen minutes while others will last a half an hour or more. At the close of a



meeting, all the team members who are not responsible for putting away equipment used in the meeting look for opportunities to talk with persons who have indicated that they would like to know more about the gospel or wish to make a personal commitment to Christ.

A major achievement has been made by one of the Newark churches in that it has an intergrated youth group numbering between fifty to seventy young people, fifty percent of which is Negro. Consequently they have an interracial open-air team which enables them to get a hearing for the gospel in the most critical ghetto areas of their city.

While the open-air efforts of the three church related organizations and the eleven churches briefly reviewed in the preceeding pages do not in any way indicate even a slight trend toward the application of the open-air ministry of evangelism by the church in America, their endeavors do indicate that when serious effort is applied to the open-air evangelism, the conclusions made concerning this approach in the past are still valid. Persons outside of faith can still be confronted with the gospel by this method; a large variety of locations in modern society are available for this work; subsequent contacts with persons reached in the open air are possible; and people do make positive decisions to accept Christ.

SECTION IV  
PROCEDURES  
OF  
OPEN-AIR EVANGELISM

## SECTION IV

### PROCEDURES OF OPEN-AIR EVANGELISM

#### A. Techniques Used

##### 1. Formation of a team

When a local church or other Christian organization wishes to engage in an open-air witness the persons involved in the initiation of such a program should not substitute zeal for know-how. A poorly organized effort is likely to end in a fiasco; therefore, the leaders should arrange for a seminar program in which the interested persons can be schooled in the methods which have proved to be effective in this phase of evangelism. The following information contains techniques which are being used by the churches and organizations cited in the previous section and can be used in introducing the procedures of current open-air evangelism in a seminar program.

Stress was already given to the fact that team work plays an important role in contemporary open-air evangelism. Jesus acknowledge the value of team work when he sent the disciples out two by two.<sup>1</sup> The Apostle Paul often accomplished his work with the assistance of

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<sup>1</sup>Mark 10:7.

others. At the beginning of his first missionary venture Barnabas and John Mark were his associates;<sup>1</sup> and during his second journey Silas<sup>2</sup> and Timothy accompanied him.<sup>3</sup>

As far as the author is able to ascertain, the team approach has been most widely developed by the Open Air Campaigners, Inc.. One of their evangelists lists the following advantages of a team: a) More concentrated prayer power; b) Larger variety of talent; c) More effectiveness in drawing and holding a crowd; and d) More personnel available for counseling individuals who respond to the witness to the gospel.<sup>4</sup>

Team members should include Christians with musical, artistic and speech abilities which they are willing to develop to the best of their capacity. Also, they should possess sufficient Biblical knowledge so as to be able to explain the basic content of the gospel message as presented in the first section of this paper. They should be convinced that God is still in the business of redeeming men, and that he can do this work

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 13:4,5.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 15:41.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 16:3.

<sup>4</sup>Donald Avilegiano, The Theory and Practice of Open Air Evangelism (Los Angeles: Open Air Campaigners, 1964), p. 23.

anywhere in the open air just as readily today as he redeemed the woman at the well,<sup>1</sup> the Ethiopian minister,<sup>2</sup> Lydia the seller of purple goods,<sup>3</sup> and many others in Biblical times.

Only persons who are seriously interested should be appointed as team members. It must be clearly explained that in the open air the ambassador of Christ will be more frequently exposed to the hostility of sinful, satan-controlled men as they vent their animosity toward Christ and his gospel. Jesus spoke these words of challenge concerning the opposition which his servants were to face:

Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, <sup>4</sup>for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.

If such a standard is too high for some candidates it would be advisable for them to forget about working in the open-air. "A smaller team of consecrated workers . . . is generally more effective than a larger team where some members are not too serious about the purpose of the meeting."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>John 4:1-15.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 8:26-39.

<sup>3</sup>Acts 16:14.

