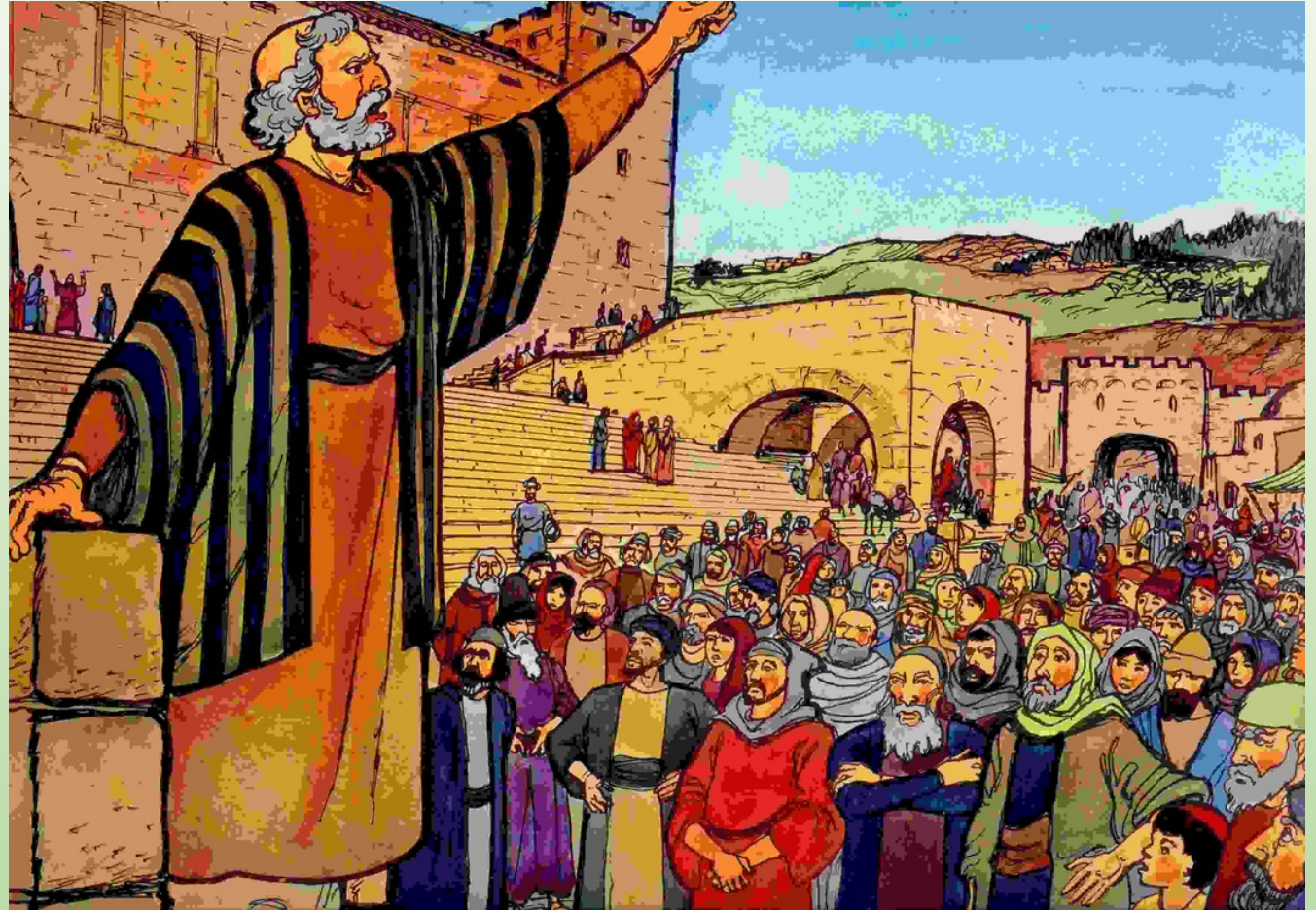
