



RUBEN'S OPENING COMMENTARY ON THE PURPOSE OF THIS WEB SITE....

God is looking for men to raise up are you willing?

“Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?”
(Ps.94:16)

“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none”
(Ezk.23:30)

We as believers should not be ashamed of the God of the Bible or the Holy standard of Christian living as fruit from being born again and we have counted the cost to preach in public to those with hard hearts and ears that are shut to the Gospel. This STYLE of preaching in the open air is what many call “Confrontational Evangelism. It involves taking a message of repentance to the public square. It involves a proclamation and a declaration of the Word of God to those who are in need. Their greatest need is to heed what God commands of them, He commands ALL people everywhere to REPENT and BELIEVE. Confrontational Evangelism involves personally confronting them boldly. We fearlessly expose sin and confidently offer the remedy to mankind and demanding fruit meet for repentance. For the very word “PREACH” in Hebrew, Greek or just using the good old Webster’s is to publicly proclaim, yell and herald coupled with countless examples in the Bible of men doing just that.

“Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets (Pr.1:20)

Wisdom should be crying out in open air, outside the walls of religious meeting houses as this style of communication has a long history going back to the prophets of the Old Testament. A popular place for OT prophets to preach was the GATES of any city. Gates were very busy places, the hub, being the site of business transactions (Gen. 23:1; 2 Kings 7:1), community meetings/city hall (Gen. 34:20; 2 Sam. 19:8; Prov. 31:23; Lam. 5:14), court decisions (Deut. 22:15; 25:7; Ruth 4:1; 2 Sam. 15:2; Amos 5:15; Zech. 8:16), public executions (Deut. 22:24), public mourning (2 Sam. 18:33), daily chores (2 Sam. 23:15; 1 Kings 17:10), religious meetings/idolatry (1 Kings 22:10; 2 Kings 23:8; 2 Chron. 18:9; Acts 14:13), beggars (Psalm 69:12; Prov. 22:22; Amos 5:12), and wartime negotiations (Isaiah 22:7; Jer. 1:15). Isaiah 29:21

The book of Jeremiah, more than any other book, gives us examples of OPEN AIR PREACHING. Jeremiah preaching at the gates is mentioned more than once (7:1-2; 11:6; 17:19-20; 22:1-2; 36:10). This was the best place to get a message to the most people, to “all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem that enter in by these gates....” Street Preaching is not just standing on the corner of Main Street and 3 Ave and raising your voice with no one on the sidewalk, but going to where the people are and there proclaim a message. Find a main artery in town, on campus at an event, with actual people not just a stray cat walking by and open your mouth.

The Old Testament is rich with accounts of PUBLIC PREACHING, but here is just a few and if you need more, see BIBLE for details.

NOAH

Noah did not keep his belief in God personal and private, he was a preacher of righteousness (2Pet.2:5), public preaching what is moral and the coming judgment to unrepentant ears. Noah was not ashamed to proclaim God.

AMOS

“They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly” (Amos 5:10) AMOS WAS A STREET PREACHER!

ISAIAH

God told Isaiah to “CRY ALOUD; SPARE NOT; LIFT UP THY VOICE LIKE A TRUMPET, and show my people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins” (Is. 58:1) and notice where he preached “they lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate...” (Isaiah 29:21) ISIAH WAS A STREET PREACHER!

JEREMIAH

“The Lord said unto me, Proclaim all these words....in the streets...” (Jer.11:6) and “Thus said the Lord unto me, Go and stand in the GATE of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by the which they go out, and in all the GATES of Jerusalem; and say unto them, Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem that enter in by these gates: Thus saith the Lord... (Jer.17:19-20)

”The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Stand in the GATE of the Lord’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord” (Jeremiah 7:1-2).

An interesting point about these men is that most of them spent most of their time not reaching those in other countries, or the most reprobate sinners, but God’s “chosen people” who had scriptures and priests, as they entered the house of God to worship the LORD!

“Thus saith the Lord; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah...and thy people that enter in by these GATES” (Jeremiah 22:1-2) “Then read Baruch in the book of the words of Jeremiah in the house of the Lord...at the entry of the new GATE of the Lord’s house, in the ears of all the people” (Jeremiah 36:10)

The word of the Lord came to me, saying, Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord...” (Jeremiah 2:1-2) JEREMIAH WAS A STREET PREACHER!

JONAH

The best example in the OLD TESTAMENT of a foreign missionary is JONAH. GOD sent him to warn Nineveh. Did he rent a hall and invite people to come to a scheduled meeting, enticing them with “special music” or Gospel entertainment? No. Jonah was charged to preach to Nineveh (as we are to the world!), not only to those who would attend his meeting, but to the whole city. The BIBLE says Nineveh was “an exceeding great city of three days journey” (Jonah 3:3); i.e., it took 3 days just to walk around it. Diodorus confirms that Nineveh was 60 miles in circumference (Herodotus records that a day’s journey was 20 miles). Jonah 3:4 says “Jonah began to enter into the city a day’s journey, and he CRIED, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown” Jonah went “a day’s journey” into Nineveh, a city of 3 day’s journey, and CRIED. He was PREACHING as he was walking, i.e. OUTDOORS. Jonah was a STREET PREACHER, walking the streets as he preached his message of judgment and truth.

JOTHAM

In JUDGES 9:7 when Jotham had a message to get to a crowd of people in Shechem (who wanted to kill him), how did he do it? Not with literature, or invitations to religious services, or any other “subtle” methods. “Jotham went and stood in the top of Mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and CRIED, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you” (Judges 9:7). Jotham found a safe place from which they could all hear him, and LIFTED UP HIS VOICE. Jotham was an open air preacher (1300 B.C.)