<sup>4</sup>Matthew 5:11,12.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

A team usually consists of four to seven persons. If one church does not have enough personnel to staff a team, it should consider the possibility of enlisting the help of interested believers in other congregations of their denomination that are located in the same or neighboring communities. Such a team can function as an inter-church team. In our day with the great stress on ecumenical cooperation, the possibility of inter-denominational teams presents an attainable challenge. Such a team of pastors was formed in Hudson County, New Jersey and functioned in 1965 and 1966. Eight men from four denominations (Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, and Assembly of God), held weekly meetings outside of the high schools of their county; and consequently they presented the gospel to three or four thousand young people each year.

The team must appoint a leader with whom they will plan the open-air meetings and who will be the master of ceremonies at each meeting.<sup>1</sup> As was pointed out in the previous section the leadership post, at first, is usually held by a pastor or another responsible person who has had some experience in this capacity. As team members gain experience, they can eventually work their way into this responsibility too. The constituent

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

elements in an open-air program and the conduct of a meeting shall be included further on in this section.

## 2. Contact the authorities

Paul admonishes the Christian to acknowledge the governing authorities of the state or city or country in which they live. He does so on the basis of the fact that government is a divinely ordered institution for the purpose of keeping law and order.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, any church or churches planning to engage in a permanent open-air ministry should be courteous enough to relate their intentions to the local town or city officials who are responsible for out-door public gatherings. Usually this responsibility is within the jurisdiction of the police department. Experience has shown that it is wise to have the pastor or pastors in the case of inter-church or inter-denominational teams and some of their laymen arrange for an interview with the chief of police or with another officer designated by his office.<sup>2</sup> In this meeting the open-air team delegates should express to the chief or to his representative their appreciation for the work his department is doing; they should then inform him that from a spiritual point of view their open-air team will attempt to provide opportunity for the individuals

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<sup>1</sup>Romans 13:1-7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

of the community to relate personally to Jesus Christ who will encourage them to become law-abiding citizens. The areas which will most concern the police are these:

- a. Do not obstruct traffic - pedestrian or automobile - during a meeting.
- b. Do not use P. A. systems where this is restricted - it is generally wiser to attempt to draw a crowd in to you rather than blast them at a distance with a loud P. A. system.
- c. Do not disturb the shopkeepers . . . if stores are open while your meeting is in progress. Do not have your meeting directly in front of the store doorway . . .
- d. Do not distribute literature if this is restricted in the area where you are holding the meeting . . .<sup>1</sup>

Also, in this meeting the chief should be told about the various locations which have been selected for the open-air meetings. In some instances the police department will issue a permit for this type of work which the team members can show to policemen on the beat who might question the legality of their activity.

### 3. Importance of prayer

Prayer has been and always will be the unchanging technique of any evangelistic endeavor, especially under the "canopy of heaven." Only the Holy Spirit can convict a man of his sinful state and can convince him of his need to relate to the living Christ.<sup>2</sup> Through the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>John 16:7-11.



Christian's witness the Holy Spirit accomplishes the new birth in the repentant sinner's life.<sup>1</sup> Prayer is the indispensable exercise of the soul which will enable the team members to have the strength to declare the gospel "boldly, as they ought."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the team leader should provide for a period of prayer before the team leaves for the meeting;<sup>3</sup> he should challenge them to pray for each member of the team as he performs his responsibility in the program during the meeting; and he should instruct the team members after the meeting is history to pray for the persons reached in the meeting.

#### 4. Elements of the program

Music - Music can often be used to introduce a meeting and draw a crowd. However, only persons with gifted voices and individuals who are accomplished instrumentalists should be used in the open air. Second-rate talent will only provide fuel for the hecklers.<sup>4</sup> There is room for solos, duets, trios, and quartets. Persons who sing should select hymns and gospel songs which are within their voice range, which

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<sup>1</sup>John 3:6.

<sup>2</sup>Eph. 6:20.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 23

<sup>4</sup>An Official Handbook On Open Air Evangelism, as yet unpublished by Open Air Campaigners, p. 53.

suit their style; and which are peppy in tempo.

