

**GR6-32**

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This morning we are going to do just that. We are going to hear the soul winning methods of Jesus. How? Through the eyes and ears of those who spent time alone with Jesus. Through the hearts and minds of those who heard Him soul winning for three plus years. Thus the Book of Acts is the most critical source in the universe for our views of evangelism. Acts records the first 30 years of evangelism from the lens of inspiration, on the film of God's Word! Through the inspired words of the Gospels and Acts when we listen to the Message of Jesus captured by the Apostles of Jesus.

Where do we begin? Our text is Mark 1:38-39. Before we read this text let me share that if Jesus left us here to do His work on earth. If Jesus saved us to share the Gospel, the Good News of Salvation, then there are few things more exciting than to actually learn from Him our Master, His message and the way He called men and women, boys and girls to Salvation. This is perhaps one of the most vital messages I could ever share with you as your pastor. As we start get ready with your pen, paper and notebook. Mark God's Word so that again and again you can revisit these pages and see the Message of Jesus. We are starting with Jesus going about preaching to all He could find in Galilee.

Galilee in the time of Jesus was composed of no less than 3.6 million people living in 240 towns and villages of about 15,000 each. This was what the Governor of Galilee named Josephus said, from the era of Jesus ministry. So into a heavily populated area, Jesus went out preaching a message to all who would hear. With Him went twelve camcorders that constantly recorded it all. They captured His words, His passion, and His method. Then He left and asked them to keep up the work of the Gospel. That is what we will see this morning, and then conclude this evening!

Please stand with me and listen to God's Word in Mark 1:38-39

***But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth." And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.***

Now please turn with me to the end of the Gospel by Luke. As we turn there we are passing over the 89 chapters of the Gospels. We are passing over the 250 different events recorded about the 3 plus years of Christ's Earthly ministry. We are passing over the countless sermons, personal soul winning events and private teachings Jesus performed and offered to His Disciples. Now in Luke 24:44-49 we find Jesus summarizing His ministry and formulating the sending off of His Men to their ministries. Listen carefully:

*Luke 24:44-49 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."<sup>45</sup> And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.<sup>46</sup> Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, <sup>47</sup> **and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.**<sup>48</sup> **"And you are witnesses of these things.**<sup>49</sup> "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem **until you are endued with power from on high.**"*

Wow, they are given a message and told to wait until they are connected with the very intimate, indwelling power source of God's Spirit. Then when they are online, bang, they are to launch out and do what they saw, heard, and learned from the very life and ministry of Jesus.

Now turn to the launching pad. It is found in the book of the Acts of the Holy Spirit. That is the sequel to Luke. Luke wrote as the Holy Spirit inspired Him **WHAT HAPPENED** (that is the content of the Gospels) and then he wrote **HOW THEY SHARED WHAT HAPPENED** (that is the book of Acts) and then in the Epistles we have **WHY ALL THIS HAD TO HAPPEN**. That in brief is a summary of the entire New Testament.

Now as we turn to Acts we are actually turning on a video that lasts 30 years. What did I just say? Acts is not so much a book on doctrine as it is a divinely recorded and edited video of 30 years of sharing the greatest message ever given, by the greatest witnesses ever chosen. You see, the Holy Spirit empowered the Apostles to go and take the Gospel to the World and records a news reporter quality full color videotape of the 30 years from Pentecost to Paul's Imprisonment. The Book of Acts is our most critical insight into how they shared the Gospel!

So Acts is a video report of how the Apostles and disciples shared the Gospel message in every possible setting. What we get is to see how the eyewitnesses shared with the world what happened in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. As we go through all 28 chapters we find that there are 22-recorded events where a Gospel Message is presented. We will start this morning and finish the 22 events tonight.

### **First Gospel Presentation in Acts**

The **FIRST** Gospel Presentation is in Acts 2. The time has come. After being called to be a fisherman for eternal souls, after being given on site, hands on training for three plus years, after being tutored privately, commissioned publicly, and filled with the very Holy Spirit of

God, Peter steps up to the microphone to deliver his first sermon. I'm sure his pulse was throbbing in anticipation, his heart pounding with excitement to at last say what he had been taught, shown, and commanded him, to say. So here it is, here is Gospel Presentation number one in Acts chapter 2. Peter preaches the first sermon after Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and sending the Holy Spirit down to indwell the Church. What does he say? Many things, all-important

Note in Acts 2:21 a verse we all know from soul winning, it is actually a quote from Joel 2:32:

*And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord **shall be saved.**'*

Now to the conclusion in Acts 2:37-39

*Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, **what shall we do?**"<sup>38</sup> Then Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**; and you **shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** <sup>39</sup> "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."*

What was the result? Note Acts 2:41

*Then those who **gladly received his word** were baptized; and that day about **three thousand souls** were added to them.*

So, what was the summary of the first message? One word, REPENT.

## **Second Gospel Presentation in Acts**

Let's go to the **SECOND** gospel presentation in Acts 3:19. Again it is Peter preaching after the wonderful healing of the man who had been unable to walk for over 40 years (Acts 4:22). What is the gospel message? Listen to Acts 3:19 and then v. 26:

*v. 19 "**Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,***

*v. 26 "To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, **in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.**"*

What is the message? Now we have two parts: repent and turn (turn is the meaning of "be converted" which is the translation of the Greek word *epistrepho*. *Strepho* means "to turn

around" and *epi* means, "on, at, around, etc." it is a preposition attached to a word to magnify the meaning. So in street talk it would be "really turn around, away from iniquity". What happened to those who listened? Listen to Luke's accounting in Acts 4:4:

*However, **many of those who heard the word believed**; and the number of the men came to be **about five thousand**.*

So, what was the summary of the second message? REPENT and TURN AWAY FROM INIQUITY.

