

## **HOW TO BE A CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIAN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In John 1:41-42 we read that the first thing Andrew did after meeting Jesus was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.

The excitement of finding Jesus, was infectious. Andrew had found Jesus and he could not keep this amazing news to himself, he wanted everyone to know about it.

There is just something within us when we first give our lives to Jesus, we are born again into being contagious Christians. We just want to tell people about Him and what He has done for us. Often, we are most effective at being witnesses in the first few months of our walk with Jesus. Why is that?

And sadly, often, the longer we are Christians, the less contagious we seem to be. But our desire should be so in love with Jesus that we remain contagious, our whole life shouting to the world, "I love Jesus" continually in such a way that they catch this love from us.

The question we need to ask today is this, "Am I a contagious Christian, and if not, how can I become contagious again?"

### **MESSAGE**

#### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CONTAGIOUS?**

If someone has a contagious sickness, they can quickly pass it on through direct or indirect contact. So, to be contagious means that we spread something that we have to other people, and they in turn, also become contagious, so from one person a sickness can be spread to many in a short period of time.

The same happens when someone has a contagious influence. Other people pick up that influence and whatever it is spreads quickly. For example, I picked up the saying, "it is what it is" at work from one of my previous directors who would often say it. My colleagues did too. Then I came to church and started saying it here. Now, a lot of people in the church use the saying too. It is a contagious saying and I've helped to spread the contagion.

To be contagious Christians means that the impact Jesus has had on us, the fact that He loved us when we were still in sin, and He gave Himself for us, and He has given us His Holy Spirit, and He never leaves us nor forsakes us must have changed us so much that through our words and actions, other people are influenced to such a degree that they also fall in love with Him, and just like that saying is contagious, our Christian relationship with Jesus

should also become contagious and spread rapidly from one person to another.

## **BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIANS**

In the book of Acts, we find a great example of contagious Christianity. We read of the 120 praying in the Upper Room when the Holy Spirit fell. Soon, 3000 gave their hearts to Jesus. That is an example of rapid Christian contagion.

As we read the accounts of the early church, we see much evidence of Christian contagiousness.

**Acts 2:46-47** (NKJV) So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

- This is a picture of a thriving church.
- It was a church that had favour.
- It was a church to which people were being added daily.

There was something special about that early church that was attracting people to Jesus. These Christians had something that could be caught, it was contagious and many, many people started following Jesus as a result of it.

## **THE CATALYST TO CHRISTIAN CONTAGIOUSNESS**

If anyone here has worked with epoxy glue, you will know that you have two tubes of bottles of glue. One is the resin and one is the hardener or the catalyst. Unless you mix the two together, they both remain soft, but when the two are mixed, a chemical reaction takes place and the glue sets and becomes hard. You could say that the resin became contaminated by the catalyst and it resulted in a permanent change.

Now as Christians we don't want to become hard, in fact the Bible teaches us that God wants to remove our hard heart, our heart of stone, and replace it with a heart of flesh.

Jesus is like the resin, when we came into contact with Him and accepted Him as our Lord and Saviour a change took place, our hard heart was removed and replaced with a heart that is soft and caring and able to love.

The Holy Spirit is our catalyst. When we combine the New Birth experience, with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, we become contagious Christians!

**Acts 1:8** (NKJV) But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

As Charismatic Pentecostals, we tend always focus on the power of the Holy Spirit, but the power is there to make us effective witnesses, to make us contagious!

It was after the Holy Spirit fell on the day of Pentecost that the Christian faith started spreading rapidly, with the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the church became contagious!

***Have you been baptised with the Holy Spirit? If not, allow us to pray for you this morning.***

## **KEYS TO CONTINUED CHRISTIAN CONTAGIOUSNESS**

Once we have received Jesus Christ, and we have received Holy Spirit, the Catalyst to Christian contagiousness, how do we remain contagious on a daily basis?