Christian folk music is especially useful in attracting high school and college young people. When solos are being used, it is advisable not to sing more than two verses and the chorus twice.<sup>1</sup> Concerning the use of musical instruments in the open-air, one authority writes:

Musical instruments for open air work can be classified under three main headings: a) Brass, b) Strings, c) Accordians. Brass instruments can be used effectively in both group and solo work. Stringed instruments such as guitar, double bass, banjo, et cetera produce good beat and rhythm which is important in open air gospel music. Piano accordians are very effective because of their 'piercing' qualities which makes it possible to hear them at a considerable distance. They are usually<sup>2</sup> the most used . . . instrument in open air work.

All instruments should be tuned up before meeting begins so that no time is lost in the program.<sup>3</sup>

Testimonies - What is a testimony? Basically it is the public witness of a Christian in which he tells the people in the crowd how he came to place his trust in Christ. The three aspects which should be included in an open-air testimony are:

- a) The B.C.(before Christ) experience:
  - 1) He should relate that which caused him to see his need of Christ as Savior.
  - 2) He should generalize his sin experience and not give the lurid details.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Official Handbook, Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Avigliano, p. 21.

- b) The D. C. (during Christ) experience:
  - 1) He should present the influences which led to his conversion.
  - 2) He should point out that Christ saved him and Christ alone.
- c) The A. C. (after Christ) experience:
  - 1) He should relate the immediate changes which followed his conversion.
  - 2) He should relate the long range results of his conversion.

If an individual finds it difficult to start and stop his testimony, he should memorize an opening sentence which will arouse the interest of the listeners; and should, also, memorize a closing sentence that will bring it to a smooth termination. Above all he should give his own testimony. There is nothing so dead as mouthing what someone else has said. One variation of the testimony technique is the multiple interview testimony in which three or four team members are interviewed by the team leader.<sup>2</sup> The latter asks lead questions which enables each Christian to tell why he believes in Christ. This technique is very effective when the persons involved are from widely divergent occupations, or come from different denominational backgrounds, or come from different foreign countries et cetera. The author recalls an evening open-air meeting held on Market Street in Newark in which this technique was used. Five persons

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

were interviewed: one was a housewife, one a secretary, one a lady electrician, one a Certified Public Accountant, and one a Ph.D. who was a college professor. The crowd listened intently as each related why he or she trusted in Christ.

Panels - Several team members are used to answer questions or to discuss topics of interest to the people in the crowd.<sup>1</sup> A moderator from the team may ask them to explain scripture verses which he quotes to them one at a time. They may be asked to explain terms which church people use so often such as: salvation, repentance, faith, justification, redemption and other such words. They may be asked to tell why they are out in an open-air meeting proclaiming their witness to Christ rather than in a church building. When there is a good rapport between the team and the crowd, the team leader may choose to allow persons in the audience to ask questions of the panel, but this can become extremely difficult if the situation is not well controlled. In order to maintain control these recommendations should be carefully followed:

- a) Put a time limit on the question period before you begin - let this . . . limit be known publically  
. . .

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

- b) Allow only one question per person . . .
- c) Only answer serious questions.
- d) The team leader will point to the panel member who is to answer the question.
- e) Present the gospel at every<sup>1</sup> opportunity as the questions are answered.

Messages - Several facts which the preacher in the open air should keep in mind are these: his message should be informal and conversational; he should keep his message outline simple; he should memorize his message and not depend on notes; he should look the people in the eye as he speaks; he should always treat the audience as his friend; therefore, he should never speak from a superior attitude; he should summarize his thoughts from time to time as he sees new people joining the crowd; and he must aim at pointing people to a decision.<sup>2</sup> The length of the message will vary depending upon the nature of the meeting. Messages for persons in a shopping crowd should not be longer than five to seven minutes because this crowd usually is on the move. Messages given to students and employees during their lunch hour can be as long as ten to twelve minutes as this group usually has some time to spare. Messages given in parks, beaches, and at teenage-hangouts, if well prepared and geared to interest level of the crowd, can be as long as fifteen or twenty

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

minutes. The illustrated message using a sketchboard has proven to be an effective means of capturing the audience's interest.<sup>1</sup> Below is a sample of a sketchboard message based on John 14:6.<sup>2</sup> The speaker draws the first part of the sketch as shown in Figure 1 while other members of the team perform their parts of the program; he completes the sketch during the presentation of his message as illustrated in Figure 2.

