



**Acts – Can I get a Witness?**  
**Wk. 9 The Vibrant Body Pt. 3 - ATTRACTIVE**  
**By Pastor Jody May 10/09/2022**

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**Acts 2:42-47 ESV**

**The Fellowship of the Believers**

<sup>42</sup> And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup> And **awe** came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup> And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> **praising God** and **having favor** with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

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**[INTRODUCTION]**

**Review Vibrant Body (displays what has gone into it).**

You have to be **DEVOTED – Devoted People reflect a Devoted God.** (v.42):

- Devoted to God's Word (Apostle's Teachings)
- Devoted to Fellowship (Day by Day in all things)
- Devoted to Breaking Bread (Community centered on Christ)
- Devoted to Prayers (Working with God, observing His will)

You will appear **RADICAL – Regenerate People are Generous People** (v.44-45)

- The heart is what separates keeps us from being generous: Mat 19:21-22.
- Unity is needed to develop generosity: <sup>44</sup> And all who believed **were together** and had **all things in common**.
- Benefits to being Generous: enriched in every way (2 Cor 19:11-12), the saints will glorify God (2 Cor 19:13-15), you will receive the benefit of prayers; **positive feedback loop** (2 Cor 19:14).



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This radicalness in one's life, ~~as a part of the Photo Mosaic which makes up the Body of the Church,~~ is what the HS uses to attract those called to the life, because to the elect it becomes **ATTRACTIVE**. Attractive in a way that makes other people ask, **"What did you do to get to this point?"** That is the key in disciple making btw a **spiritual attractiveness**, it is hard to make a disciple if what you are doing is not attractive to others. If there is nothing appealing in our lives about our faith, then we shouldn't be surprised when we have no one to disciple. Yet the church in Acts is called to be a witness for the great commission IS to MAKE DISCIPLES!

Today we want to talk about this third aspect if you will, of a Vibrant body, for it is through the Vibrant body that God calls people to join Him. Here's the main point today as we wrap up these past three weeks on the church as a Vibrant Witness:

**Point of the Day:**

**Evangelism is Propelled by the Attractiveness of the Gospel.**

Please take notice and take heart, I did not say Evangelism is based on how good you look (**Lev 13!?**). No, and evangelism is not even about how good you think you have to behave, although that is helpful. BUT what we will see today is that attractiveness comes from what God is doing, **TO and THROUGH** His people (**the church before and after pics**). Let me say it this way, you are not up to the task of becoming attractive that job is up to the Lord, and what's more it is His desire.

**Ephesians 5:25-27 ESV**

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, **as Christ** loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might **sanctify** her, having **cleansed** her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> so that he might **present** the **church** to himself in **splendor**, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Jesus is the one that is changing/sanctifying us, He's in charge, if you will, with our training, our spiritual growth. His desire is to present us in splendor (radiant/expensive) where no one can find a flaw. **WHY?** One day, there will be



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a presentation of us to this world and on that day, this body, will be like nothing the world has ever seen, you will have ultimate attraction.

**Revelation 21:9-11 ESV**  
**The New Jerusalem**

<sup>9</sup>Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the **Bride**, the wife of the Lamb.” <sup>10</sup>And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, <sup>11</sup>having the **glory of God**, its **radiance** like a most **rare jewel**, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

There will be a day where the best thing in this world, in this creation, is us! You will be the most attractive thing ever made. We have to be because, we are the reflection of Jesus’s glory. So, make no doubt, Jesus is about making us **attractive**, not in the flesh, but in our souls, and that soul is what is attractive to other people.

The Lord is the one that has a plan for how to do this because this is not a synergistic work, we don’t make ourselves beautiful, God is doing that! The weight of the change is on Him, Jesus is the one that does the work and the way in which He does this is by getting our attention on Him. **(My grandmother’s daunting beauty regimen)** The beauty care regimen that we have before us is simple if we but commit to it: we notice Jesus (Word), what He has done, what He is currently doing (Fellowship), and what will be one day, and that is what **inspires us** to change, that’s the regimen.

This change is already happening in you, you can’t stop it, once the Lord has decided you’re His, it begins. That’s why the majority of life is a struggle, it’s just going through God’s beauty regimen so that our family is attracted to Him though us. This morning, I want to focus in on the key thing in the text to help us understand how God likes to begin the process of making us attractive for evangelism.

