

OPEN-AIR MEETINGS - WITNESSING

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We are reading a couple of original First Century Gospel Church Pamphlet/Tract messages that have been referenced in the Church's 100 year history here in this country. Also, many copies have been sent to our Church branches in West Africa (or other places and locations), over the past 90 plus years, (on the subjects of Open Air Meetings and Witnessing to others around us in this world), and the Scripture-based position and opinion of the F.C.G. Church has always taken in that regard.

F.C.G. CHURCH PAMPHLET #2-ORIGINAL “OPEN-AIR MEETINGS”– “WITNESSING”

During the time when Jesus was here on earth (of the thousands of His followers, He chose and appointed a few as Disciples), and, sent out those (His Disciples) to preach the Word (of God's Salvation Plan for mankind). One reason was, because THERE WAS NO BIBLE THEN. We NOW have a Bible that contains a full volume of Truth.

However, Jesus did command for all of us to be a 'light' to shine via one's actions and decisions, for others around us to see and to follow in their life. That is a calling from Jesus, for each one of us to be a Christian 'light', and so, light the 'Pathway of Christ' for others.

In [Mark 13:10](#) it says that the 'end of the age' will come when the Gospel is published among all nations. The Bible (the most translated book in the world), has been published in every nation that we know of, and in over 1000 languages. So, the Holy Spirit must now work in getting people to accept what the Bible teaches.

We firmly believe that if there is anyone who is seeking the real truth, God (through His Holy Spirit) will reach them some way or another.

We can refer to the case of Saul in the 9th chapter of Acts. God convicted him in an instant, and no one was further away from the Truth and God's Word than he was. He even held the coats of those people who were stoning Stephen to death. Then while he was on the way to Damascus, to cause more trouble to God's people, he was struck down by a bright light.

From that time on Paul was a changed person, and his only desire was to do God's will and follow His will completely. When we read his (Paul's) writings, we can see that his conviction was genuine, for he gave us some of the most treasured truths in the Bible.

With this example in mind, you can see that God has many, many ways of bringing someone to repentance, when He sees that they are willing to follow His order and plan.

Many religious organizations (and individuals themselves), believe that they should preach/witness for Christ, which, in reality would be trying to spread the Gospel to all people in all corners of the world. The Church has firmly believed that if a person is not convicted by the Holy Spirit of God (as Jesus said) they will amount to nothing in the Christian life.

Furthermore, not one person who wanted 'spiritual light' ever failed to receive it. Even the heathen and other people who do not know the Bible, and may have never heard even one sermon, have no excuse. In [Psalm 19:1-4](#) the writer says that "The Heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

Paul said the same thing in [Romans 1:\(19-20\)](#). "God is angry: because what may be known about Him is plain to their inmost consciousness; for He Himself has made it plain to them. For, from the very creation of the world, His invisible perfections—namely His eternal power and divine nature—have been rendered intelligible and clearly visible by His works, so that these men are without excuse."

This shows us that no honest soul ever perished through ignorance. Instead of anyone trying to push ahead and seeking new converts by all and every method, they should concentrate on their own 'spiritual growth and development.'

Human efforts in Christian work are fatal. If anyone has no more than scratched the surface where the Truth is concerned, they will be like the first, second, and third classes whom Jesus described in His 'parable of the sower'. The kind of people that God wants are those who hear the teaching with an honest heart and bring forth fruit with patience. *God is looking for 'quality Christians'!*

We could reach hundreds and thousands of people by means of the radio (and television and many other video-based platforms), but, of course, we would not be allowed to broadcast such a clean-cut teaching if we wanted to do so. But still, we would not consider it the best thing. In (the Church's) opinion it would be on the same order as open-air meetings- reaching large numbers of people, -but accomplishing no permanent good.