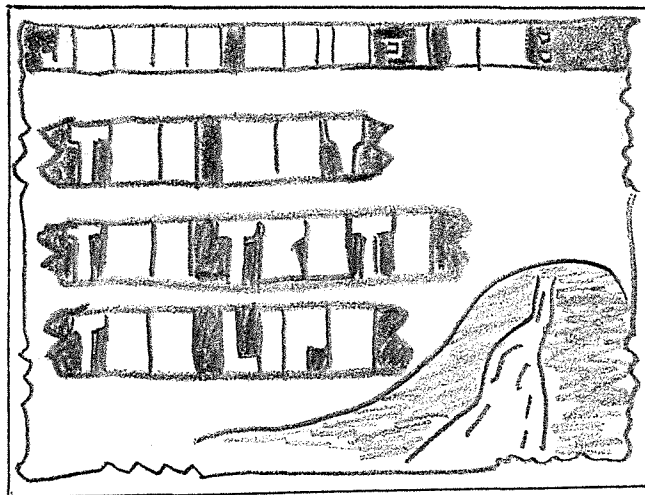


Figure 1

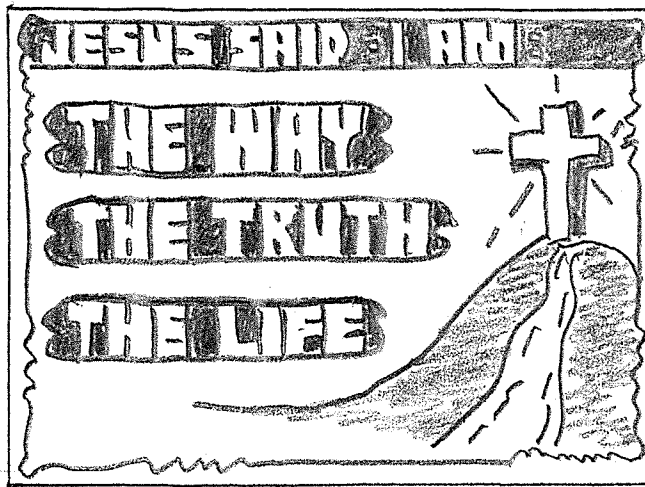


Figure 2

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

The open-air preacher who has considerable artistic skill can develop several dozen sketchboard messages which he can file away for ready reference.

Films - Evening meetings at parks, beaches and even at vacant lots provide locations at which to show gospel films.<sup>1</sup> There are a large variety of science films with a gospel message available from the Moody Institute of Science. World Wide Films, Ken Anderson Films, and a number of other concerns have produced evangelistic films which can be used in the open air. The team must secure an adequate screen for this purpose. An eight foot by six foot plyboard screen painted a matte white and mounted to the side of a pick-up truck would be sufficient for most meetings. The availability of electric power would largely determine the location to be chosen.

Counseling - Time is taken at the end of each meeting to counsel with individuals who have indicated that they would like to talk about their commitment to Christ or about the issues involved in trusting Christ. When these persons are willing, the team members record their names and addresses on file cards which are turned over to the team leader. The latter gives the cards to the parties responsible for follow-up contacts. In a

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<sup>1</sup>Official Handbook., pp. 111-113.

local church these cards can be given to the chairman of the visitation committee or the pastor.

