

THE GIFT OF E V A N G E L I S M - A SPEAKING GIFT

Text Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; II Tim. 4:5

EXPLANATION

I. WHAT WAS INVOLVED IN THIS GIFT

- A. This gift involved the God-given ability to preach the gospel and draw unsaved folks to make decisions for Christ and become a part of the church.
- B. This gift differs from the missionary gift in that it does not involve adapting or relating to other cultures or church planting. It differs from the gift of prophecy or preaching in that it centers on presenting the claims of Christ and results in church growth rather than leading and instructing believers.

EXERCISE

II. HOW THIS GIFT WAS EXERCISED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. This gift of evangelism was used by those who had it to spread the gospel and win others to Christ in a variety of ways.
 - 1. Philip who was one of the seven (Acts 6:5; 21:8) spread the gospel to the Samaritans (Acts 8:5) but he also went to one single individual in the desert (Acts 8:26,27).
 - 2. Paul exercising the gift won a woman down by the river (Acts 16:14) and also a man in jail (Acts 16:31,32).
 - 3. Other times those with this gift won people in the

market places, along the highway, and in their homes.

- B. This gift is only mentioned three times in the N.T. and it no doubt refers to the work that is done by a God-called and God-appointed individual (Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; II Tim. 4:5). However from II Tim. 4:5 we conclude that others are to be involved in the same work that an evangelist is called to do. But this gift is given to one who is specifically singled out and sent by the Holy Spirit to win souls and add to the church.

- C. This gift apparently bridged the gap between what the apostles and prophets were called to do and that which the pastors were called to do (Eph. 4:12). The apostles were missionaries who planted churches. The prophets and pastors led and instructed those in the church. The evangelists on the other hand were used of the Lord to bring others into the church.

EXTENT

III. HOW THIS GIFT OPERATES AND APPLIES TO INDIVIDUALS IN OUR DAY

- A. First of all if an individual has the gift of evangelism he will receive a personal call from the Lord to preach. Then as he begins to exercise that gift and calling, he will discover whether or not he has the gift of evangelism. Usually evangelists make poor pastors. Pastors on the other hand are not usually suited to be evangelists. However an individual may possess both gifts and many times those with gift of evangelism must first learn the problems of the pastorate in order to help a pastor and his people.

- B. Based upon the fact that Philip was one of the seven men called to serve in Acts 6 some surmise that these were deacons and that Philip was simply a deacon or servant. But it should be noted that while Philip served to help in that particular instance, he was also called to preach (Acts 8:5)

and as he preached he won many to Christ which were added to the church. So it follows that Philip was not only called to preach but called to be an evangelist as well (Acts 8:6)

C. A person called to preach and given the gift of evangelism will manifest it in several ways:

1. He will have a consuming passion for souls.
2. He will have a clear understanding of the gospel message and his message will be Christ-centered.
3. He will be able to present the gospel very clearly to others.
4. He will be able to present the gospel in power and see spiritual results.
5. He will have an overwhelming amount of joy when others are saved.
6. He will be able to use his gift publicly (Samaria) and privately (Ethiopian).

ERROR

IV. WHAT IS OFTENTIMES MISAPPLIED CONCERNING THE GIFT OF EVANGELISM

- A. Some suppose they have no responsibility to witness to others and to try to win them to Christ since they don't possess this particular gift. Notice it is the responsibility of all believers to witness (Acts 1:8).
- B. Some suppose winning someone to Christ is beyond their realm of possibility. Timothy may not have possessed this gift but Paul exhorted him to do the work of an evangelist (II Tim. 4:5). It should be noted also what the Lord Jesus

said in Mark 1:17 ... Andrew did the work of an evangelist (Jn. 1:41). So did the woman mentioned in Jn. 4:29,30.