The PROPHETS of GOD in the Old Testament did not use low-key approaches, such as literature tables, passing out tracts, invitations to religious meetings, singing gospel teams, free meals, coffee, etc. These methods have some limited value, but again, what is the MAIN method of outreach in the BIBLE? What is the most effective way to reach the most people at the least expense? What is the method that most ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE REAL CHARACTER OF GOD? And lastly what is the one method that receives the least amount of teaching, encouragement and promotion? STREET PREACHING.

The Old Testament prophets were people who were on the outside of the religious establishment. They were not priests. They wandered through the streets, proclaiming a message that people did not want to hear. They called their society to repentance and predicted dire consequences for Israel if they did not, such as the destruction of the southern kingdom of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem (in Isaiah and Jeremiah). In Lamentations, the Hebrews wept over the destruction of Jerusalem and their subsequent exile, essentially agreeing that the prophets had been correct, and attributing the destruction to the sins of their people.

Before we move into the New Testament I would like to make a distinction between preaching, testifying, teaching, and witnessing, because not all is the same.

A) Witnessing is how you interact with sinners on a daily basis. Jesus had many commands on how to show kindness and love to those who don't know Him. He ate with them and showed compassion on them. He lived an example. Preaching is a specific function that God uses to warn sinners of His impending judgment and it's results, and to offer the gift of salvation through repentance and belief in the redemptive work of Christ on the cross.

B) Let me also make a distinction between preaching and teaching. Preaching is primarily what is done for the benefit of the lost whom we are attempting to reach with the Gospel. Teaching is primarily the Word as it is given to those who are saved and are being edified and matured by it. While those may not be hard-and-fast definitions, they are generally accurate and will suffice for the sake of my points on preaching. I am discussing the way that God's Word is preached to the lost.

C) Now testifying is to acknowledge openly what Jesus has done to you, as Paul testified of his testimony 3 times in the book of Acts. Sometimes I will ask people I am preaching to testify how Jesus has saved them. There are events that we do not get a chance to preach nor witness but only to have our banners testify a message

D) Now with that said, let us look at preaching. The most popular method of preaching is the type popularized by Billy Graham. Those of us who are street preachers call it the "God Loves You and Has a Wonderful Plan For Your Life" preaching. Sinners are told that "Jesus loves you. He accepts you just the way you are. Invite him into your heart right now. That's all you have to do. Believe and profess His name right now and you will be born again." This of course is followed by "With every head bowed and every eye closed...Come down to the front right now. Your friends will wait. Don't worry, the buses will not leave". Hundreds, sometimes thousands of people stream to the front of the auditorium as "Just As I Am" plays over the sound system.

What becomes of these thousands and thousands of "converts" over the years? You might think that after all these thousands coming forward, we would have had a major revival in the U.S. by now. What gives? The answer may surprise you. According to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, only about 10% of those making a profession of faith at a Billy Graham crusade are regularly attending church members one year later. That's right. Just ten percent. What's the problem? Is it the messenger, or is it the message? Or did the Holy Spirit goof up somehow?

The Bible has a pretty basic model for preaching. It can be summed up in two words, REPENT and BELIEVE. Now you might think that this smacks of old-timey fire and brimstone preaching that is outdated and, well, FOOLISH. Guess again.

Matt 3:2 "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matt 4:17 "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Mark 1:15 "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Mark 6:12 "And they went out, and preached that men should repent."

Luke 13:3 "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Luke 13:5 "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 3:19 "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;"

Acts 17:30 "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent"

Acts 26:20 "But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and [then] to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."

One does not need to be a Bible scholar to see this message is consistent in the Old Testament, with John the Baptist, Jesus and within the book of Acts but the modern day Church is appalled to use the "R" word.

But aren't we supposed to preach the Love of Christ we are told on the streets. Aren't we supposed to be "non-judgmental" say the heathen. Haven't we been taught that the Holy Spirit "woos" sinners to Himself in love, says the lukewarm believer. Well, not according to Scripture for IF the Holy Ghost is using us to preach, we should be USED to reprove as per John 16:8

"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment"

The verse below, Paul goes into specifics about HOW one should preach, and he did write PREACH THE WORD, which gives me liberty to preach on every subject within those 66 books and not just the death and resurrection but the WORD of God. Therefore I have authorization and permission to preach about what a Holy God says regarding abortion, sodomy, fornication, idolatry, adultery, drunkenness, heresy, other gods, creation, death penalty, evolution, marriage, government, false teachers, false prophets, current events, etc. By that one verse I have full authority to promote what God considers on these matters as I contend for the faith.

2Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

Note these words in that verse, **REPROVE**, **REBUKE** and **EXHORT**. Most of us only understand in a general sense what these words mean. Let's just look at the word "reprove" in the Greek. It is an extremely strong word:

- Strong's: #1651 elegcho
1) to convict, refute, confute
1a) generally with a suggestion of shame of the person convicted
1b) by conviction to bring to the light, to expose
2) to find fault with, correct
2a) by word
2a1) to reprehend severely, chide, admonish, reprove
2a2) to call to account, show one his fault, demand an explanation
2b) by deed
2b1) to chasten, to punish

Paul is basically saying that when you preach, "find fault with them, reprehend them severely, warn (admonish) them, chide them, show them their faults, bring shame on them". Obviously this is done along with the message that if the sinner **DOES** repent and turn to God he will be saved and experience the "times of refreshing". But there are no instructions about the "love of Jesus". He is also saying that **ALL SCRIPTURE** is profitable for reproof as well.

