



**Acts – Can I get a Witness?  
Wk. 17 Pt. 1 Recipe for Evangelistic Zeal  
By Pastor Jody May 01/22/2023**

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**Acts 5:12-16 ESV**

**Many Signs and Wonders Done**

<sup>12</sup> Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. <sup>13</sup> None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. <sup>14</sup> And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, <sup>15</sup> so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. <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.

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**[INTRODUCTION]**

Following the recipe is important. Especially when you are making something that will be shared with others and is to promote joy in a social situation. Let me tell you about the day we made **chocolate cake**...

In much the same way here in chapter 5 of Acts we are witnessing the church mature, the key ingredients have been added, the HS was the Head chef, and the Apostles were His underlings. The mixture had been put together and the heat of the oven was the disdain of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Sanhedrin. The result of this glorious concoction makes **Evangelistic Zeal**, that would be shared and distributed to promote joy in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's jump down to **v.42** to see what transpired after all the ingredients were added, when the timer went off, the church was removed from the heat of the oven, what did it produce?

**Acts 5:42 ESV**

And **every day**, in the temple and from house to house, they **did not cease teaching** and **preaching** that the **Christ** is **Jesus**.



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Every day, not just Sundays, the church continuously preached and taught that the Savior/the CHRIST (all that mankind needed to be saved from their sin) was found in the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth.

We also want to notice it wasn't just the Apostles proclaiming this, that was their main job from chapter 2-4, but it has now progressed, or the situation has cooked if you will. The result of the preaching of the Gospel, the result of people repenting and turning from their sin to Jesus, the joy of being rescued and the fear of watching what happens to those who oppose God, the pressure cooking by the Sanhedrin has now **produced a people** that all proclaim the goodness of Jesus.

Bottom line everyone in the church is called to the work of Evangelism, in their own strengths and in their own ways:

**MP: This is the call of the church - to produce a people that teach and preach about Jesus constantly,**

and everyone in the church has a role to play in that.

So, to continue to use our baking Analogy today I am going to go through the baking directions with everyone and talk about the importance of the first key ingredient, how to use it and what it does.

**1. Baking directions for Evangelistic Zeal – Ephesians 4:11-16.**

The interesting thing here is that all church leaders are given the same set of directions and yet the churches will produce a people of Evangelistic Zeal that may look and taste a little different. That's because you are making this church with a people that have taken on the distinct qualities of their surroundings. An Evangelistic Zealous church in Ecuador will look different than an Evangelistic Zealous church in Dallas GA. Both will have the same ingredients, both will produce a people celebrating Christ, but both will come out with different flavors. Each body will have a different effect in its' community but know it will produce a body that is in essence performing the same variety of functions.



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Paul in his letter of Ephesians, elevates what the church could and should look like, **A FAMILY**. Chapter 4 of that letter gives gets real specific on how that family should function. I want us to go to vs. 11 and first look at the leadership structure:

<sup>11</sup>And he gave the **apostles**, the **prophets**, the **evangelists**, the **shepherds** and **teachers**, <sup>12</sup>to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

**The cooks** - These people are the protectors of the recipe, they don't allow anyone who wants to cook into the kitchen, they shoo out those trying to add ingredients or who want to substitute one ingredient for another. They are there to help get the church ready to produce **Evangelistic Zeal** BUT notice the goal of the cooks in v.12 - **to equip the saints for the work of ministry**.

These teachers and leaders are not there to work for the body to give them what they want, they are not there to work so the body doesn't have to share the Gospel, they are there so the body CAN share the gospel. That's **Acts 5:42** again, the key word in v. 42 is the pronoun **THEY**; and it is said that from house to house everyday **THEY** continuously taught and preached Jesus. Now where is this **recipe taking us from Eph. 4?**

<sup>13</sup>until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to **mature manhood**, to the measure of the stature of the **fullness** of Christ, <sup>14</sup>so that we may **no longer be children**, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup>Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to **grow up** in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,

**End Results – MATURITY**, the job of the elders in the church again is not to do all the work of ministry but is to help you develop, to mature, to grow up, to no longer be like children, to stop getting tossed around by this world.

The **Mission statement** of this church is:



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*“To Develop the Disciples of Jesus”*

Our job, the **Elders/Shepherds**, is not to convert people that is the HS job, our job is not to make cookie cutter robots so that everyone does the same things in this church, our job is to develop each of you so that you become what you were meant to be in your own unique way, with your own unique gifts, all to the glory of Jesus.