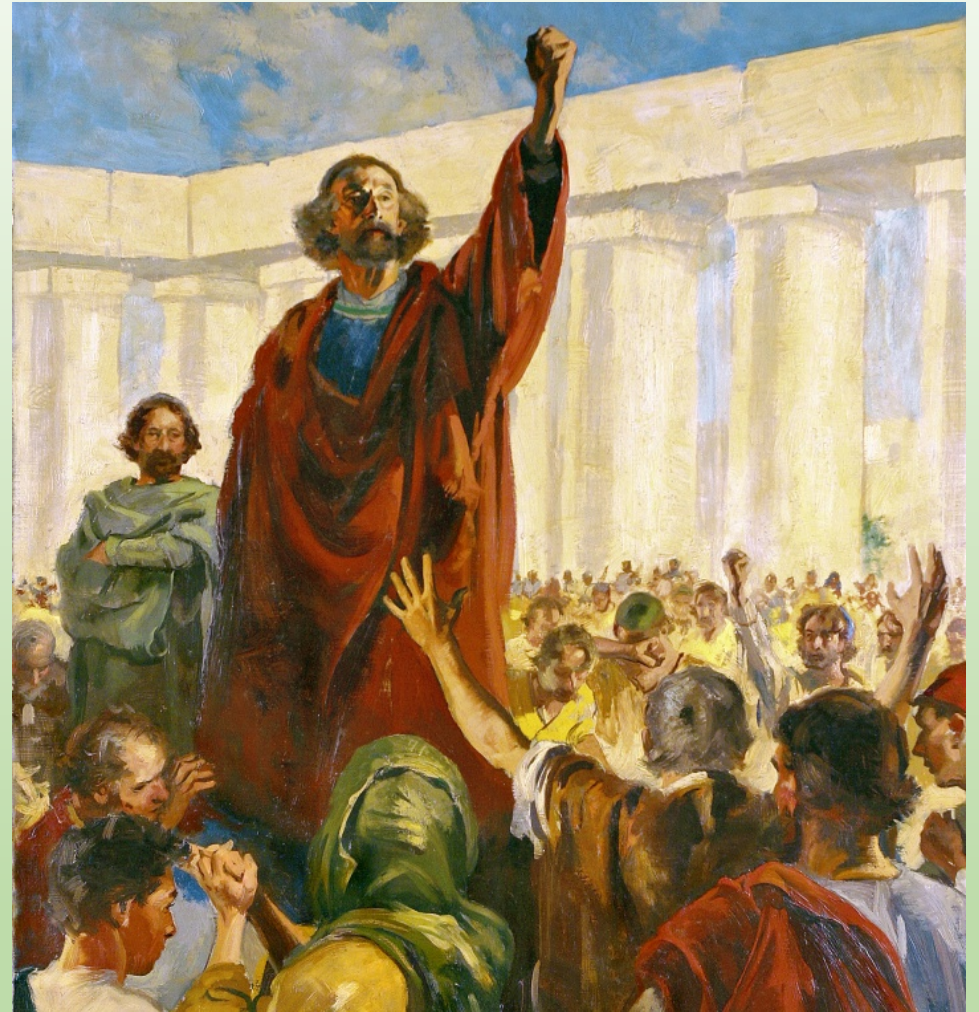