### **1. Love**

The number one key to remaining contagious is to be continually impacted by the love of God. He is love, we have received that love, and every aspect of our lives should radiate that love.

**John 13:34-35** "A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one to another".

When the love of God so impacts us that we literally radiate that love to all around us, we become contagious. When we don't radiate it, it's possible that we have lost our first love: **Revelation 2:4** (NKJV) Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love

### **2. Unity**

**Acts 2:1**(NKJV) When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

It took unity – when they were in unity the Holy Spirit fell. Psalm 133 tells us that God commands His blessing where the brethren dwell together in unity.

### **3. Consistency and Steadfastness**

**Acts 2:42-43** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

The Christians spent time together, they spent time in God's word, they prayed together, and they broke bread (both food and the Lord's supper).

#### 4. Their faith was evidenced by action

This is the book of Acts – Acts means there was faith in action!

**Acts 2:44-47** Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favour with all the people.

Every time I read these verses, I get the sense of a peace and tranquility that had settled upon these people.

- **There was love-filled fellowship and caring**
- There was warm fellowship, the people became like one big happy family, they were not just church acquaintances.
- They cared so much for each other that they were even prepared to sell property to meet the needs among them.

The people took their faith beyond themselves, their faith became manifest in acts of selfless love, just like the example Jesus had set.

#### 5. The people were in love with Jesus

**Acts 2:47a** praising God ... The people praised a real Saviour that many of them had seen or encountered. They were in love with Him and that love was made manifest in praise and in acts of love toward others.

#### 6. Their faith was on display for others to see and it was a genuine faith, not a toxic religion, they were a true example.

**Acts 2:47b** ...and having favour with all the people...

The people didn't like the Pharisees, nor did Jesus, but they did like these new born Christians, they had favour because of what the people were seeing in them!

**1 Thessalonians 1:6-8** (NKJV) And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. 8 For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

Evangelist Roger Whipp said this about the Thessalonian church "If there was ever a contagious congregation, it was that little church in Thessalonica. Their love for Jesus was contagious, infectious, so much so that they were known throughout the Roman Empire. They were contagious believers, they caught the love of Jesus and then urgently and infectiously offered it to anyone who

was willing to consider it. Here also was a church who realized they were being watched. They gave the spectators quite a performance – reputation spread. Paul hears about their reputation/testimony and writes to them. It is a lesson for us to heed. Our reputation is at stake. The world is watching us. They need to see a difference in us.”

### **Paul instructed Timothy to do the same:**

**1 Timothy 4:12** 'Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.'

Frances Bacon said; It is not what men eat, but what they digest that makes them strong; not what we gain, but what we save that makes us rich; not what we read, but what we remember that makes us learned; not what we preach or pray, but what we practice and believe that makes us Christians”.

Bill Hybels also says, “The attitudes and actions of each of Jesus’ followers would either draw people toward a relationship with God or push them further away. So Jesus was pleading with his people, then and now, to live in a way that would draw people toward the Father. How we conduct our daily lives has implications that reach all the way into eternity”.

### **CONCLUSION**

Before we can become contagious, we need to be infected. Has the love of Jesus infected us so much that it’s literally changing our world?

To be contagious Christians, we need to add the following to our love for Jesus:

- The love of Christ Jesus must radiate from our lives.
- We must be baptized in with the Holy Spirit.
- We must walk in unity.
- We must be consistent and steadfast in God’s word, fellowship, prayer and the Lord’s supper.
- Our faith must result in action which is undergirded by love, love, love.
- Our faith must be on display and we must be a good examples and not toxic Christians.

***What do people see when they watch us? Are we a picture of people who are in love with Jesus? When people look at us do they want what we have? Or are we toxic Christians of whom people say, “if that’s what being a Christian is, I want nothing to do with it?”***

***Let us ask the Lord Jesus Christ for a fresh encounter where we are blown-away by His love, baptized in His Holy Spirit, and where many that we meet “catch” this amazing love experience.***