

## Contagious Faith

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Good news is contagious and “word of mouth” is widely recognized in marketing as the most powerful way to spread good news. Ask anyone who has bought or sold Mary Kay cosmetics, Pampered Chef housewares, or Ambit energy, to name a few popular relationship marketing brands.

The Good News of the Gospel is also contagious and has seen explosive growth on many occasions since the time of Jesus. Three thousand were added to the number of believers on the first Pentecost after the Crucifixion (*Acts 2:40*), a 2500% increase over the 120 disciples who huddled in the Upper Room that portentous morning. Not long afterward, another 5000 were added (*Acts 4:4*). Today, global evangelist Reinhard Bonnke (Christ for All Nations) claims more than 55 million decisions for Christ as a result of his evangelistic meetings! Much of his work has been in developing nations, principally Africa, where word of mouth is a primary form of communication.

What happened on Pentecost to make the Gospel so contagious? For one, the disciples had had time to process the meaning of the cross. Most of them had fearfully abandoned Jesus at Gethsemane, but three days later word that the Lord had risen spread like wildfire. Their anguish and confusion was replaced by wonderment and joy. Jesus had done exactly what He said He would do (*Matt 12:4, 27:63, Mk 8:31, John 2:19*). Without the Resurrection, we would not be talking about the Cross today. Have you taken time to truly comprehend the power of the Resurrection? “If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (*Rom 8:11*).

After the Cross, the Disciples had heard the word of God explained by the risen Christ. He appeared on several occasions to explicate the Scriptures so that His followers could comprehend how His death and Resurrection fulfilled what the prophets had foretold (*Luke 24:25-27, 44-49*). Have you studied the prophets and gotten clear in your mind that Jesus is the Seed promised to Eve at the very Beginning (*Gen 3:15*), the Prophet like Moses (*Deut 18:14*), the Rod that came forth from Jesse (*Isaiah 11:1*), the suffering Messiah of *Isaiah 53*? The power of your faith will increase markedly when you know these things!

Before Pentecost, the Disciples obeyed Jesus' command to tarry in Jerusalem and wait until they received power from on High (*Luke 24:49*). For ten days they gathered and waited, being of one accord with each other (*Acts 1:12-14*). To “tarry in Jerusalem” means to abide in a holy place, a place set apart, and wait for the Spirit of the Lord to act. Have you taken the time to tarry seriously for the Lord?

On Pentecost, the Disciples prayed through the night. The Bible does not say this, but it was the Jewish custom at the time of Jesus, and all his first Disciples were Jews. They would have most likely read the Book of Ruth, which speaks of grain harvests and Ruth, the Gentile, coming alongside the people of God. What a perfect picture of the harvest of souls that ensued when Peter came under the power of the Holy Spirit and people from “every nation” (*Acts 2:5*) heard the Good News that day. Have you ever prayed through the night? Have you gathered with others to do so?

The contagion of Pentecost exploded into the streets of Jerusalem when the Disciples became “filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance” (*Acts 2:4*). Have you experienced the second Baptism of the Holy Spirit that is freely available to us today, just as it was to the first Disciples two thousand years ago? “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.” (*Hebrews 13:8*)

If you deepen your understanding of the Scriptures, if you tarry and pray with one accord with other Believers, if you earnestly desire the second baptism of the Holy Spirit, God will bless you. He is faithful! Your faith will become contagious, and, like the first Disciples, God will use you to do mighty exploits, such as sharing the Good News of the Gospel with a stranger this very day!