Literature distribution - The principles usually adopted concerning this aspect of open-air witnessing are: never give literature to persons coming toward the meeting or to persons standing in the crowd listening to the speaker; have a pleasant and courteous attitude at all times; hold the literature so that the title can be easily read; do not lunge at people; do not block a person's path to give him literature; and do not argue with anyone who refuses to take it.<sup>1</sup>

#### 5. Conducting a meeting

Immediately upon the teams' arrival at the location of the open-air meeting, the leader sees to it that all the equipment is set up; that the musicians are tuned up; that a clean sheet of paper is on the sketchboard; that the team members know the order in which they are to appear on the program; and that literature is given to the persons who will distribute it.<sup>2</sup>

The leader begins the meeting by telling the audience where the team comes from, e.g. This is the Hudson County Ministers' open air team. Then he introduces the members of the team as their respective

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 23.



contributions come up in the progress of the meeting. After the meeting is over, he thanks the audience for listening.<sup>1</sup>

After the meeting ends, he makes sure that the equipment is packed away; that team members are counseling with the persons who are seeking this ministry.<sup>2</sup>

The leader is in charge of the whole meeting from beginning to end. If a team member feels that the leader made a mistake in conducting the meeting, that member should wait until the team arrives back at the church or other meeting place, and in the evaluation session he can express his views. Especially in the early stages of developing an open-air ministry, if possible, every meeting should be followed by an evaluation session.

Early in open-air evangelism the team will be confronted with the interjectors and heckler. However, "always remember that the majority of an open air audience is friendly and interested in what is being said in the meeting - the interjector or heckler is generally the exception . . ."<sup>3</sup> The various kinds of insincere interjectors and hecklers are drunks, humanists, wise guys, scoffers, atheists, and noise makers.<sup>4</sup> If the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

crowd is listening, it is best to disregard them. However, if such a person is insistent the leader can try to indicate to another team member through a glance that he should graciously attempt to engage in discussion with him outside of the meeting area.<sup>1</sup> In the case of a sincere questioner, if possible, effort should be made to answer his question if what he asks is not too far removed from the subject being presented. Should the question involve another theological area remote from the speaker's subject, he can offer to answer his question at the conclusion of the meeting.<sup>2</sup>

In the case of very large meetings when one hundred to three hundred people are pushing and shoving to get near the front of the crowd and a riot condition is threatening, the team should dispense with the meeting immediately.

E V A N G E L I S T I C

O U T R E A C H

ANGOUTS y Alleys alls Corners	FACTORIES	BEACHES
son, tings - 1:00 p.m.	See recommendations for Schools.	Most any time of the day from about 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 or 9:00 p.m.
sis - Year endation for y Project.	See recommendations for Schools.	Seasonal - Late June to the middle of Sept.. Daily meetings.
ts for y Projects.	See comments for Schools.	See comments under Parks.

F O R    O P E N - A I R

PROJECTS	SCHOOLS High School Colleges Universities	PARKS	TEENAGE HA Bowling Pool Ha Street
<p>afternoon g. ning ening noons</p>	<p>Lunch periods on week days only. Most schools have several lunch periods ranging from about 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m..</p>	<p>Fall and Spring - Late afternoons 4:00-5:00<sup>P</sup> Summer Vacation - Any time from late morning to 8:00 or 9:00 p.m.. Saturdays and Sundays especially.</p>	<p>Late afterno Evening Meet 7:00-11</p>
<p>st: one our, day a month. ve onto t until 3 ave passed, etings can reviously jects.</p>	<p>Same school, same day each week for a month, or once a month for three to four months. After this go to another school.</p>	<p>Once each week or once each month depending upon the numbers of people who frequent the location in question.</p>	<p>Regular bas round See recomme Housing</p>
<p>can be as utes.</p>	<p>Meetings must be well timed, about 20 minutes in length.</p>	<p>A well arranged program could result in a 30 to 40 minute meeting.</p>	<p>See comment Housing</p>