**3 Marks of an Attractive Body. All brought to us by the sense of “AWE”:**



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**1. Rightful Responses to the Gospel will cause “AWE”.**

<sup>43</sup> And **awe** came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

φόβος (*phobos*). n. masc. **fear, terror**. Refers to the emotion elicited by a sense of alarm or danger or anticipation of a negative experience.<sup>1</sup> (**rollercoaster**)  
Luke uses this word in only one other place in his writings:

**Luke 5:26 ESV**

<sup>26</sup> And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with **awe**, saying, “We have seen extraordinary things today.”

Jesus had been healing here in Luke during the first part of His ministry on earth, and it was one of the first times Jesus uses the **Son of Man** title for the reason He does a thing.

**Luke 5:24 ESV**

<sup>24</sup> But that you may know that the **Son of Man** has authority on earth to **forgive sins**—he said to the man who was paralyzed—“I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home.”

Jesus is displaying to the people and the scribes that along with the power of God to do miracles, as the prophets, He has kingly authority, a divine authority, **whereby He can forgive sins**. No one ever has been able to do this, there have been people who can heal, but no one can take away the consequence of sin, EXCEPT GOD. The fact that He does the miracle means the Father must be ok with this man, and if He has the power to forgive, He also has the power to condemn, which gives Him the power to judge for God,

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<sup>1</sup>Custis, M. (2014). [Fear](#). D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press. - *Phobos* can have both positive and negative connotations. In Romans 13:3, it refers to a fear of governing authorities, but Paul notes that only those engaged in illegal acts need to fear the rulers. The disciples are overcome with fear, thinking that Jesus walking on the water is a ghost (Matt 14:26). The sight of the risen Christ overwhelms the Roman soldiers with fear (Matt 28:4). Elsewhere, *phobos* can indicate a sense of awe or amazement (Luke 1:65; 5:26), or apprehension at possible social or political reprisal (John 7:13; 19:38). In Acts 9:31, *phobos* is used for the fear of the Lord in a sense similar to the OT meaning of proper piety.



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so what He says goes. And it says the response to this realization put them in **AWE! (rollercoaster)**

These first converts in Acts, after devoting themselves to Christ, were now experiencing the **AWE** of who it was, they had decided to follow. The Apostles were performing miracles in Jesus' name, meaning Jesus is the one making decisions on who to heal and who not to heal. Again, they are observing His divine forbearance as their new king through His servants.

Divine **AWE** is the demonstration that you and I have found something worth our **attention**, that is worth our **commitment**, and that is worth our **obedience**. The **AWE** of the Gospel in this instance is the fact that the same God that saved you, that blessed you, is the same person that forgave you even knowing you were not worthy and that now **He calls you friend**. The one that forgives sin, that judges over you, is not someone you cannot know, but it is someone that rather knows you intimately.

There is an old saying, "Nothing attracts a crowd like a crowd". What God does in the lives of His people is to put them in **AWE**, drawing others unto Himself so that we may have the opportunity to share with them why we are in such **AWE**. My question for us as a church this morning is are people drawn to us by how we tell them how cool we are, or do we brag what makes us so special, OR is it because we can't stop telling others about Jesus and what makes HIM so special!

A sense of **AWE** is what gives the church her attractiveness because unlike the rest of the world we have decided, by grace, that **there is something outside ourselves that we want to give our attention to**. Our attractiveness for the sake of evangelizing is based on how well we all are attracted to Christ.

I knew I wanted to marry Heather Marie Malvinni because she was the first person that I ever wanted to sacrifice for. Whatever it was she was doing to me, it had caught my attention, it had made me want to leave other desires behind, and I wanted to tell others about her. And as strong as that initial attraction was though, it pales in comparison to the **AWE** I have about Jesus.



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The strength of His attraction is what keeps me with her, it keeps me rooted in my family, and it plants me in this church. And when you have a whole building full of people like that people will stop and stare at what has your attention your **AWE** and some will even want to join.

Is that the response we all are having to the gospel here? Are we constantly perplexed by the love and commitment of Christ to us? Are we constantly amazed at the magnitude of the work He is doing? If so, then look what that brings.