“have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” Eph. 5:11

Many modern translations say "expose" rather than reprove, but the Greek word is the same, with the same strong meaning. We should not only avoid fellowship with these works, but should warn, bring shame on, reprehend severely, chide, call them to account and show them their faults". **THIS IS PREACHING.**

Ok, side-bar is over let us now plow into the Testament.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

The tradition of the Old Testament prophets seems to end with John the Baptist, signaling the shift from calling for repentance of an entire nation to individual repentance: “John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” Matthew records that “and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan” came out to hear John preach. He was baptizing in the river Jordan a main artery where Jews traveled back and forth to Galilee refused to take the direct route through Samaria (John 4:9), but rather went to the Jordan River and followed it up to and from Galilee. John understood the concept of location as he preached repentance and baptized with heavy traffic and with large crowds gathered. He called the Pharisees and Sadducees that came to him for baptism a “vipers,” a confrontational message, to be sure. It was for proclaiming sin that he was imprisoned, namely for proclaiming that Herod Antipas was living in sin for consorting with his brother’s wife, Herodias. Herodias’ daughter asked for John’s head on a platter. Herod complied, and John, the first proto-Christian confrontational evangelist martyr. John the Baptist was an open air preacher.

JESUS

We find many examples of Jesus preaching to large crowds in the four Gospels and how can one convey a message to such unless the raise the voice? We also find a few cases of personal witnessing done to Nicodemus, the woman at the well, and Zaccheus. but if context means anything, Jesus was with a large crowd when He looked up and saw Zaccheus, and invited him to come down (Luke 19:1-5). And He was in Jerusalem,

crowded with Jews from all over the world for the Passover, where He preached the “Make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise” as He drove the moneychangers out of the temple causing no small stir, Nicodemus came to Him by night (John 2:13-3:1). Then en route back to His home in Galilee after that incident He stopped and exposed the secret sins of the woman at the well (John 4). Also notable is that Jesus’ one-on-one situations usually came out of these “multitude” situations and again how can you reach the ears of crowd or throng without open air. But the Gospels give many more accounts of His dealings with MULTITUDES (see Matt. 4:25; 5:1; 8:1,18; 12:15; 13:2,34; 14:14; 15:10,30-35,39; 17:14; 19:2; 21:8,11).

Our Lord lived in Galilee, where Matthew, Mark and Luke record His words and deeds. But John focuses on his trips to Jerusalem during the Jewish feasts and His dealing with the masses there. Everything in John revolves around Christ’s experiences in Jerusalem during the Jewish feasts (John 2:13; 5:1; 6:4; 7:2). The Gospel of John (7:37) records our Lord raising His voice; “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and CRIED, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.”

JESUS’ most famous sermons were delivered OUTDOORS. For example, the sermon ON THE MOUNT (Mt.5,6,7). In Luke 6:17 he preached to a “great multitude” in “the plain” (outdoors). The “Olivet discourse” (Mt.24) was delivered on the Mount of Olives (outdoors). In Matthew 13 His well known parables were preached to “great multitudes” by “the sea side” (JESUS was a “beach preacher”). He sat in a boat and taught the multitude on the shore. Just to be clear, we are not saying to stop the work of witnessing, we do it and we encourage it! Again, our interest is given to the MAIN method of outreach found in the Scriptures: open air preaching.

JESUS commanded His disciples before he sends them out to preach:

“What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light, and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops” (Mt.10:27)

“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (Mt.10.32-33)

Lastly we were commissioned by Jesus to “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel TO EVERY CREATURE” (Mk.16:15).

I live in Los Angeles and there are many CREATURES out here to preach to. Simple logic will show the best way to accomplish this is to find where the most “creatures” are in one place at one time and proclaim the message loud enough for them all to hear.

Jesus, of course, preached out-of-doors to the people of Galilee (in Matthew, Mark, and Luke) or Jerusalem (in John). There were no churches, of course, and he very rarely preached in a synagogue. He, like John, preached in a confrontational style: Look in the pages of the gospels and you will find that Jesus calling individuals names and condemned people. He called the king a "fox." He called two of His disciples "devils" and “evil.” He referred to a Gentile woman as a "dog." He exposed the unbelieving Jews as "children of the devil." He called the religious leaders of the day "vipers, snakes, hypocrites, blind guides, fools, and whited sepulchers." Not only does Jesus rebuke and condemn individuals and groups but he declares his generation to be "faithless, perverse, and adulterous...."

In Luke 10:13 we find Jesus Woeed two cities that no longer exist today, as I do believe he did not set up a tract table or formed a band with the disciples to get His message across.

“Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes”

In Matthew 11:20 we find another gem of a verse that seems to be sweep under the rug.

“Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not”

Now the scripture does not say what our Lord preached in those cities but we do know that the word “upbraid” is the strongest word for rebuke, so you can bet the farm that Jesus did not go around quoting John 3:16 to everyone. Here are a few definitions to the word “upbraid”

To reproach with severe or insulting words.

To attribute blame to.

To allege something disgraceful against.

To charge with a fault.

To treat discourteously

To jeer at

Jesus the Christ was a confrontational street preacher

THE APOSTLES

We now find powerful examples found with the Apostles in the book of Acts. These men followed Jesus and preached this controversial message and suffered for it at the hands of those to whom they preached. I see not only is the method of open air preaching aborted but the salty message too. The Apostle Peter called men "wicked" when preaching and charged them with murdering Christ in his great Pentecostal message as he LIFTED UP HIS VOICE. The Apostle Paul called men "whited walls" (Acts 23:3) and "children of the devil" (Acts 13:10). The boo of Acts as with other books from the Bible uses every descriptive tool of language in depicting men as sinful and evil. Remember, the Bible is God's mind revealed in paper to man and the thoughts expressed therein are what GOD WANTS MEN TO KNOW about themselves. If God sought to inspire such terms to describe sin why shouldn't we voice them?