Peter and the Gentiles

Acts 2: 38. 39.



"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. 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.'"
Acts 2: 38. 39.

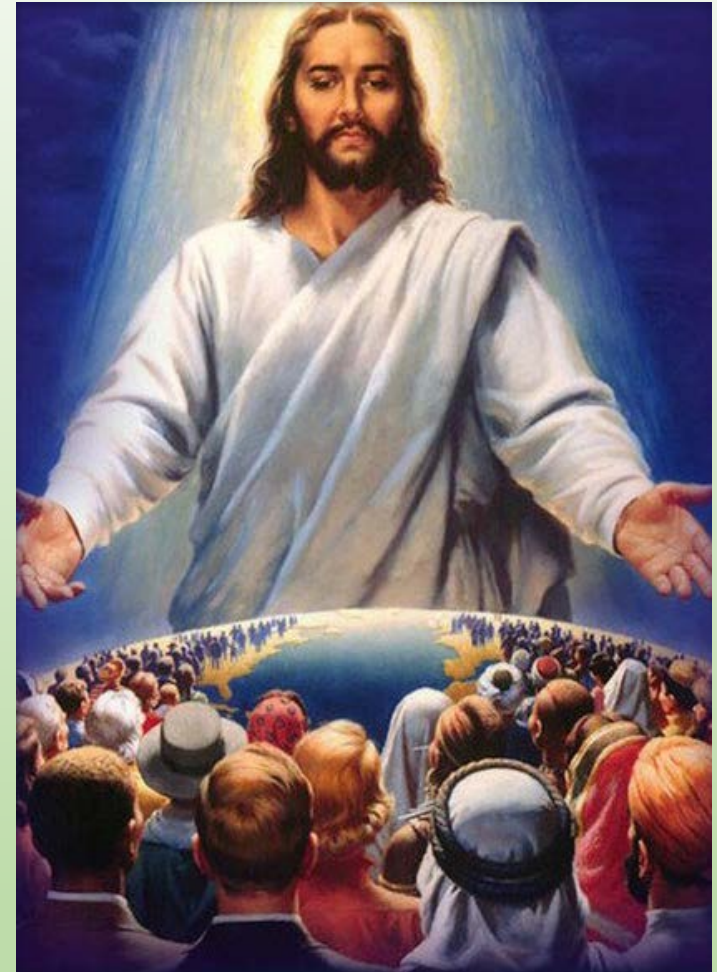


I. Introduction

The birth of the Christian church is characterized by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and by the deliverance of the Good News of Salvation directed to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.



“By his (Christ’s) name, all can obtain life
and salvation.”
John Wesley



"As long as there is
any hate in us we
are not ready for
heaven, not as long
as we're shutting the
golden doors on
anyone else..."
Madeleine L'Engle



"The cross of Christ means that the salvation of God goes deeper down than the deepest depths of iniquity man can commit. No person can get beyond the reach of Jesus."
Oswald Chambers, the Essay, It is Finished



"The difference between the Christian and the non-Christian is not one of salvation. Salvation is given by grace to everyone. Christians are simply those charged by God with a special mission. The meaning of being a Christian is not working at your own little salvation, but changing human history."

Jacques Ellul



"I think that every prayer that is made even to a false God or to the very imperfectly conceived true God is accepted by the true God, and that Christ saves many who do not think they know Him. For He is (dimly) present in the good side of the inferior teachers whom they follow. In the parable of the sheep and goats (Matt. 25:3 and following) those who are saved do not seem to know they have served Christ. But of course our anxiety about unbelievers is most perfectly employed when it leads not to speculation but to earnest prayer for them and the attempt to be in our own lives such good advertisements for Christianity as will make it attractive."

C.S. Lewis, Letters, p. 247.

"God's love for sinners is directly revealed as a mark of his eschatological reign. The grace is bestowed upon all who accept the salvific Gospel of Jesus. God's delight in forgiveness and the generous outpouring of his saving graces are shown... On account of its purely religious character, the Gospel of the reign of God preached by Jesus is directed to all mankind."

Mariasusay Dhavamony, Jesus and the Gentiles, Studia Missionalia, vol. 51, 2002. p. 176.