There are so few persons who will make the grade, or, as Jesus said, "get through the straight gate, which leads unto life," and that only the Holy Spirit can search out and find those "extremely few," and "bring them to a knowledge of the Truth". All other methods do not amount to anything more than 'hitting the air' as far as any lasting results are concerned.

Jesus tells us (Matt.5:16), to— "Let your light so shine before men that they may SEE your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

So rather than trying to bring people into the Truth by self-efforts, it would be far more profitable for us to live a truly Scriptural life personally, thus, setting an example for others to see and follow as Jesus said.

When we try to force our views on others (even though it is the Truth), it will not do any good if that person was not ready to accept it. The best thing we can do for anyone (and this would include a member of our family, a relative or a friend), is to remember them in prayer, asking God that if He sees the least chance of them

getting straightened out in their life that He will work just as fast as He can in bringing this about.

So, you can see that the stand we have taken in the Work here. is not to use the least human effort in trying to convert, or bring back, anyone to the Truth - rather we place them in God's capable hands to do the work of conviction that is necessary.

As we said before, the best thing we can do for anyone, no matter what part of the world they live, is to pray for them, asking God if there is the least chance for them receiving eternal life, that He will work with them and prepare them for His heavenly kingdom. We have promises given us in [Matthew 19:26](#); [Luke 1:37 and 18:27](#), and [Mark 10:27](#) telling us that nothing is impossible with God.

In each one of our lives there is a great work to be done, so it is important that we concentrate on getting ourselves in perfect line in our personal lives, and that of our family and other members under our care and keeping, rather than worrying about the vast majority of people in all parts of the world.

PAMPHLET #2-RV WITNESSING (November 1995)

THE FIRST-CENTURY GOSPEL CHURCH'S STAND ON PUBLIC PREACHING (is that)

The Church does not believe in sending people to the various countries as missionaries, for one must be very careful in such ventures because of the use of human efforts (which can be fatal, in 'Christian work').

The use of human or self-efforts is the root or the foundation of all other sin or sins that have ever been committed. This is the same sin that Adam committed--and that is to try to accomplish something by our own ability and plan, or, to attempt to influence another before they are ready to accept the full Truth of God.

No doubt there is political and religious oppression in many countries, but a genuine Christian should not be overly concerned about this.

Rather, those in the real truth should concentrate on their own personal life and that of their family rather than worrying over political leaders and people around the globe. The best and only Scriptural plan to follow in this matter is to pray for those in authority as we are told in 1 Timothy 2:1-4.

A person will be fortunate indeed, if they (as an individual) are truly prepared for Eternal Life. For a Christian to be overly concerned and to worry about people all over the world not being saved, they would only be harming themselves and could seriously jeopardize their hopes of making Eternal Life.

Unfortunately, there are millions of people heading for the Lake of Fire, but we as true and genuine Christians cannot save them by human efforts or by our own plans and methods. **"No one can come to me except the Father draw them to me."** (John 6:44) Nor should we unnecessarily worry ourselves about this situation, since God is in control of all aspects of life, and, if He sees any possibility of a person repenting and coming to know Christ as their personal Savior, He will give them the opportunity to get in touch with a church that gives His full Truth. [*God tells us in His Word, that He wants no soul to perish, but that all should repent.*]

The only Scriptural plan to follow is to pray for them--asking God to bring them in touch with His Truth. Only God, through His Holy Spirit, can convict any person. Any other way or method would not bring any positive or lasting results, because human self-efforts would be used.

People all over the world believe that if they accept Jesus Christ as their personal savior, attend church services, and become a member of it, live a good outward moral life, they will be ready for Heaven. But the actual fact is, they have only scratched the surface, because for a person to be ready for Eternal Life, they often need a lifetime of teaching and training from God before they would be ready, and, even then, each individual truly desiring to follow God's plan, will be mighty fortunate if they are in readiness for Heaven.