God used these unschooled, ordinary men to promote the kingdom of God, so you do not need to be educated or graduate from Bible college to preach, nor do you need to understand Hebrew or Greek to comprehend scripture. The Bible is given to the common man to not be oppressed or in bondage with religion and God used the ordinary man to establish the early Church as plan “A” is still very much alive that you very much. God used this style of public preaching in the book of Acts to add souls to the Church, to make no small stir, to bring confusion on a city, to bring persecution, to be tried with jail and released, tested with beating and put to death as all rejoiced that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name. What has the modern day Church in America have in common with that?

As previously stated the Apostles in Acts were no strangers to outdoor preaching as per the Day of Pentecost where Peter being filled with the Holy Ghost “lifted up his voice” (Acts 2:14). Stephen also was a public preacher as he proclaimed a salty message (Acts 7). In Acts 17:17 we find Paul “disputed in the market daily.” Why the marketplace? As with the GATES, location, Location, LOCATION, for the crowds are there. The early Christians had no church buildings so their sermons were of necessity preached outside of meeting house walls. Yes, the apostles’ evangelism often involved “DISPUTING” and judgment, not just preaching GOD’s love (see Acts 6:9; 9:22,29; 11:2; 15:2,7; 17:2; 18:19,28; 19:8,9; 28:23; see also Neh. 13:11; 17,25; Proverbs 28:4; Ephesians 5:11; I Thessalonians 2:2; Jude 3,9; see examples in Matthew 22; John 7,8).

Stephen the first one killed in the book of Acts understood his own ministry as being someone who feeds the poor and needy, yet did not die in the kitchen. He continuation the long line of persecution preaching like the prophets of old. Right before Stephen was stoned to death by a group of Jews that did not like the content of his preaching, as he proclaimed truth and exposed their sins, saying:

“You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did. Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those

who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it” (Acts 7:51-53).

The Apostle Paul was a confrontational evangelist, in Acts 19: 23-28, we find Paul preaching against idols and because that preaching “there arose no small stir about that way” and as fruit from that type of preaching “the whole city was filled with confusion.” Paul not only preached like the Old Testament prophets but labeled them personally saying, “O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?” Acts 13:10.

Oh, he did not go to the Robert Schuller or the Joel Osteen school of evangelism because he argued with people.

“Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him” Acts 17:17

“And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God” Acts 19:8

“But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus” Acts 19:9

With both he and Peter both ended up imprisoned in Rome, and in all likelihood, executed there because of their faith promoted in public. Much of the New Testament was written from behind bars and again I ask, what has the modern day Church in America have in common with that?

The EPISTLES exhort the Church to PREACH

“And how shall they preach, except they be sent?....” (Rom.10:15)

“Whom we preach, WARNING EVERY MAN and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in CHRIST JESUS” (Colossians 1:28)

OPEN-AIR PREACHING IN CHURCH HISTORY

The Anabaptist history of Baptist continuing the acts of the Apostles (see TRAIL OF BLOOD by J.M. Carroll) for full of examples of men preaching outdoors.

PETROBRUSSIANS

Followers of Peter of Bruys, made enemies of the Papists as they preached open air in France in the 1100s.

WALDENSES

In France in the 12th century sold their possessions and gave the money to the poor, and travelled by twos through the villages of Europe, reading the Scriptures to multitudes in their own language, and preaching in the markets. The Pope launched Inquisitions against them to stamp them out.

HENRICIANS

Followers of Henry of Lausanne, also preached in the street of southern France in the 12th century. They publicly preached against images and infant baptism.

Another shining light from the followers of Francis was Raymund Lully (or Ramon Lull, or Raymundus Lullus, 1232-1315). He had a burden to preach to Muslims on their own turf: he wanted to travel to North Africa and evangelize in the streets of a Mohammedan town. His dream came true when he was in his sixties, when he traveled to Bugia in North Africa and "found his way to a public place, stood up boldly, and proclaimed in the

Arabic language that Christianity was the only true faith." He was promptly arrested and deported. He returned, however, when he was in his eighties, and "came forth into the open market and presented himself to the people as the same man whom they had once expelled from their town. ... Lull stood before them and threatened them with divine wrath if they still persisted in their errors." This time Raymund Lullus was stoned to death by the mob. He died a martyr, preaching in the streets of a Muslim town, in 1315.

DOMINICANS

Were founded by Dominic (1170-1221), who traveled with Diego and journeyed from town to town conducting open air debates. Some Dominican preachers were again so popular that they had to preach outside the church to accommodate the crowds that came to hear them. Such a Dominican preacher was Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419). **DOMINICANS WERE STREET PREACHERS!**

HENRICIANS & PETROBRUSIANS

Before Luther and the Protestant Reformation came along, the groundwork for their success was laid by several groups that rose within the Catholic Church and questioned papal authority to the point of getting excommunicated. Three such groups arose in France in the 12th century and were started by **STREET PREACHERS**. The Henricians were started by Henry of Lausanne (died 1148), the Petrobrussians by Peter de Bruys (died 1126). They worked together denouncing romanist doctrines like infant baptism and transubstantiation (both were eventually condemned as heretics and martyred.). They also rejected Church buildings, and preached on the streets and in the open places.