Then as all are developing and maturing, we all get involved in adding to the creation of an Evangelistic Zealous church:

<sup>16</sup> from whom the **whole body**, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, **makes** the body **grow** so that it builds itself up in **love**. **(Commitment)**

**[SIN WARNING]** (This is where we all need to be careful of self-idolatry because all of us, if not now, will be in the position to help develop someone). The world says to show your success and your skills as an influencer, a leader, a parent - A **COOK**, then you have to produce a **clone of yourself** to prove it OR you need to make a person that is a **clone the world**. Right now, there are parents that are destroying their children’s spirits and in some cases mutilating their bodies and minds all so they can gain acceptance by secular influencers.

**[GOSPEL]** The Gospel though gives us all the same mold; Christ, of which we can all say there is no way I can make a Christ like being, that mold was broke, there is no way we can develop a person like that. That’s where we need to start, and we need to **submit those under us to our Lord Jesus**. We are called to stick to the recipe, put in the elements of prayer, worship, scripture, devotion, and love and let God cook them. The pressure is not in the end result, but our responsibility is to stick to the recipe.

Our **Vision Statement** is to *“Cultivate Kingdom Minded Families”*.

Our aim is to help the body care for those under them so that the body grows and matures. The body works together to mature all of its’ members that



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bakes that evangelistic Zeal together (Eph. 14:16) that is so desired and needed in our world.

Baking Directions, it is the same for all churches. The Pastors and Elders are the head chefs under Jesus, we help develop you so you can employ your gifts to help those under your care to grow. And along the way we all get to lovingly chastise each other when we try to change that recipe.

That brings us to the first and most important ingredient today.

**2. We use Holiness as a base, sifting out the world as it also calls our lost home.**

Last week we saw the HS Himself establish what was the key element in making an Evangelistic Zealous church, Holiness. God did not want the taint of liars and hypocrites among his budding church. So, He removed with extreme prejudice a bad ingredient. Holiness means to be set apart to remain different, to be set aside for specific purpose, to be anointed, to stand out from the world.

As my son as entered into the world of wrestling, I have come to better understand what Holy means.

Wrestlers have to remove themselves from normal worldly activities if they want to become good wrestlers, their path is narrow, that's why it's a sport mostly watched and not participated in much.

- They can't eat what they want in fear of always missing weight, but they learn to love the food they get to have.
- They can't protect themselves like other sports with safety equipment, they will need to say goodbye to nice ears, straight noses, and original teeth.
- They can't enjoy the same night life like their peers because if they don't get 8 hours of sleep they can't heal.
- They can't rely on team mates to catch their mistakes during competition, whether they win or lose its' all on their shoulders, there's no one to blame.



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- They all dress weird with sweatpants tucked into socks, I really don't know why they do that?

All that to say, that if they want to be a wrestler worth their salt, they have to separate themselves from this world, there are no short cuts, no one is going to give it to them, they must be set apart for the work of becoming a wrestler.

Peter the leader of this new church, in his letter to the churches of Asia Minor 30 years later, writes about the importance of keeping the most essential ingredient of HOLINESS, pure in the life of the church.

**1 Peter 1:13-16 ESV**

<sup>13</sup>Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, <sup>15</sup>but as he who called you is **holy**, you also be **holy** in all your conduct, <sup>16</sup>since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Holiness is the process by which we set our minds, our thoughts, our attitudes out of this world and put it on the striving and envisioning of the goal of getting to see Jesus one day.

Holiness gets us off the broad path of destruction and puts us on the narrow way.

Holiness gives us the focus we need and provides the target by which we are to place our thoughts – seeing Jesus.

**Here's why Holiness is important and how it works in the early life of the church:**

- Holiness **RETAINS** the church's commonality.

<sup>12</sup>Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in **Solomon's Portico**.

<sup>13</sup>None of the **rest dared join them**, but the people held them in **high esteem**.



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The church at the end of chapter 4 had developed commonality, all have been saved by Grace, they all were rejoicing in this miracle, and they were out loving each other with generosity. That was their commonality.

Then we had Ananias and Saphira show up with their envious hearts, witnessed the adoration of Barnabas and now they were willing to jeopardize that commonality of the church to get what they wanted; praise and recognition.