S A M P L E      S C H E D U L E

LOCATION OF MEETING	DOWNTOWN STREET MEETINGS	HOUSING PROJECTS
TIME FOR MEETING	<p>Late morning - 11:00 a.m.            Noon hour - Office Workers            Afternoons - Shoppers            Evenings - 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.            Especially on shopping nights.</p>	<p>Weekdays - Late afternoon            and evenings.            Saturdays - Morning            through evening            Sundays - Afternoons</p>
REGULARITY OF MEETING	<p>Regular basis - same            location, time and day            of each week or month.            If possible hold            several meetings in            different locations and            times on the same day.</p>	<p>In same project: one            meeting same hour, day            each week for a month.            Each month move onto            another project until 3            or 4 months have passed,            then repeat meetings can            be tried at previously            contacted projects.</p>
LENGTH OF MEETING	<p>Noon meetings must be well            timed, 15-20 minutes.            Afternoon and evening            meetings may last as            long as 20-30 minutes            depending on the            attention of the crowd.</p>	<p>Most meetings can be as            long as 30 minutes.</p>

## B. Equipment

### 1. Gospel mobile units

The Open Air Campaigners, Inc. have used gospel vans for many years. Below is a picture of one of them.

## "Presenting Christ by all means . . . everywhere"

requires mobility and methods that will allow the message free course to the heart of man.