THE HENRICIANS AND PETROBRUSIANS WERE STREET PREACHERS!

WALDENSES

Were started by Peter Waldo, a wealthy merchant in Lyons, France in the 12th century. One day he asked a theologian what he should do to gain eternal life. He was answered with the words of Jesus to the rich young ruler, to sell his possessions, give the money to the poor, and follow Christ. Waldo took this literally, selling his business, giving away his wealth. Together with his followers, they traveled by twos, preaching in the streets, reading passages of Scripture which they translated themselves into the common language. According to Foxe's Book of Martyrs the Inquisition was originally launched against the Waldenses.

THE WALDENSES WERE STREET PREACHERS!

LOLLARDS

Were taught by John Wycliffe (1330-1384) in England "the morningstar of the Reformation" preached in the streets and marketplaces against the errors of popery. Wycliffe translated the first English Bible and influenced all later Reformers. The Papists dug up his dead body from its grave, condemned him as a heretic, burned his body, and threw the ashes into the Thames river.

THE LOLLARDS WERE STREET PREACHERS!

JOHN HUS

John Hus was told by the archbishop of Prague to stop preaching and asked the university to burn Wycliffe's writings. Hus refused to comply, and the archbishop condemned him. Meanwhile, Hus preached against the sale of indulgences, which were being used to finance the pope's expedition against the king of Naples. The pope excommunicated Hus and placed Prague under an interdict-roughly meaning that the entire city was excommunicated and could not receive the sacraments. To relieve this situation, Hus left Prague, but he continued to preach in various churches and in the open air. Formally condemned, he was handed over to the secular authorities to be burned at the stake on July 6, 1415. On the way to the place of execution, he passed a churchyard and saw a bonfire of his books. He laughed and told the bystanders not to believe the lies circulated about him. Arriving at the place of execution, he was asked by the empire's marshal if he would finally retract

his views. Hus replied, "God is my witness that the evidence against me is false. I have never thought nor preached except with the one intention of winning men, if possible, from their sins. Today I will gladly die." The fire was lit. As the flames engulfed him, Hus began to sing in Latin a Christian chant: "Christ, Thou Son of the Living God, have mercy upon me."

WILLIAM FAREL

William Farel (1489-1565), who paved the way for John Calvin to come to Switzerland, and has been called "the pioneer of Protestantism in Western Switzerland," was a STREET PREACHER. "He turned every stump and stone into a pulpit, every house, every street, and market-place into a church."

JOHN KNOX

The Presbyterian Church was founded in Scotland by John Knox (1513-1572), who started out as a bodyguard for a STREET PREACHER named George Wishart. After Wishart was martyred in 1546, Knox took over as leader of the reformation. Wishart was not allowed to preach in the churches and so preached in the market-places and fields. John Knox accompanied him on his preaching tours, sword in hand, to protect him from violence." Later, when the Church of England was established in Scotland, Protestant preachers were banned from their pulpits and became field preachers, proclaiming their message in the open air. Some of these Scottish Presbyterian field preachers included Richard Cameron (1648-1680) and Donald Cargill (1619-1681).

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WAS STARTED BY STREET PREACHERS!

GEORGE FOX

George Fox began his outdoor preaching with a limited education, without any special training, and without special advantages of any kind. He so preached that men got the shakes. The name Quaker was attached to Fox and his followers because of the quaking of the men who came to scoff but stayed to pray. Though he made others shake, no man could make him shake. Walking bare-footed through the crowded market at Litchfield, England, this man in the leather suit upraised his hands and voice, shouting, "Woe unto Litchfield, thou bloody city! Woe unto Litchfield!" He feared neither man nor the consequences of his tirade. At first the crowd was amused, then serious, then terrified. No religious or political reformer was ever imprisoned as many times as George Fox, and oh, what prisons! But his times in prison were missionary labors. Not in solitary confinement, he always had a congregation. But he made converts. His fame spread and people came in crowds to hear him,

GEORGE FOX OPEN AIRED THE GOSPEL.

JOHN BUNYAN

John Bunyan was born in Harrowden (one mile southeast of Bedford), in the Parish of Elstow, England, November 28 1628. John was a writer and preacher, famous for writing "The Pilgrim's Progress". With new laws meeting-houses were quickly closed and all citizens were required to attend Anglican only parish churches. In 1658, at aged 30, he was arrested for preaching at Eaton Socon without a license. He no longer had the freedom to preach that he had enjoyed under the Puritan Commonwealth and he was arrested again on November 12 1660 for preaching. He was confined for the first three months, but on his refusing to conform or to desist from preaching, his confinement was extended for a period of nearly 12 years. He said, "If you release me today, I will preach tomorrow." In 1666, he was briefly released for a few weeks before he was arrested again for preaching and he was sent back to Bedford for another six years. In March 1675, he was again imprisoned for preaching, he later died from a cold on August 31 1688. While imprisoned Bunyan wrote about 60 books and tracts.

John rebuked sin in public:

"In my preaching of the Word, I took special notice of this one thing, namely, that the Lord did lead me to begin where His Word begins with sinners; that is, to condemn all flesh, and to open and allege that the curse of God, by the Law, doth belong to and lay hold on all men as they come into the world, because of sin."

STREET PREACHER JOHN BUNYAN

WILLIAM PENN

Penn in 1670 fell into trouble by preaching in the street in violation of the Conventicle act. He was promptly arrested with Captain William Mead and taken before the lord-mayor, who sent them to the Old Bailey. In the remarkable trial that followed, the jury, who were kept for two days and nights without food, fire, or water, brought in a verdict of not guilty, for which each juryman was fined forty marks and sent to Newgate, while Penn and Mead were also fined and imprisoned for contempt in wearing their hats in presence of the court. They appealed to the court of common pleas, where the decision of the lower court was reversed, and the great principle of English law was established, that it is the right of the jury to judge of the evidence independently of the dictation or direction of the court.

