THE GREAT COMMISSION FEAR NO MORE

Early Church Growth

Lesson 1

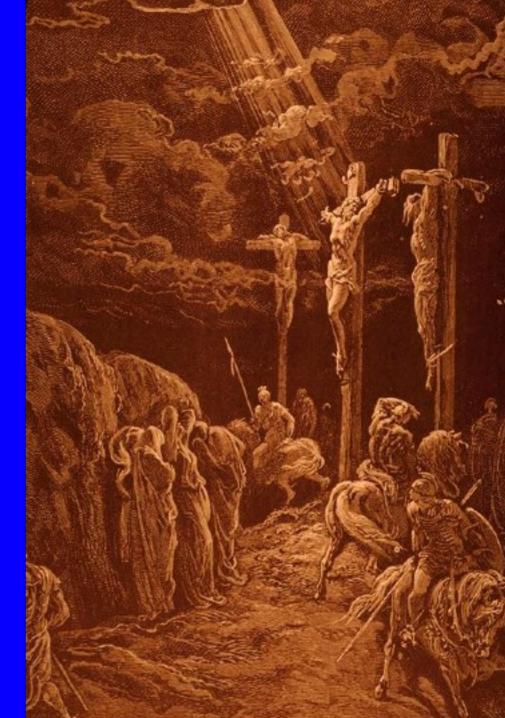
Biblical-Literacy.com

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Coming Attraction:

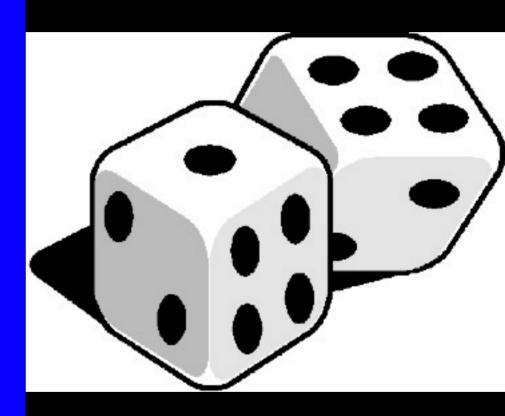
Two weeks of sharing Jesus without fear

At Calvary: a ragtag band of uneducated, unimportant fishermen in a backwater country



150 years later: A powerful movement and church that spanned the Roman Empire









Jesus' teaching in John 14-16

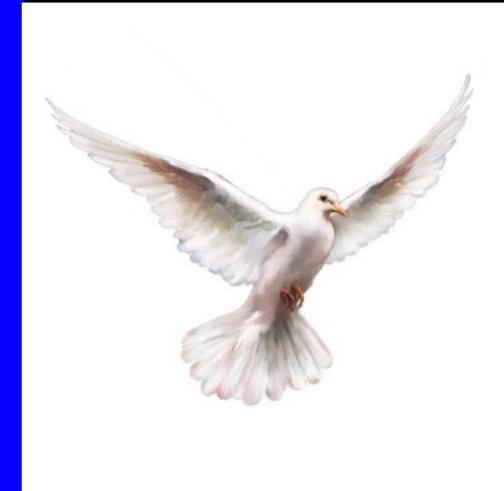


"The Spirit of truth ... He will testify about me." (John 15:26)



The Spirit will "convict the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment." (John 16:8)





"The Spirit of truth ... He will testify about me." (John 15:26)

"And you also must testify." (John 15:26)

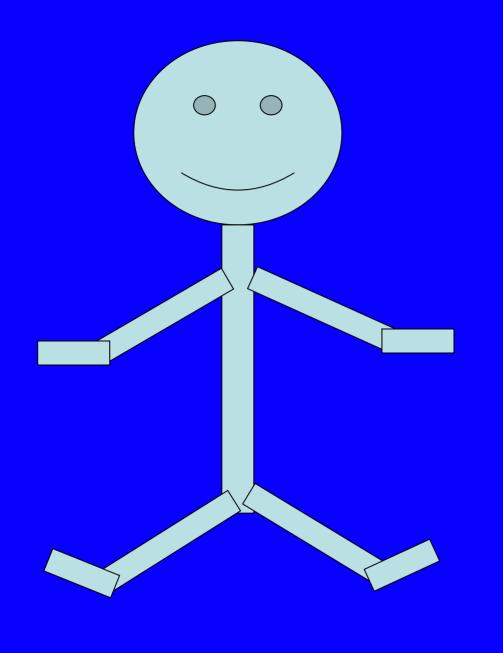


Evangelism is the work of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit does this work through Christians



"Go and make disciples of all nations" (Mt. 28:19)



The "body of Christ"

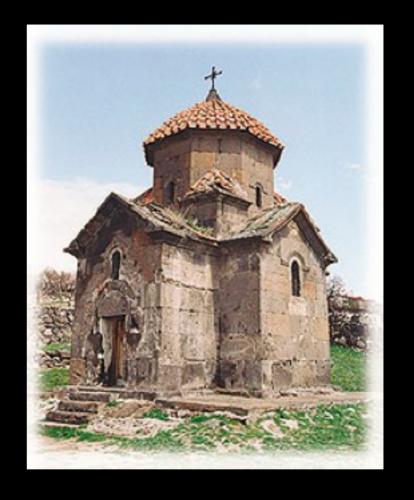
Each with a gift of the Holy Spirit for the "common good" (1 Cor. 12:7)



Popularity?