God removed that cancer and the way in which he did spread the news fast!

v.13 *“None of the **rest dared join them**, but the people held them in **high esteem**”*

John MacArthur put it this way, “The church had become **wonderfully inviting** while remaining **ultimately terrifying**.” Holiness is the ingredient given by God and protected by God so that word gets around and it actually becomes a barrier from keeping just anybody from joining the body.

Our goal here is not to become the church where everyone can join, our **goal is to display the church called to holiness by God**. That way we can protect our commonality in Jesus which in reality is the thing that people find attractive in the church.

- Holiness constantly **REFORMS** around Jesus’ and the Apostle’s teachings.

<sup>12</sup> Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in **Solomon’s Portico**... <sup>14</sup> And more than ever **believers** were **added** to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,

We see that this new church liked doing what the Apostles liked doing, which was what Jesus liked doing. First, they experienced and witnessed miracles just like when the Lord was on the earth. There were powerful demonstrations of God’s power to give credence to the name of Jesus that the Apostles were teaching in.



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Secondly, they liked the preaching and teaching of God's Word, that's what they were doing in **Solomon's Portico**. It says more than ever **believers were added** (v.14) but note as well that there is not another way of discipleship mentioned here outside the teaching of God's Word? They all gathered for the public reading of the teachings of Jesus, to hear how the Apostles pulled together the OT with the NT as Jesus taught them.

Holiness was **retaining** their **commonality** while it was **reforming** them into a **congregation** AROUND the love of hearing the Truth found only in God's Word.

This is an uphill battle for the church of the day when many churches have settled for less preaching, and or less biblical preaching, and put more effort into their weekly programming. The 20<sup>th</sup> century has redefined discipleship as mentoring, or as communal living, or missional living, or life on life, or RAK all of which are good things but the Bible over and over declares that the number one tool, and the tool specifically commanded for us to do is - **PREACHING.**

### **I Corinthians 1:21 ESV**

For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we **preach** to **save** those who **believe**.

The **wisdom of God** that saves is given by the preaching of the Word, because only the **Truth of God** can set a person free from sin.

It is the **conviction of the Word** that compels a man to **repent**, it is the **authority of the word** that demands **obedience**, and it is the grace given through the Word that changes a man's heart and mind.

Holiness is what protects this, it is what will build a wall around it, and it is what will ensure the next generation gets it.

I want to ask everyone in here right now to pray. Pray for the elders and the candidates for over the next few weeks for we are discussing how can we get more preaching into this church. I need for you to pray that God's will be revealed that holiness will do its' work and remind us we are called not to be



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like everyone else but to be like Christ, and that we would not shy away from doing the hard work of ministry.

- Holiness **RECLAIMS** the poor in spirit.

<sup>15</sup>so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them.

<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.

Lastly, Holiness is what sets the church apart so that the poor in Spirit may get to God. Because the church remained Holy in that day, their power was increasing and because of this the poor in Spirit were coming from everywhere. The difference this time though, undoubtedly these people were being saved in the power of a man that was the Messiah, people were accepting Jesus as their Lord most likely upon being saved. When the church remains separate from the rest of the world those that most desperately want Him, those that most desperately need Him, can find Him in the church.

Holiness is what retains our commonality, it is what reforms us around the Word, and it is what Reclaims from this world the poor in spirit.

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### **[CHALLENGE + APPLICATION]**

Friends I desire to have us all come out of here with a higher degree of Evangelistic Zeal.

Today let's examine what is keeping us back from becoming someone that spends all their time rejoicing in and sharing that the Christ is Jesus and you found Him!

It may be that you have gotten lackadaisical in your church attendance and your missing the first point this is where change in you happens. This is when



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God challenged your heart, this is where He fights to initiate the reforming of your mind, what is keeping you from hearing God's Word weekly?

Today let me ask you finally what is it that is keeping you plugged into this world more than into what God is developing here? Family you all have been called to Holiness, to be set apart for the glorious work of God's Kingdom. Let's seek to strive to preserve our Evangelistic Zeal by embracing our most important ingredient Holiness.

**[PRAYER]**

**[COMMUNION]**

**[BENEDICTION]**

Go in the name of the Father, that has called us before time to a life of Holiness setting us apart to show the world His Son.

Go in the name of the Son, that through His death has set us apart to be Holy for the work of His Kingdom .

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that continues to keep us Holy calling us to lay down our earthly treasures while constantly refocusing us on Him.