PENN THE STREET PREACHER

JONATHAN EDWARDS

Jonathan Edwards, was born in Connecticut in 1703. He earned a Masters in Theology from Yale in 1722, and by 1729 was pastor of the First Church of Northampton, Massachusetts.

In 1734 Edwards started a powerful revival in Northampton.

Jonathan was a staunch believer in the importance of holiness as the way of life for any true Christian as he cites a Christian conversion as not simply being a repression of all of a person's former appetites, but a complete transformation of the nature and appetites of the person, guiding them to live the life of a saint: Edwards was a powerful preacher and theologian, but he did not engage in the demonstrative, theatrical type of preaching that would become the hallmark of revivalist preachers to come.

Although we can point to Edwards as being the primary instigator of the First Great Awakening in the United States, the phenomenon was not at all limited to North America.

His sermons were salty and often used the word HELL:

“The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince; and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment.”

.....and.....

“It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you were suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you have not gone to hell, since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not this very moment drop down into hell. O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in!”

Jonathan Edwards on preaching outdoors:

“Preach abroad....It is the cooping yourselves up in rooms that has dampened the work of God, which never was and never will be carried out to any purpose without going into the highways and hedges and compelling men and women to come in.”

JONATHAN EDWARDS OPEN AIRED

JOHN WESLEY

John Wesley was born only three months after Jonathan Edwards in 1703. He was a member of the Church of England, earned a Masters degree from Christ Church College, Oxford, in 1727, and was ordained an Anglican deacon. In 1729, Wesley returned to finish his studies at Oxford, only to find that his brother, Charles, had

started what he called the “holy club.” Wesley quickly found comfort in the methodical life of diligence and obedience to which they adhered.

In 1738, as he was listening to a sermon that included a reading of Martin Luther’s doctrine of “justification by faith,” he had what we today would recognize as a born-again experience or an infilling of the Holy Spirit: “I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins.”

churches though, soon would not allow him to preach, due to the emotion and forcefulness of his holiness message. As it turned out, George Whitefield, another member of the “holy club” at Oxford and fellow Anglican preacher, received the same cold shoulder from area churches, for the same reason: this new evangelical style was too “in your face” for the conservative Anglicans, how ever when these men opened their mouths to speak in public or within four walls people listened, and flocked to see them.

The Methodist Church, co-founded by George Whitefield and John Wesley (1703-1791). These two were Anglicans, but being banned from speaking in churches since they were not "licensed," they took to FIELD PREACHING, boldly proclaiming GOD’S WORD to large crowds in streets and markets. They traveled throughout England and the American colonies, and were instrumental in the GREAT AWAKENING, a mighty revival that swept the colonies in the eighteenth century. John Wesley wrote : "I am well assured that I did far more good to my Lincolnshire parishioners by preaching three days on my father's tomb than I did by preaching three years in his pulpit." ... "To this day field preaching is a cross to me, but I know my commission and see no other way of preaching the gospel to every creature".

John’s counsel on preaching is to
“Preach 90% Law and 10% grace.”

THE METHODIST CHURCH WAS STARTED BY STREET PREACHERS!

GEORGE WHITEFIELD

George Whitefield (1714-1770) stated regarding open air: "I believe I never was more acceptable to my Master than when I was standing to teach those hearers in the open fields." ... "I now preach to ten times more people than I should, if had been confined to the Churches."

In 1789 Anglican churches began to close its doors to Whitefield and according to the rules of the Church of England, if there were no building, preachers were permitted to preach in the open air. The first day, he had 200 people. After that, he was called before the head of the diocese, who forbade him to speak there again. The next day, he was back at it, this time gathering a crowd of 2000. Within a month’s time, some estimates put Whitefield’s crowd at over 20,000. Finally embracing this method of lay preaching, Whitefield said, “I believe I was never more acceptable to my Master than when I was standing to teach those hearers in the open fields...I now preach to ten times more people than I should, if I had been confined to the churches.”

Wesley was exceedingly reluctant, as he related in his personal journal regarding Whitefield:
“In the evening I reached Bristol, and met Mr. Whitefield there. I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday; having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin, if it had not been done in a church....What marvel the devil does not love field preaching. Neither do I: I love a commodious room, a soft cushion, a handsome pulpit. But where is my zeal if I do not trample all of these underfoot in order to save one more soul?”

GEORGE WHITEFIELD PREACHED IN PUBLIC.

A friend of Whitefield and Wesley's started a great revival in Wales called the Welsh Revival. His name was Howell Harris, and is another example of a man known to be a FIELD PREACHER.

METHODIST & PRESBYTERIAN

Another great Methodist outdoor preacher at this time was Gideon Ouseley (1762-1839). He traveled on horseback and preached several times a day, without dismounting, in streets, fairs and markets throughout

Ireland. Methodists were also instrumental in America's second Great Awakening, typified by outdoor Camp Meetings, started in 1800 by James Mcready, and also featuring the preaching of Peter Cartwright (1785-1872) and Lorenzo Dow (1777-1834). The REFORMED churches, PRESBYTERIAN churches, and METHODIST churches,
and the MODERN MISSIONS MOVEMENT were all started by STREET PREACHERS!