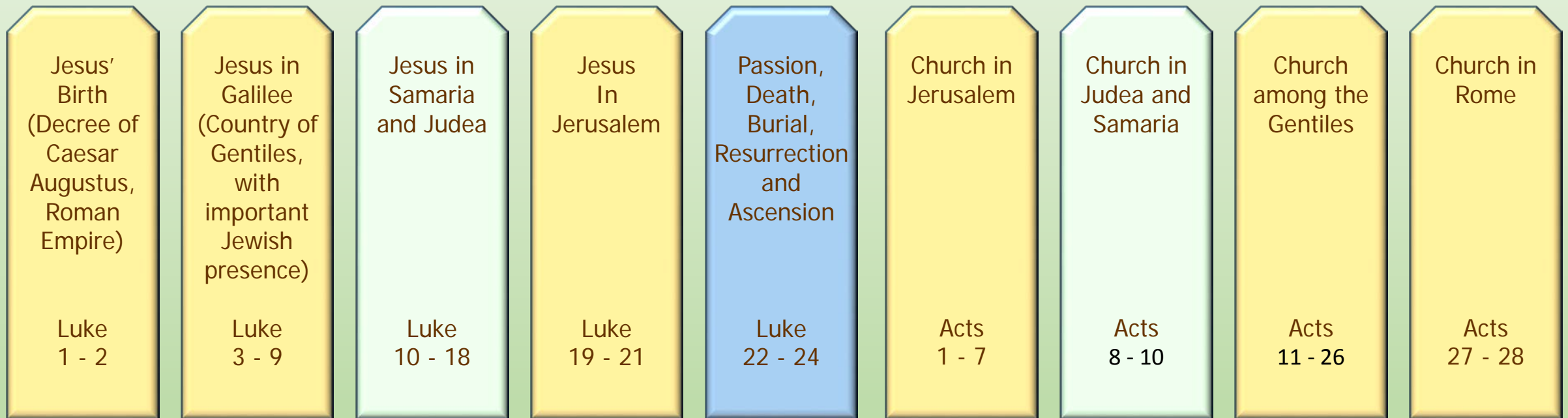
“Christianity from its inception was a missionary religion. The truths about the one God became available to all peoples through the work of Christ. God’s plan of bringing all things together in Christ has taken a giant step with the birth of Christianity. (Ephesians 1). The emphasis on carrying God’s truth through the community of the Israelites broadened into a focus on teaching and making the disciples of all nations, a task that had been given to the disciples after Jesus’ resurrection.”
Frances S. Adeney, *Graceful Evangelism: Christian Witness in a Complex World*, Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2010, p. 15.



II. Context



The Narrative of the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts



After the Gospel of Luke presenting the ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem (Luke 19 – 21), his passion, death, and resurrection (Luke 22 – 24), the Book of Acts, the second volume written by Dr. Luke, insists on the birth of the Christian church in Jerusalem. The expansion of the church outside of Jerusalem (Acts 8 – 28) will be narrated in creating a chiasm covering two entire books of the New Testament (Acts of Jesus = Gospel of Luke; Acts of the Holy Spirit = Book of Acts).



They are three speeches of Peter in the Book of Acts. All three are coming after the supernatural manifestation of God's power.

1. Outpouring of the Holy Spirit, ch. 2.
2. Miracle of healing of a lame man, ch. 3.
3. Vision of Peter before the visit of Cornelius, ch. 10.

In each of them Peter is underlining the universality of God's message for the salvation of every nation

"And the promise is to all who are afar off". (2: 39)