### Third Gospel Presentation in Acts

Now to the **THIRD** gospel presentation in Acts 4:12

*"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which **we must be saved**."*

There is a common description we use today. Peter said again, the third description of salvation: be saved. From what we might ask? Well when the name of the Messiah was given as Jesus it was stated in Matthew 1:21:

*"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will **save His people from their sins**."*

So what is saved? Saved from sins. Thus we can say in summary after the third Gospel message? REPENT and TURN AWAY FROM INIQUITY, and BE SAVED FROM SIN.

### Fourth Gospel Presentation in Acts

The **FOURTH** Gospel Message comes in Acts 5:31-32 as Peter is again speaking, declaring the way of salvation:

*"Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give **repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins**.<sup>32</sup> "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."*

So what is our GOSPEL MESSAGE SUMMARY after the fourth message on how to be saved? REPENT and TURN AWAY FROM INIQUITY, and BE SAVED by RECEIVING FORGIVENESS of SINS.

Now, as we turn to Acts 8 several things are happening. Time has passed, greater persecution has started, and others are preaching the Apostolic Message of Salvation. Philip has gone to the next level. Jesus said in Acts 1:8:

*“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea **and Samaria**, and to the end of the earth.”*

### **Fifth Gospel Presentation in Acts**

The **FIFTH** Gospel Message we find is no longer directed just to Jews, now Samaritans, half Jew and half Gentile, are getting the message. Now we see for the first time a false believer. Jesus warned of this in the Gospels, now we see it. Note Acts 8:13:

*Then Simon himself also **believed**; and when he **was baptized** he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs, which were done.*

So he believed and was baptized, but something was missing. When the Apostle Peter who has given every recorded Gospel Message on this videotape so far shows up to confirm the veracity of this evangelistic outreach he declares something was lacking from this man's conversion. Listen and note the report in

Acts 8:21-23:

*“You have **neither part nor portion in this matter** (what matter? Salvation), for your **heart is not right in the sight of God**. (Wow, what makes a heart right in God's sight Peter?) 22 **“Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.**23 **“For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.”***

Simon believed and was baptized but did not receive the Holy Spirit, which was the seal of true conversion and New Birth. This means that belief and baptism without repentance was insufficient. He never repented of his sin so he was never saved! Salvation again is stated by Peter to involve a turning from sin, which is called repentance.

So what is our GOSPEL MESSAGE SUMMARY after the fifth message on how to be saved? Really REPENT and TURN AWAY FROM INIQUITY, and BE SAVED by RECEIVING FORGIVENESS of SINS.

### **Sixth Gospel Presentation in Acts**

Quickly now, here is a vital point. Philip has now experienced a lesson just like Peter had gotten repeatedly at the feet of Jesus. Philip had his gospel message inspected by Peter. Philip was shown that as Jesus warned, there would be those who believed and went through baptism, but were never saved. What does Philip do? He emphasizes something. Look now at the SIXTH Gospel Message in Acts 8:35-37:

*Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning **at this Scripture, preached Jesus** to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" 37 Then Philip said, "If you **believe with all your heart, you may.**" And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."*

So what is our GOSPEL MESSAGE SUMMARY after the 6th message on how to be saved? Really REPENT and TURN AWAY FROM INIQUITY, and BE SAVED by RECEIVING FORGIVENESS of SINS, when you BELIEVE WITH ALL YOUR HEART.

Philip began to beware of false professors. He didn't look for merely believing the facts; he sought a heart of faith for Jesus. What lesson had Philip learned from Peter on soul winning? I think Peter has drawn Philip back to Christ's first warning of false professors of faith. Jesus had taught Peter and the apostles this type of person who said all the right things and yet lacked true saving faith. Why don't we go there to Matthew 7 before we celebrate the Lord's Supper this morning?

Peter must have shared with Philip what he had heard so clearly from the lips of Jesus. As Jesus taught His men to be soul winners He said false professions would come. Listen to Jesus in Matthew 7:21 and 23:

*v. 21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but **he who does the will of My Father in heaven.***

*v. 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, **you who practice lawlessness!**'"*

Jesus said saved people turn from doing their own will and going their own way as a lost person to doing God's will and way as a saved person. Remember Matthew 7:13-23 presents Christ's way of describing true and genuine salvation:

1. True believers are those who ENTER GOD'S WAY [v. 13-15 it is narrow, small and they are few]
2. True believers are those who BEAR GOD'S FRUIT [v.16-20]
3. True believers are those who DO GOD'S WILL [v. 21]
4. True believers are those who KNOW GOD INTIMATELY [v. 22-23]
5. True believers are those who OBEY GOD'S WORD [v.24a if God says it they believe and obey]
6. True believers are those who BUILD THEIR LIVES UPON THE ROCK [v. 24b]

So this morning we have watched the video for 8 chapters of Acts. What do we see contained in the Gospel Message they presented? One thing for sure, they never quite explain it the same exact way. There seem to be many ways to say the same simple message of salvation. But what is our GOSPEL MESSAGE SUMMARY after the sixth message on how to be saved?

Really **REPENT** and **TURN AWAY FROM INIQUITY**, and **BE SAVED** by **RECEIVING FORGIVENESS** of **SINS**, when you **BELIEVE WITH ALL YOUR HEART**. And if you have been saved by God's miraculous grace so richly and freely bestowed through Christ, then you are a True believer who has **ENTERED GOD'S WAY, BEARS GOD'S FRUIT, DOES GOD'S WILL, KNOWS GOD INTIMATELY, OBEYS GOD'S WORD, and BUILDS YOUR LIFE UPON THE ROCK.**

You say, that sounds impossible. It is humanly, that is why only those born **FROM ABOVE**, are truly saved. Let's celebrate the Great Salvation symbolized in the Lord's Supper this morning.