

Why a World Congress on Evangelism

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I. Introduction.

- A. The history of the World Council of Churches.
- B. The church has a passion for unity, but it has forgotten our Lord's commission to evangelism.
- C. The purpose for this conference is to plea for a return to evangelism.
- D. Texts: John 4:45, Matthew 9:35-38.

II. Harvest time is the ever present now.

- A. We are to go now and gather the workmen for tomorrow may already be too late.
- B. Every generation is strategic and urgent.
 - 1. We stand at the heart of a world revolution.
 - 2. There is confusion in the World Council. It is said that if they adopted a definition of evangelism it would split the church.

III. The meaning of evangelism.

- A. One group denies individual evangelism and moves toward the salvation of structures of evangelism.
- B. The primary objective of evangelism is the winning of souls to Jesus Christ.
- C. Evangelism was prominent in the early church. They proclaimed to the world hope and purpose.
- D. To evangelize is to so present Christ through the Holy Spirit that a man would put their trust in Him.
- E. To evangelize is to bear witness with the objective of winning men.

IV. The motives for evangelism.

- A. Jesus has commanded evangelism, and failure to heed it is deliberate disobedience. (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:18, John 20:21, Acts 1:8)
- B. The apostles set an example for preaching.
- C. The love of Christ constrains us. (2 Corinthians 5:14)
- D. The wrath of God in the approaching judgment.

1. Are men really lost?
2. Men outside of Jesus are lost according to the Scriptures.
 - a. Jesus says to some to depart from Him. (Matthew 7:21)
 - b. Some will suffer eternal destruction and torment. (2 Thessalonians 1:5-10, Revelation 20:11-15)
3. If we really believe that men are lost without Jesus, we will have a burning zeal for evangelism.

E. The spiritual and social needs of men.

1. Jesus had compassion on men.
2. He looked upon them as sick bodies that needed His touch and word.
3. The evangelist must have compassion.
4. Some of the greatest social movements have come about through the conversions of men to Christ.
5. We have made the mistake of putting the cart before the horse: men can only love when given the capacity to love.

V. The message of evangelism.

- A. There is a change in Christianity to a new humanism.
- B. The great question is whether the gospel is still relevant for today.
 1. Paul declares the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15. This was an irrelevant message then, but God took it and transformed people.
 2. Any other message than the *kerygma* is not the gospel.
 3. There is power in the message that cannot be explained.
- C. The message is that Christ died from our sins and rose from the dead and that we must be converted.
- D. We are to be witnesses to the world and not imitators.

VI. The enemy of evangelism.

- A. Satan is at work to deceive. (2 Corinthians 11:14)
- B. Satan is blinding nonbelievers. (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- C. The Spirit is the solution which opens the mind and the heart.

VII. Method of evangelism.

- A. There are many approaches everywhere, but the spiritual needs are the same.
- B. All men need redemption and salvation.
- C. At the rate of population increase people must be one in mass quantities to keep up, but there are new forms of communication that must be exploited for the message.
- D. Forms of evangelism.
 - 1. Mass media.
 - 2. Personal evangelism.
 - 3. Impromptu evangelism.
 - 4. Dialogue evangelism.
 - 5. Systematic evangelism. (Acts 5)
 - 6. Letter evangelism. (John 20:21, Luke 1:1-4)
- E. Some method is certainly right in any given place or time.
- F. The world desperately needs world reform, but the quickest and surest way is evangelism.
- G. The preaching of Christ has been primarily responsible for social reform throughout the years.
- H. Our greatest need is not organization but to be baptized by the fire of the Holy Spirit.

VIII. One of the greatest questions is whether the church can be revived to complete the task.

- A. Revival is needed.
- B. Paul exhorted Timothy to fan the flame.
- C. The Spirit filled the Apostles again. (Acts 2, 4)
- D. The day of miracles and revival have not passed.
- E. If God is reviving in other places, He can do it with you.
- F. God's purpose will be fulfilled.

Application questions

1. What are the motives for evangelism? How does this make it effective?

2. What is the gospel message according to the speaker and what is necessary for it to be received?

3. Why can we be assured today that the mission to evangelize the world is not impossible? Explain.