A great PR campaign?



Great looking buildings?

Only Jesus answers the deepest needs

Truth

Purpose

Peace

Hope

Why would someone in that era know that?

Only Jesus answers the deepest needs

Truth

Purpose

Peace

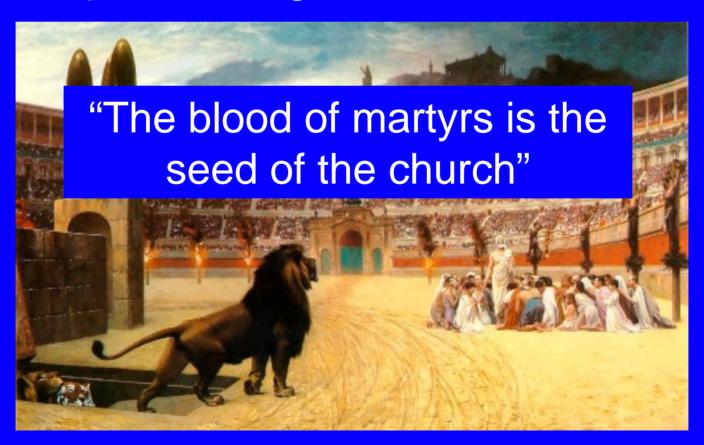
Hope

5 features of early Christians

- 1. Passion
- 2. Prayer
- 3. Partnership
- 4. Power
- 5. Preparation

Passion

An absolute conviction that Jesus had conquered the grave



Prayer

Consider the Didache: Teaching recitation of the Lord's prayer 3 times daily



The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in heaven as it is on earth. Give us this day, our daily bread and forgive us our debts (trespasses); as we forgive our debtors (those who trespass against us). And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen.

Our heavenly Father. You are holy in your person and your actions. We pray that your church will grow on earth and that it will finally be united with you in heaven. Please make sure we have the things we need today, including not just food, but forgiveness for our sins. Knowing your forgiveness, we also forgive those who have wronged us. Father, please protect us spiritually. We live for you. You are all powerful. You alone are worthy of our praise. Amen

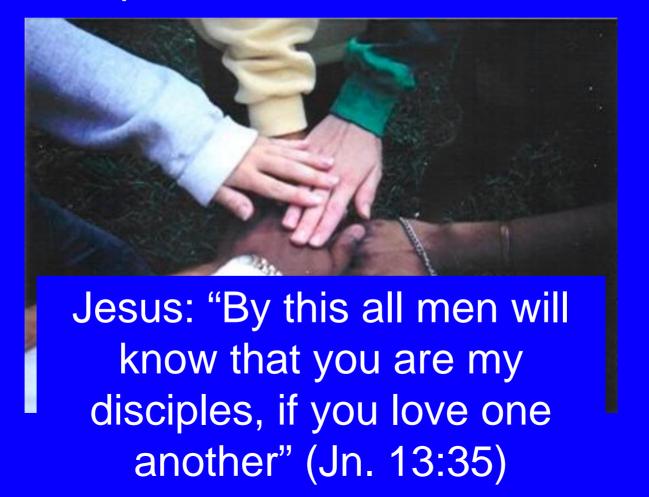
We are part of God's team; it is His work



We are part of God's team; it is His work



We are part of God's team; it is His work



We are part of God's team; it is His work



Henry Chadwick: "The practical application of charity [love] was probably the single most potent cause of Christian success"

We are part of God's team; it is His work



Care for poor

Care for widows

Care for orphans

We are part of God's team; it is His work

251:

Church staff (1 Bishop, 46
Presbyters, 7 deacons, subdeacons,
42 acolytes, 52 exorcists, readers,
doorkeepers)

Also: 1,500 widows and needy persons, all of whom were "fed by the grace and kindness of the Lord."

Power

REAL GREAT POWER!!!!







Power

REAL GREAT POWER!!!!







Power REAL GREAT POWER!!!!



Preparation

"Always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence." (1 Pet. 3:15)

Points for Home

Let's be people of:

- 1. Passion
- 2. Prayer
- 3. Partnership
- 4. Power
- 5. Preparation