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EVANGELISM IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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Rocket-driven by a living, inward, soul-deep impulsion, away the apostles went, 'Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.' Divine expulsion delivered them from every love-contrary notion, divine impulsion thrust them forth to their work, divine compulsion permitted no restraint, and divine propulsion kept them surging "full steam ahead." Methods were neither concern, problem, nor embarrassment; they "became all things to all men, that by all means they might save some." This salvation, this power, this glory within, clambering for release, they knew no better than to release in every possible way. Their Lord had declared, "The Holy Spirit shall come; ye shall have power; ye shall be witnesses; your field is the world; and behold. I give you power over all the power of the enemy." That was promise and charter and program and contract. Christ was the source, the Holy Spirit the means, the world the objective; they were but channels of release, and they took out the stop-logs and let the floodtide roll.

The flood was released in streams of holy living. This is more important than many professors of religion realize. Enemies might contradict their message, but they had to admit that these hitherto not-overly-religious fisher-folk "had been with Jesus." Holy lives could not be argued down.

It was released in unceasing activity. "They were all at it and always at it." Scattered by persecution, their laymen "went everywhere telling the story." Visitors to Jewish Pentecost took the Christian Pentecost and its meaning home with them; Jews carried it to Jews; Grecians carried it to Grecians, taking it to Antioch, Phenice, Cyprus and Cyrene. The home-going converts, just through the red-hot revival with veteran campaigners in Jerusalem, who "daily in the temple, and from house to house, ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ," had learned their lessons well.

It was released in mighty, effectual praying. They did not labor alone. They had no pull with the government, but they had a tremendous pull with heaven. They tarried, they prayed, the blessing came; they kept their blessing fresh upon them by praying; they prayed when their enemies threatened; they prayed their fellow Christians out of jail; they prayed their deacons into office; they prayed their converts out in experience; they prayed missionaries into the field; and as they went forth, they followed them with prevailing prayers.

When the Jerusalem revival kept feast-attenders there beyond the stretch of their

funds, this new power found release in most unselfish liberality. They pooled their possessions and funds and shared alike. The Holy Spirit had complete charge of the situation, and the cause never lacked for means.

When revival heat scorched enemies into persecuting activity, this power was released in marvelous fortitude. Of itself this was a testimony mightily felt by all. Neither tongue, nor lash, nor bonds, nor prison, not even death could daunt these Spirit-filled men and women. "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard," declared Peter to the Sanhedrin. And when the apostles walked out, every member of the Sanhedrin knew that it lacked the power to silence these witnesses. Jesus had said, "Men will lay hands on you and persecute you, handing you over to synagogues and prisons; you will be dragged before kings and governors for the sake of my name. That will turn out an opportunity for you to bear witness. So resolve to yourselves that you will not rehearse your defense beforehand, for I will give you words and wisdom that not one of your opponents will be able to meet or refute" (Luke 21:12-15—Moffat). Such things were now on them, and coming thicker and faster. But the promise held; the mighty words and more than human wisdom were given them; and with them walked, always, though unseen, yet consciously realized, a presence. Comforted and strengthened, they could say, "We will not fear what man can do unto us."

And they were always witnessing. Locked doors swung open to public places the minute the power fell on them; from then until and unto death, their testimony kept ringing out. They preached it in sermon, told it in synagogue, testified it in homes, witnessed on stairways, in chariots, around camp fires, on shipboard, greeted their arrestors with testimony, related it as evidence, made it their defense, went to jail rather than squelch it, sang it at midnight, converted jailors with it, prayed for their murderers because of it, bowed their heads in death in the strength of it, and turned persecutors into preachers by the very triumph of their homegoing.

I am afraid that Satan has deceived us into believing that Sunday morning love feast is the witnessing of Acts 1:8. Acts 1:8 may include that, but it goes infinitely beyond. The Acts itself is comment upon its key verse. The witnessing of the apostles is the witnessing of Acts 1:8. They Mrs Fred Brown, Dec the devil. If he ignored them, they spread the gospel; if he arrested them, they told their captors; if he imprisoned them, they converted their jailors; if he killed them, they got hold, even in death, of their murderers

and the onlookers. "Power over all the power of the enemy"? That was it! That was it!

Well, I profess to have it; but after studying this together with you, methinks the better way to profess it is to prove one has it. "Ye shall be witnesses."

"Lord, lay some soul upon my heart,
And love that soul through me;
And may I always do my part
To win that soul for Thee."

—Free Methodist

A STRANGE PASSWORD

A True Incident

He had always been so keen on foreign languages and, as his father had business interests on the Continent, Dennis Millbank was fortunate in having many opportunities of studying, at first hand, both French and German. He spent many holidays in Normandy and in the Black Forest, and so, even before he left school to go up to Oxford, he could speak both languages fluently.

After only a year at college the war started, and Dennis in a very short time was in the R. A. F., and soon was doing his preliminary training.

During the first few weeks of operational flying in the early spring of 1940 life seemed rather dull and Dennis never even sighted an enemy plane. After a short time, however, he was transferred to an advance flying base in France, and almost at once things began to warm up. In fact, he had hardly settled down to the new place when the German attack on Holland and Belgium developed and life began to be exciting. There was little rest for anyone during those hectic days, and the thunder of the guns, which at first had seemed only like a distant storm, grew ominously nearer.

Dennis was a keen Christian, and even during those difficult days he still found time for a few quiet moments with his Bible before the grim business of the day started. One morning, while waiting for the mist to clear so that the first squadron could get away, he opened his Bible and started reading Psalm 91. He found himself reading the first verse over and over again. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." With war and death so much in evidence around, this word came with great power to Dennis, and the words were foremost in his mind as he took off on the first patrol.

It was during his fourth flight of the day that Dennis became separated from his squadron in a terrible dog-fight, and in a matter of seconds, as he dangled from his para-

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