## **2. People in "AWE" Praise God and Bless Others.**

<sup>47</sup>praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

So, these converts now were living life everyday together, experiencing the teachings, the fellowship, and the public witness to prayers (miracles). The **AWE** was palpable. This **AWE** also does something else for the convert, it produces a sense of praise. Praise is a public declaration about a person, place, or thing (noun) based on the positive thoughts and feelings of the praisee/r. People praise what they love. Again, we go back to Luke to see the use of this word here in his previous gospel writings.

### **Luke 19:37 ESV**

<sup>37</sup>As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen,

The disciples praised God for what they had seen when they were with Him for they were in a perpetual state of **AWE**. Now the first converts were experiencing the same effect, this **AWE**: they had seen Jesus as the disciples had, they witnessed the miracles in His name, and now they were praising God for what they have seen. Family, make no mistake, it does not matter with the passing of time, when people truly see the Lord and for who He is the **AWE** that comes over them will produce a Praise in them that cannot be put out.



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On this date October 09, 2022 we are in between several martyr deaths and it would be good for the church to remember them for in their sacrificial deaths one can see the tremendous amount of **AWE** in their lives producing praise that would not be quieted in front of their accusers.

- On **October 06, 1536** we remember the death of **William Tyndale**, who was strangled and his body burned at the stake for his protest against the Catholic Church in printing the Bible into English. His last prayer was "Lord, open the King of England's eyes." The prayer was answered in part when three years later, in 1539, Henry VIII required every parish church in England to make a copy of the English Bible available to its parishioners.<sup>2</sup>
- On **October 16, 1555**, **Hugh Latimer** the Bishop of Worcester, and **Nicholas Ridley** the Bishop of London, along with **Thomas Cranmer** (March 21, 1556) also known as the Oxford Martyrs, we burned at the stake. Hugh was noted to have made his last words, 'Be of good cheer, Ridley; and play the man. We shall this day, by God's grace, light up such a candle in England, as, I trust, will never be put out.'<sup>3</sup>

**True Praise of God** is something that **cannot be doused** even by the fires of persecution for **AWE** of God dwarfs the **awe** of man.

What was more impactful about these men was not only the type of death they suffered but that they were loved by the people, they had favor with them. They spent time preaching to them in English, they worked to keep the Word in English and promoted community involvement around the church. The igniting of their body's produced a flame in the heart of English peasants that doused the reign of Bloody Mary and continued to usher in the freedoms we received from the Reformation.

In light of October being a Historically significant month in the life of the church let me go back even further and share with you a recount of the early church as she was finding favor with all people.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1501-1600/translator-william-tyndale-strangled-and-burned-11629961.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tudorsociety.com/16-october-1555-the-burnings-of-bishops-ridley-and-latimer/>





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(2nd Century Church) The Christians sacrificially cared for one another and cared for outsiders. A few years after Acts was written, a man named **Aristides** commented, actually he wrote an official apology, **to Emperor Hadrian in AD 125**, on the reasons for the spread of Christianity of which upon reading it seems he was a part of that movement as well.<sup>4</sup>

Further, if one or other of them have bondmen and bondwomen or children, through love towards them they persuade them to become Christians, and when they have done so, they call them brethren without distinction. They do not worship strange gods, and they go their way in all modesty and cheerfulness. Falsehood is not found among them; and they love one another, and from widows they do not turn away their esteem; and they deliver the orphan from him who treats him harshly. And he, who has, gives to him who has not, without boasting. And when they see a stranger, they take him in to their homes and rejoice over him as a very brother; for they do not call them brethren after the flesh, but brethren after the spirit and in God. And whenever one of their poor passes from the world, each one of them according to his ability gives heed to him and carefully sees to his burial. And if they hear that one of their number is imprisoned or afflicted on account of the name of their Messiah, all of them anxiously minister to his necessity, and if it is possible to redeem him they set him free. And if there is among them any that is poor and needy, and if they have no spare food, they fast two or three days in order to supply to the needy their lack of food. They observe the precepts of their Messiah with much care, living justly and soberly as the Lord their God commanded them. - Aristides

The attractiveness of the Gospel is that it changes people so that **they no longer are afraid of men**. The **AWE** of God is something that **produces the Praise of God**, and it **finds favor with all people**, because you are not afraid of the consequences any longer. Again, let me tell you the world is setting the church up right now. The more they try to strangle the gospel the prettier they are making it to those that are lost. And just as in the age of the first century church 2,000 years ago, and as in the age of the reformation over 500 years ago, our world is piling up the fuel that will be used for the next great

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/aristides-kay.html>





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awakening. For the power of the Gospel can never be diminished it can only be increased.