WILLIAM TAYLOR

Taylor was a Methodist was asked "Why do you preach in the streets and highways?" His answer was BECAUSE IT IS A DUTY ENJOINED BY THE LORD JESUS CHRIS AND IT IS SUPPORTED BY DIVINE AND APOSTOLIC PRECEDENT AND EXAMPLE, CONFIRMED BY DIVINE ATTESTATION

HALDANE & HILL

A great Baptist revival in Scotland was the result of the FIELD PREACHING of Robert (1764-1842) and James (1768-1851) Haldane and Rowland Hill (one of the founders of the Religious Tract Society, and an early advocate of vaccination). They were Anglicans, but converted to Baptists when the established Church forbade their field preaching. Robert and James left their business and sold their estate to devote their time to preaching the Gospel.

WILLIAM CAREY

The 'father of modern missions,' went to India and preached in the streets of the brothel district of Calcutta. His assistant, Chamberlain, would go to the Ganges river and preach to crowds of Hindus there. One of their converts was a British sailor, Robert Flockhart, who returned to Scotland and preached in the streets until his death. THE MODERN MISSIONS MOVEMENT WAS STARTED BY STREET PREACHERS!

AMERICAN COLONISTS

Who were Baptists impressed Jefferson and Madison with their views on religious freedom. Baptists were often jailed in Virginia, where they would preach to crowds outside through the window of their jail cell. Jefferson used to enjoy pulling up a camp stool and listening to Baptist outdoor preachers. (Encyclopedia of Religious Freedom: "Baptist Dissenters in Virginia")

THE HALDANE brothers, who along with Rowland Hill founded the Religious Tract Society. These Baptists started a great revival in Scotland in the 1800s as they PREACHED OUTDOORS.

CHARLES SPURGEON

Known as the 'prince of preachers' and pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, started out preaching in the streets and taught open air preaching to his pastoral students. As Charles Spurgeon testified: "No sort of defense is needed for preaching out of doors, but it would need very potent arguments to prove that a man had done his duty who has never preached beyond the walls of his meeting-house. A defense is required for services within buildings than for worship outside of them" and "It would be very easy to prove that revivals of religion have usually been accompanied, if not caused, by a considerable amount of preaching out of doors, or in unusual places."

Charles Spurgeon, influential preacher of the Second Great Awakening, wrote that "When Wesley stood and preached a sermon on his father's grave, at Epworth, because the parish priest would not allow him admission within the (so-called) sacred edifice, Mr. Wesley writes: 'I am well assured that I did far more good to my Lincolnshire parishioners by preaching three days on my father's tomb than I did by preaching three years in his pulpit.'"

Charles Spurgeon and Dwight L. Moody were also well-respected revivalists of the 1800's, though more Calvinistic and less prone to the use of emotion to effect conversion, even though Moody did begin to realize the possibilities of using advertising techniques, and Spurgeon did not mind the occasional use of emotional appeal through appearing persecuted:

"I am somewhat pleased when I occasionally hear of a brother's being locked up by police, for it does him good, and it does the people good also. It is a fine sight to see the minister of the gospel marched off by the servant of the law! It excites sympathy for him, and the next step is sympathy for his message. Many, who felt no interest in him before, are eager to hear him when he is ordered to leave off, and still more so, when he is taken to the station. The vilest of mankind respects a man who gets into trouble in order to do them good, and if they see unfair opposition excited they grow quite zealous in the man's defense."

Regarding warning the sinner of his sin:

"If sinners be dammed, at least let them leap to Hell over our bodies. If they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees. Let no one GO there UNWARNED and unprayed for." Now this advise on preaching from Charles,

"Preach not calmly and quietly as though you were asleep, but preach with fire and pathos and passion."

"It is not the bigness of the words you utter, but the force with which you deliver them"

STREET PREACHER SPURGEON.

DWIGHT MOODY

Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899) was a well known preacher in the Chicago area. The Moody Bible Institute bears his name. One of his regular practices in the late sixties was to exhort the passersby in the evenings from the steps of the court house. Often these impromptu gathering drew as many hecklers as supporters. Moody regarding soul winning, "It is not our strength we want. It is not our work to make them believe. That is the work of the Spirit. Our work is to give them the Word of God. I cannot convert men; I can only proclaim the Gospel"

MOODY WAS A STREET PREACHER!

WILLIAM BOOTH

It is well known that The Salvation Army started out doing a lot of STREET PREACHING! William Booth would pointed to sinners and called them specifically to repentance. When William Booth preached the first of nine sermons in that tattered tent, he did so under the name of the East London Christian Mission; Thirteen years later, it became the Salvation Army. William and Catherine realized that they had to meet more than spiritual needs: the physical needs were just too great. And that is what they did.

William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, was a revival preacher at work in England, and a contemporary of Finney. He, too, was an open-air revivalist, and suffered at the hands of the angry crowds. His wife wrote that he would "stumble home night after night haggard with fatigue, often his clothes were torn and bloody bandages swathed his head where a stone had struck." His movement didn't really catch on until he made an interesting rhetorical move, changing the name of his ministry from the Christian Mission to the Salvation Army. The idea of an Army fighting sin caught the imagination of the people and the Army began to grow rapidly. Booth's fiery sermons and sharp imagery drove the message home and more and more people found themselves willing to leave their past behind and start a new life as a soldier in The Salvation Army. The image of the soldier doing battle for God against the forces of sin is one that motivates confrontational evangelists today. Not only did Mr. Booth proclaim in public but admonished others by saying: "Not called!" did you say? "Not heard the call," I think you should say. Put your ear down to the Bible, and hear Him bid you go and pull sinners out of the fire of sin. Put your ear down to the burdened, agonized heart of humanity, and listen to its pitiful wail for help. Go stand by the gates of hell, and hear the damned entreat you to go to their father's house and bid their brothers and sisters and servants and masters not come there. Then look Christ in the face -- whose mercy you have professed to obey -- and tell Him whether you will join heart and soul and body and circumstances in the march to publish His mercy to the world."