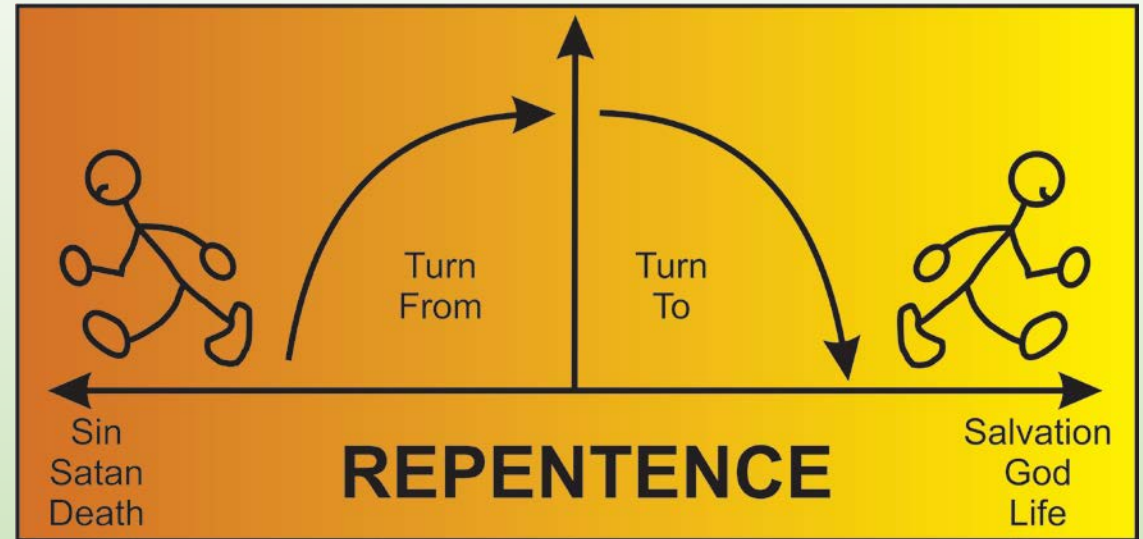
"In your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed". (3: 25)

"I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him."

III. The Good news of Jesus Christ is a promise of a new life through the power of the Holy Spirit



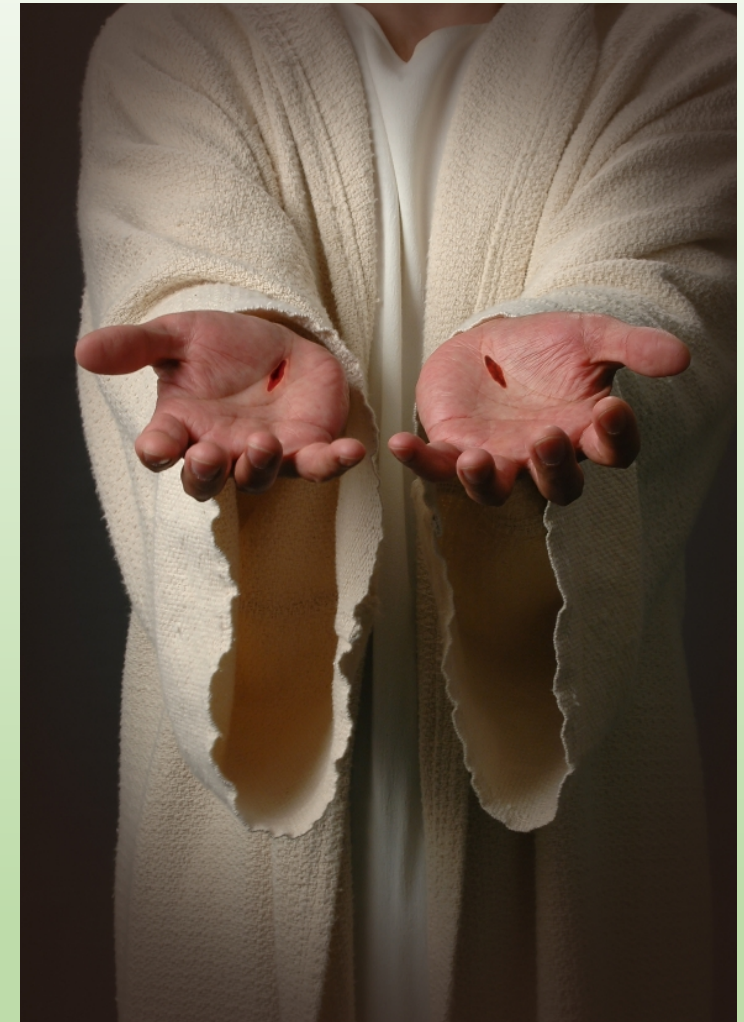
1. The first step to embrace Jesus' teaching is to renounce to our own way of living
"Repent"