**3. God continually adds to the “AWE” of the Gospel.**

<sup>47</sup>praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord **added** to their number **day by day** those who were being **saved**.

The Lord is the one that adds the increase and it the Lord that does the saving. All throughout the book of Acts it is witnessed and attested to that the Lord is the one responsible for the increase in **AWE**.

**Acts 5:14 & 16 ESV**

<sup>14</sup> And **more than ever believers were** added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, <sup>16</sup> The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

**Acts 6:1&7 ESV**

**6** Now in these days when the disciples were **increasing in number**, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.

<sup>7</sup> And the word of God continued to increase, and the **number of the disciples** multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a **great many of the priests became obedient to the faith**

**Acts 9:31 ESV**

<sup>31</sup> So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the **fear** of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it **multiplied**.

**Acts 11:21&24 ESV**

<sup>21</sup> And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a **great number who believed** turned to the Lord. <sup>24</sup> for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a **great many people were added** to the Lord.



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**Acts 16:5 ESV**

<sup>5</sup>So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they **increased in numbers daily**.

The Gospel will never lose its' luster, the Gospel will never lose its' power, the gospel will never lose effectiveness because God is the one that is increasing the **AWE** by which He increases the numbers continually.

The plan has been the same for centuries. God brings the unconverted around those in **AWE**, where they witness radical devotion to God and those in the body and in turn it calls them to come and be a part of it. It's not about the programs, it's not about the building, it's all about Jesus in YOU! Main Point - **Evangelism is being propelled by the Attractiveness of the Gospel which is God's work being done in the church!**

**[CHALLENGE / APPLICATION]**

**Do we communicate our AWE?**

Are we a communicative people? Are we letting people know simple truths about our lives where God is changing us, where we are loving Him better, where we are desiring to give up more, where He is getting us to do things we don't like to do? I know right now communication with others may not be on the top of your list especially when it seems people can be so mean, but that is exactly the best time to do it!

We communicate our **AWE** of God by how we stand for His Truth in front of others. Now for each of us in here, you all have ways in which you life to talk, my simple challenge for you is in your spheres are you communicating your **AWE** of God or are you demonstrating your **AWE** of man?

**Do we communicate our praise?**

When we talk to people who are complaining about life, I know this may sound weird but are you telling them what you are rejoicing about? It sounds a little harsh doesn't it in light of this culture's current state of mental stress.



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- I can't believe what's happening in politics **vs.** I thank God is in control of all that as His will is done.
- I can't believe how inflation is impacting me **vs.** I know I had a chance to bless these people with generosity it brought a smile to my face and blessed God.
- I can't believe how alone I feel right now **vs.** I am so thankful I have my church family, would you like to come with me?

**Do we communicate our care?**

In this world I see a lot of Christians who are making loud statements about this politician, this headline, this social influencer, etc.... But where we are called to be the loudest is in how we live with each other for this is the way that God attracts people to Himself.

- Are you spending as much time with people in this church as you do on your phone trying to discover something to keep you busy? Let's spend our time building each other up.
- Are we busying ourselves to include the people in this building into our daily lives by which the world sees us loving each other? Let's spend more time including people in our activities.
- Let us be a church where the world see that we love God together so what we can love them.

If we do this God will be faithful and will continue to add things we can praise Him for and we will find favor with all men. In this way we are allowing the attractiveness of the Gospel to shine forth. May God continually put us in **AWE** of Him...

**[PRAYER]**

**[COMMUNION]**

**[BENEDICTION]**

Go in the name of the Father, that continually demonstrates His love for us by consistently providing evidence for His **Awe**someness.



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Go in the name of the Son, that is continually working in us igniting our **AWE** by His sacrifice and His determination to present us in Splendor on the last day.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that is continually getting us to communicate with each other and the lost proclaiming through our lives the **Awesomeness** of God.