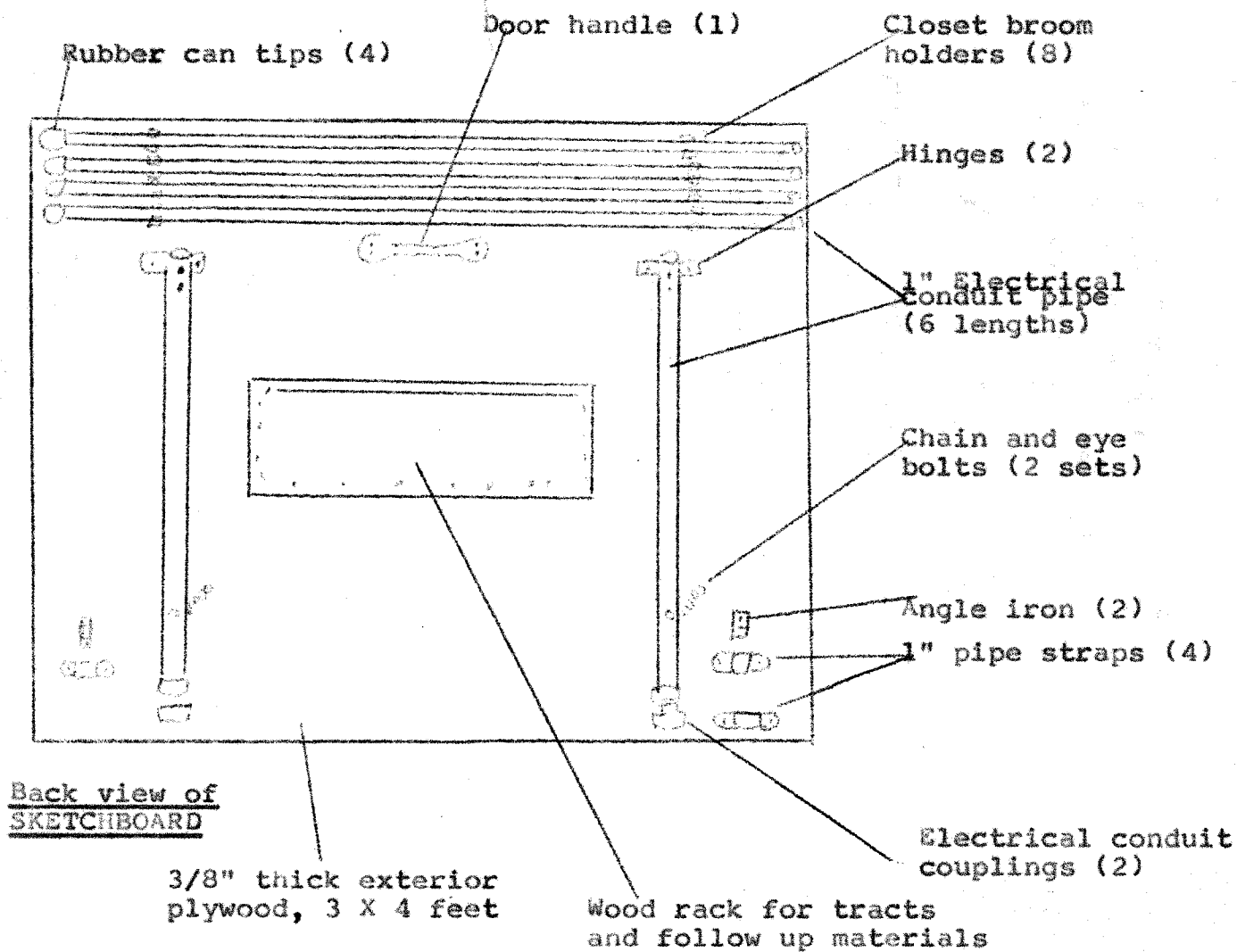


### GOSPEL VAN IN ACTION

Evangelist Jim Duffecy demonstrates the unique equipment which has enabled Open Air Campaigner to excel in reaching vast multitudes very effectively and economically.

The van when fully equipped affords a speaking platform a backdrop for sound projection and illustrated messages. At night the light makes possible good visual communication as well as the equipment quickly converts into a movie screen for gospel films and film strips.

Open Air Campaigners have used their vehicles in working with local church teams that could not afford to purchase their own mobile units. However, large churches could readily afford to buy such a unit.

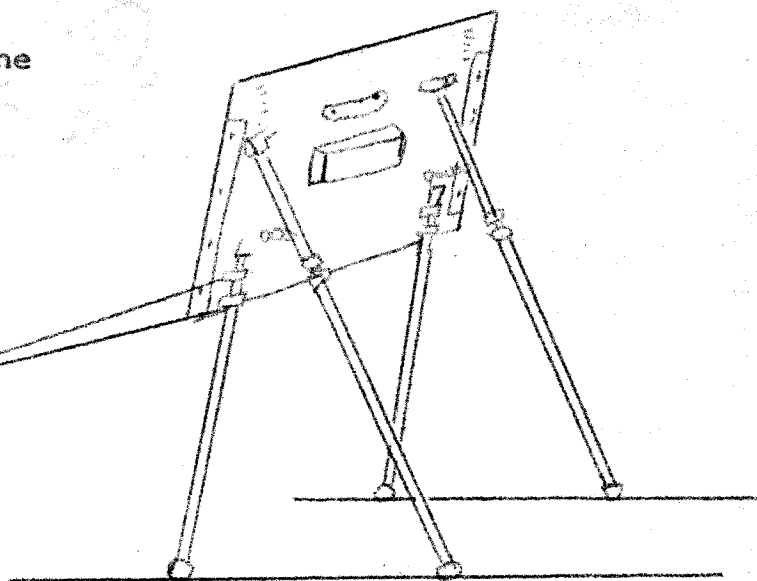


## Sketchboard set up

Newsprint paper is stretched across the front of the sketchboard and thumbtacked at the sides on the back of the board.

All parts are bolted through the plywood sketchboard with flat head bolts with heads counter-sunk in the front surface of the sketchboard.

Pipe lengths slide into pipe couplings and pipe straps.





## CONCLUSION

New Testament data discloses that a Biblical evangelism can be defined as preaching or heralding the "good news" of God's salvation in Christ to the people of the world so that they may have the opportunity to believe in Christ and once having believed be instructed in the teachings of Christ. Because the evangelistic message is a revelation from God its proclamation must be theologically sound so as to present the Person, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ as the sole message of God's redemptive plan for sinful men. This proclamation must be accompanied by a direct call for man to repent and to trust in Christ.

Christ through divine authority has placed on the church as a whole the task of evangelism as defined above. In order to accomplish this task, all local churches must actively engage in the work of evangelism in their respective communities.

Through carefully planned training programs the clergy and laity of the church can be equipped to use the open-air medium as a means of evangelizing many people who do not enter the church to hear the proclamation of God's "good news" in Christ.

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