"I truly wish with all my heart that universal salvation were true. But to pretend that people are not sinful and in need of salvation would be as cruel and deceptive as pretending that somebody was healthy even though you knew that he had a fatal disease for which you knew the cure."
William Lane Craig



"My brother, the Spirit invites you today.
Come with your whole heart to Jesus.
Repent of your sins, make confession to
God, forsake all iniquity, and you may
appropriate to yourself all His promises.
"Look unto me, and be ye saved" (Isa.
45:22) is His gracious invitation."
Ellen G. White, Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 634.



"Low self-esteem causes me to believe that I have so little worth that my response does not matter. With repentance, however, I understand that being worth so much to God is why my response is so important. Repentance is remedial work to mend our minds and hearts, which get bent by sin."

John Ortberg Jr., *The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You*



2. The baptism is the death to self and the resurrection to a new life in Jesus

"And let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ"



"Jesus said, 'Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' There are no exceptions. Baptism is a necessary ordinance."
Gordon B. Hinckley



“The minister of the Gospel is not baptizing people to essentially increase the number of his members. He is simply obeying to Jesus’ order, allowing to the candidates to reconcile themselves with God, to receive the power of the Holy Spirit, and to become blessings to others according to the promises of the Bible. The membership of the church is just the consequence of the reconciliation with God. Those who are reconciled with Him are automatically reconciled with all His children. And they create the community of believers, preparing themselves to spend eternity together in God’s presence” (DS)



“Under the leadership of religious professionals, modern worship has become passive—listening to a message and singing some songs. Seldom is there a call to service or an invitation to trust Christ. Baptisms take place inside the church where it is safe and comfortable rather than in public where there is opportunity to give witness to the saving grace of Christ. The great needs of society are left to para-church groups, government agencies, and other social service organizations. All the while the church is losing its muscle tone, its biceps are becoming loose and flabby and its belly is becoming round and soft. Not a pretty picture for one who once was toned and buff—a lean, mean fighting machine.”

Craig Olson, Writer. From his book *The Casual Christian*.

3. The relief of all burdens, of all sins, of all wrongdoings is the most important consequence of our commitment to Jesus Christ

“For the remission of sins”



“Forgiveness is the divine miracle of grace. The cost to God was the Cross of Christ. To forgive sin, while remaining a holy God, this price had to be paid. Never accept a view of the fatherhood of God if it blots out the atonement. The revealed truth of God is that without the atonement He cannot forgive— He would contradict His nature if He did. The only way we can be forgiven is by being brought back to God through the atonement of the Cross. God’s forgiveness is possible only in the supernatural realm.”