The Apostle Peter said in his first epistle, (1 Pet.4: 18), "If 'righteous' scarcely 'be saved', where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

The position The First-Century Gospel Church has taken (regarding giving the Gospel to those outside our church membership) is to send literature to anyone requesting or showing interest in it. We do not attempt to force the Truth or literature on anyone. It is the Holy Spirit's work to convict people and bring them in touch with the true Gospel.

We steadfastly believe (and have experienced) that anyone who is really sincere in wanting the real Truth, God will see that they get in touch with it in His way and time. To follow any other course of action would not bring any positive or lasting results.

If a person is not brought to repentance through the Lord's work and prompting, they will not progress properly in the true Christian life, because they supposedly accepted Jesus as their Savior only through someone telling them to, and not because of a genuine conviction and repentance from the Holy Spirit (start right in true Christian life).

It cannot be emphasized too much that the use of human-efforts is the worst type of sin. And in most cases, those who witness for Christ and act as missionaries to try and bring people to Christ (prior to those people being made ready by God to accept His Truth, they are using human efforts. [*We cannot run ahead of the Holy Spirit in Christian work* (nor in other things and situations), as Jesus said, "**no one can come to me except the Father draw them to Me**".] To use human self-efforts in Christian work is a serious sin, because the fate and destiny of 'precious souls' is directly involved.

The Bible tells us that only a very few people (taking the world population as a whole) will be serving and trusting God in the true Bible way. Jesus said in (Luke 18:8) "**Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?**"

Just taking Jesus as one's personal Savior is only the beginning and in itself will not adequately prepare nor take a person to Heaven. There is a great spiritual work to be

done in every life. The true 'Christian life' is not learned in one day--rather, it is a life-long process. It takes many years of teaching and training from God before we are ready for His Heavenly Kingdom.

A true believer must meet every circumstance that arises in their life as the Scriptures direct. The fact is, our whole life and attitude must be changed, because when we first come to God, we are exactly opposite to what we should be. We must become fully Christlike in every part of our life--how we act, how we talk, how we meet our fellow Christians, and those we come in contact with--in fact, our every mannerism is to be exactly like Jesus' if we ever expect to inherit Eternal Life.

The church does not use the medium of radio and television [and we could add online platforms in this day and age, with many social media platforms such as You-tube and other broadcasting and video-sharing platforms, that are so commonly and widely used by millions of people of the world], [many of which are video-shared recordings of 'outward worshiping events' to be observed by others.] (Many of those who are witnessing today, are effective in getting their listeners (or those watching) to respond emotionally (using clapping, shouting, raising of hands, and other outward activities that would seem to make a person "feel more righteous".) *These would be human plans devised by man, to try to get people to repent and accept Christ, instead of letting God do the work of conviction that is needed in every life (which only God can do for us), for Jesus told us that only His Father in Heaven could **draw or bring others to Him**. Jesus called those hypocrites, who worshiped "on street-corners to be observed by men" (he said).*

So, we have people who (as Jesus said) "**honor Me with their lips**". (As this past Sunday morning's message made note) "They know the vocabulary of a Christian but have not been changed by the power of the Gospel." And, that they may say "He is risen" on Sunday, and 'still live by self-life on Monday'.)

[As has been said in previous messages "if something is widely accepted by the world, you can be sure that Satan's cloven foot is hidden in

that."] Only God knows the heart of each one of us, and it is He alone who is to bring a person to conviction. The world (in general) is using human efforts in trying to get people to come to Christ, but these methods have failed. (Romans 12:2) "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Instead, many people today (seeming to feel more outwardly righteous) are thinking that they are 'packed up and ready for Heaven', but in reality, are heading for the lake of fire, where the trouble, torment, and anguish will be far beyond any they have ever experienced here, and it will last for an eternity.

In summation, the Church's stand on witnessing is to not use any human self-efforts, either in word or deed (nor outward religious works), and instead, to place the whole matter into God's hands to control, and to convict and guide 'precious souls' to repentance. (Heb.12:28-29) "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."

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