

Apostolic Leadership Conference 2008
Part 5 – Ten Irresistible Attractions Of The Early Church
Sep 14/08 – Stephen Crosby – www.destinychurch.ca

- Psalm 34:8, NIV - *Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.*
- It is not our arguments, but our flavour, that attracts the lost.
- What things most impressed pagans about the early church? Why would sinful, lust-driven people give up everything, and even face death, to join the early church?

1. Fortitude Under Pressure

- They could not believe how Christians withstood persecution. They had joy in the midst of persecution.

2. Fearlessness In The Face Of Death

- No fear of death.
- Philippians 1:23-24, NIV – (23) ... *I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; (24) but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.*

3. The Tightness Of Their Community

- Authenticity, not passivity.
- Getting along.

4. A Life Of Moral Purity and Prayer (Piety)

- Inward life.

5. Strong Leadership Of Eldership

6. Cared For The Needy

- Care of the sick, care for one another.
- As a result, Christians lived longer than the unsaved.

7. Miracles And Deliverances

- In a world of early death, miracles were very attractive.

8. Relational Evangelism

- Cared for the “other”

9. Honour/Elevation Of Women

- Acts 2:17, NIV – “*In the last days*”, God says, “*I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy ...*”
- In a world where women were possessions, the church’s treatment of women was very attractive.
- Our problem today is poorly exegeted Pauline prooftexts.

10. A God Of Love And Mercy

- Pagan gods were cruel and unpredictable.
- The Christian God was a god of assurance and fidelity of character.
- If we want to be an apostolic church, we need to value what the first century church valued.

OUR PROBLEM WITH MODERN EVANGELISM

- Evangelism today is all about winning
- “Winning” souls
- Evangelistic “crusades” (wars)
- Winning arguments.

- Evangelism should be a dance, not a wrestling match.
- Mutuality, not antagonism

- Leviticus 5:15, NIV – “*When a person commits a violation and sins unintentionally in regard to any of the LORD’s holy things, he is to bring to the LORD as a penalty a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value in silver, according to the sanctuary shekel. It is a guilt offering.*”

- Violation / sin = “to be out of harmony”
- Therefore righteousness is to be in tune.

- Are we spiritual salesmen, or have we heard the music, and are we inviting others to dance.

- Evangelism is all about letting other people hear God’s melody played by you.

- Relate, don’t win – value them.
- Listen, don’t push – dignify them.

- Be quiet, be safe, and build trust.

- Evangelism is the art of learning to pull their rug out, so we must first listen and find out what rug they are standing on.

- Jesus came to where we were, we must go to where they are.