Oswald Chambers

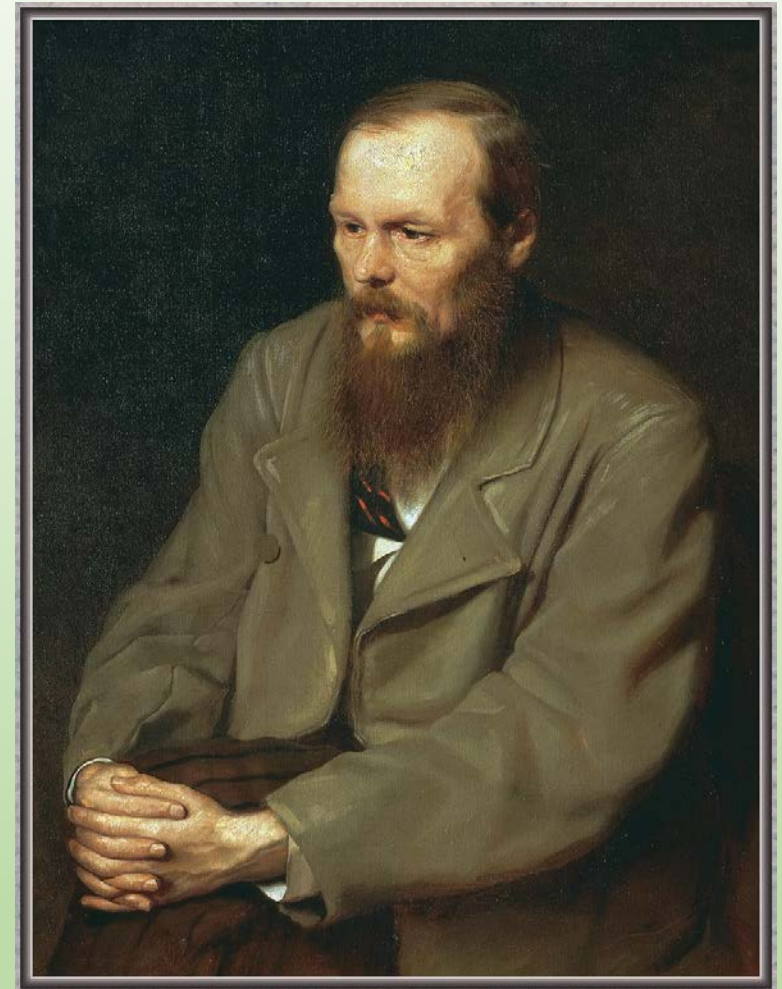


"To me, forgiveness
is the cornerstone
of healing."
Sylvia Fraser



“One of the things that Dostoevsky talks about is that no character is too high to fall and no character is too low to be redeemed. 'Crime and Punishment' began with a person going out and consciously becoming a cold-blooded murderer, and it took 800 pages and an epilogue before the person finally asked for forgiveness.”

Jeffrey Bell



4. The Holy Spirit comes
as a gift to those who
forgiven and resurrected.
"And you shall receive the gift of
the Holy Spirit"



"I used to tell young preachers, in order to preach you've got to have the power of God on your life. Now I tell them, in order to tie your shoes you've got to have the power of God on your life."

Paul Washer



“Those in whom the Spirit comes to live are God's new Temple. They are, individually and corporately, places where heaven and earth meet.”
N.T. Wright, Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense



"The Holy Spirit doesn't need to equip you for what you're not going to do, so if you're in rebellion against Jesus and refusing His right to be Lord, He doesn't need to send the Holy Spirit to equip you for service. And, tragically, you miss out on the joy that He brings. So let the Holy Spirit deal with anything that's keeping you from obeying Christ."
Henry T. Blackaby



5. The Good News is a universal promise given to all generations and every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.

"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."



“The idea of preaching the gospel to all nations alike, regardless of nationality, of internal divisions as to rank and color, complexion and religion, constituted the beginning of a new era in history. You cannot preach the gospel in its purity over the world, without proclaiming the doctrine of civil and religious liberty,— without overthrowing the barriers reared between nations and clans and classes of men,— without ultimately undermining the thrones of despots, and breaking off the shackles of slavery, — without making men everywhere free.”
Albert Barnes, 1798 - 1870.



“We don’t have to ask what the will of God is; he has made it clear. He wants his people to provide for the poor, to value the unborn, to care for orphans and widows, to rescue people from slavery, to defend marriage, to war against sexual immorality in all its forms in every area of our lives, to love our neighbors as ourselves regardless of their ethnicity, to practice faith regardless of the risk, and to proclaim the gospel to all nations. Of these things we are sure.”
David Platt, *Counter Culture*.



“Like Jesus we must be intentional about entering into people’s world. Only then can we share the Gospel. Consider these questions: in the past, how often have you gone up to talk to someone from another culture who visited your church? When checking out at a grocery store, do you feel uncomfortable (and maybe avoid) getting in line behind someone from another culture? When you travel by air, do you feel uneasy about sitting next to someone who looks different from you? If a ‘foreigner’ and his or her family have moved into your neighborhood, how do you feel about it? Just as God is multicultural in nature, Jesus is a multicultural Saviour.”
Rajendra Pillai, Reaching the world in our backyard, p. 18.