As for Mrs. Booth, well Catherine says:

“Many do not recognize the fact as they ought, that Satan has got men fast asleep in sin and that it is his great device to keep them so. He does not care what we do if he can do that. We may sing songs about the sweet by and by, preach sermons and say prayers until doomsday, and he will never concern himself about us, if we don't wake anybody up. But if we awake the sleeping sinner he will gnash on us with his teeth. This is our work - to wake people up.”

GEN. WILLIAM BOOTH STREET PREACHED.

R.A. TORREY

R. A. Torrey said Open-air meetings are portable, you can carry them around. It would be very difficult to carry a church or mission building with you, but there is no difficulty about carrying an open air meeting with you. You can get an open-air meeting where you could by no possibility get a church, mission hall or even a room. You can have open-air meetings in all parts of the city and all parts of the country. You can reach men in an open-air meeting that you can reach in no other way. I can tell of instance after instance where men who have not been at church or a mission hall for years have been reached by open-air meetings. The persons I have known to be reached and converted through open-air meetings have included thieves, drunkards, gamblers, saloon-keepers, abandoned women, murderers, lawyers, doctors, theatrical people, society people, in fact pretty much every class.

BILLY SUNDAY

Sunday, took the emotional appeal to a whole new level. Sunday was one of the first of the revivalists to move into the media age. Billy Sunday (1863-1935) was the ideal of the emotive, fire-and-brimstone, a true fundamentalist preacher. He was one of the first of such preachers to use the medium of radio, and the first to have been videotaped. There are many extant audio recordings of his sermons. He spoke out, among other things, against adultery, gambling, theatre, dancing, and especially, alcohol. In fact, he was one of the main proponents of Prohibition. Sunday was a master storyteller, and spoke in such a “plain folks” kind of way that he seemed accessible to the common man as Jesus with parables. He told stories of everyday people struggling with sin, and urged repentance.

“So you cross the line and God won't issue any extradition papers. Some of you want to cross. If you believe, then say so, and step across. I'll bet there are hundreds that are on the edge of the line and many are standing straddling it. But that won't save you. You believe in your heart - confess him with your mouth. With his heart man believes and with his mouth he confesses. Then confess and receive salvation full, free, perfect and external. God will not grant any extradition papers. Get over the old line. A man isn't a soldier because he wears a uniform, carries a gun, or carries a canteen. He is a soldier when he makes a definite enlistment. All of the others can be bought without enlisting. When a man becomes a soldier he goes out on muster day and takes an oath to defend his country. It's the oath that makes him a soldier. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you an automobile, but public definite enlistment for Christ makes you a Christian.”

It was not just what he said, though, but the way he said it. He gestured grandly to make his points, and used vocal intonation to its fullest. He didn't just speak of conversion in the abstract; he pointedly spoke to a person's hesitation and sin.

WHY has the modern Church aborted this method, knowing great exploits happened with out door preachers with different theology, from Francis of Assisi, John Bunyon, Charles Finney, Billy Sunday, Holy Hubert and Brimstone Billy? The names can go on with numerous examples of holy men proclaiming the Word of God publicly to unwanted, uninvited ears for centuries as this website will resurrect that buried talent again within the body of Christ.

Face it, 'Confrontational Evangelism' is nothing new, it is not a present-day phenomenon, it is growing because it is Biblical, as God used John the Baptist to usher the Son of God, He has now raised up an army of John's to escort the coming of Jesus in these last days. Over the years I have talked, emailed and personally met men worldwide who have been inspired by this method of preaching from our website, our youtube clips, my example in the theater today and the history of those that proclaimed God in public. The Hebrew prophets of old uses this specific method as an exemplar for the New Testament, and pioneers of Protestant open-air preaching during the Great Awakenings and in 20th century America. It is both ordained and commanded by the God of the Bible, and therefore we interpret that role to adhere to a solid Biblical example.

To say it is Biblical is an understatement, that every man that preached in public was hated, beat, jailed or killed as they exhortation and open rebuked the people God had them speak to. Also with these men from the past, we find fruit of persecution:

On numerous occasions the preaching's of the Wesley brothers, George Whitefield and many itinerant preachers were attacked by drunken, brawling rabbles armed with such formidable weapons as clubs, bricks, stones, stink bombs and rotten eggs. On occasion, the mob would procure a bull and drive the tormented beast into the middle of an open-air congregation, while sometimes they contented themselves by making a noise with bells, horns, drums and pans to drown out the preacher's voice. Frequently, when goaded by a violent leader, the people in the mob resorted to every available means of attack. Sometimes they expended their fury in burning or tearing down the houses and destroying or stealing the furniture and possessions of Methodist followers. It is known that John Wesley himself was in grave danger of being killed while at the hands of mobs in Staffordshire and Cornwall. His brother Charles narrowly escaped with his life in the town of Devizes, in Wiltshire, and Whitefield - said to be "covered with blood and on the point of falling" - was rescued in the nick of time from the brutal fury of an Irish crowd in Dublin. Whitefield also evidences the almost gleeful acceptance of negative reaction to his preaching, just as the early disciples did: "I was honored with having stones, dirt, rotten eggs and pieces of dead cats thrown at me." These stories of crowd persecution are where in today's evangelists?