V. Conclusion



“The commission given to the disciples is given also to us. Today, as then, a crucified and risen Saviour is to be uplifted before those who are without God and without hope in the world. The Lord calls for pastors, teachers, and evangelists. From door to door His servants are to proclaim the message of salvation. To every nation, kindred, tongue, and people the tidings of pardon through Christ are to be carried. Not with tame, lifeless utterances is the message to be given, but with clear, decided, stirring utterances. Hundreds are waiting for the warning to escape for their lives. The world needs to see in Christians an evidence of the power of Christianity. Not merely in a few places, but throughout the world, messages of mercy are needed.”

Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers*, p. 29.

"I thank God that the gospel is to be preached to every creature. There is no man so far gone, but the grace of God can reach him; no man so desperate, but He can forgive him."

D. L. Moody.



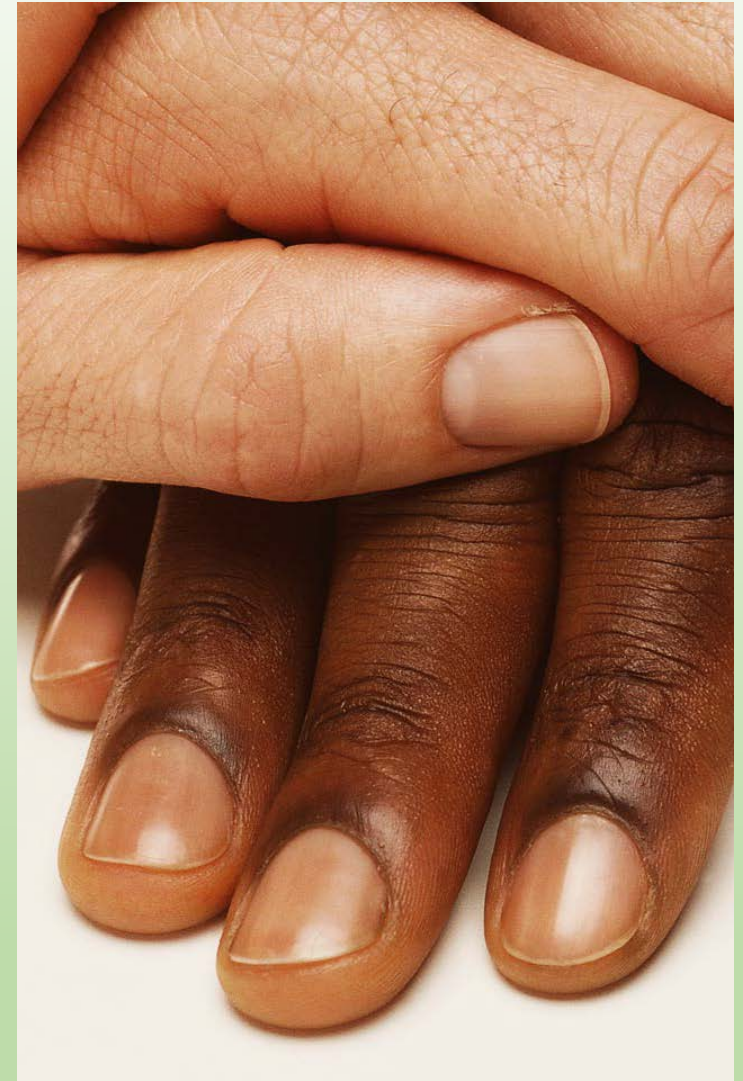
"The world needs to see Christians burning, not with self-righteous fury at the sliding morals in our country, but with passion for God."

Kevin DeYoung



"The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian."

Ellen G. White, The Ministry of Healing, p. 470.



Peter and the Gentiles

Acts 2: 38. 39.

