

## JESUS THE EVANGELIST

Jesus was passing through Jericho and there was a wealthy tax collector who climbed a tree in order to see Jesus as he came by. Jesus took notice of him and said to him:

‘Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.’

Zacchaeus came down from the tree and welcomed Jesus and then showed true repentance as he desired to give away half his money and make restitution four times over for all of his cheating. Jesus was criticized for spending time with a sinner like Zacchaeus, but Jesus knew his mission.

The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost. - Luke 19:10

The ultimate goal of an evangelist is to see a life change and perspective which comes from submission to Jesus as king. Jesus went on to share a parable in which this basic phrase was used twice..... ‘We don’t want this man to be king over us.’

Evangelism is the message of the good news of Jesus, of His kingship and kingdom. The New Testament message was: ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ not, ‘the kingdom of hell is at hand.’ Of course, that proclamation was made possible because of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Evangelists who follow the model given in the New Testament will see signs, wonders and miracles as part of the gospel message. The apostle Paul thought so.

‘I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles **to obey God by what I have said and done**, by the power of signs and miracles through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have **fully proclaimed** the gospel where Christ was not known.....’ - Romans 15:18-19

Philip proclaimed Christ in Samaria in a similar way.

When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs that he did, they **all paid attention to what he said**. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in the city. - Acts 8:5-8

In the mid-20th century, T.L. Osborn was the foremost evangelist who saw multitudes healed and saved in Africa and other poor nations. In the early 20th century God was preparing the way for another powerful ministry to come forth. It began with a retired Pentecostal American minister Louis Graf. In 1922 he felt called of God to do mission work in Germany. While driving around in East Germany, he got lost in an enormous forest and came upon a small village. Rather than seeing this as something negative, he saw it as an opportunity. He asked a man in the village if there was anyone sick in the village. The man said: ‘Just listen’. Louis could hear the agonizing sounds of a man in extreme pain. They went to the house and found a

man bedridden with a hopeless situation. Louis proclaimed the Holy Spirit was there for demonstration of God's power. Jolts of God's power hit the sick man as Louis laid his hands on him and he arose immediately healed and was converted. His son went on to become a pastor and his grandson Reinhard was born in 1940 and born again in 1949. Reinhard later went to Bible School in Wales and was inspired by Rees Howells, who taught him how to live by faith in God. Reinhard then returned to Germany to pastor a church for seven years.

At age 27 he went to Africa in Lesotho to be a missionary. He only had a handful of people to minister to but after awhile he had little more success as he played his accordion which attracted people to hear him preach. In the midst of his discouragement, one night he had a dream. He saw a picture of the whole continent of Africa, and then saw a red wave sweep from south to north and west to east until Africa was fully covered with the blood of Jesus. God then spoke....

**Africa shall be saved!** After 4 nights of the same dream, Reinhard knew for sure that this was his assignment from God. He would preach Christ from Capetown to Cairo. He began small with an 800 person tent, but as God continued to increase his faith and favor, he had acquired a tent to hold 34,000 people. However, a storm came once and it was destroyed, but God had bigger plans. The crowds would become so large that no tent would be able to hold them. The first open air crowd was 150,000 but later some of the meetings had up to 1.6 million in one service!

There would be times of great danger, but God was faithful over his 55 plus years of ministry as he faced angry witch doctors, murderous Muslims, violent thunderstorms, corrupt heads of state and rioting crowds. However, Jesus prevailed as multitudes were saved, healed and delivered. Reinhard never claimed to be a healer and remained humble. His passion was to preach the cross of Christ and the miracles just followed as the Holy Spirit swept across the vast crowds. If you go to their ministry website: [cfa.org](http://cfa.org) you will see the total number of recorded salvation cards from their meetings. It is currently at 78,800,704 (nearly 79 million won to Christ!). Yay God!

Reinhard preached his farewell message in Lagos, Nigeria in 2017, where 1.7 million attended over five days. He said his final goodbye to his earthly family one on December 10, 2019. Reinhard Bonnke was one of Christianity's finest evangelists and representatives in the past 2000 years. He had a passion for Christ and the lost.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is all inclusive, the love of God does not discriminate, I do not preach against religions; I preach Christ. I do not consider those who oppose us enemies, because Jesus died for them as much as he died for me. - Reinhard Bonnke

Millions on earth will miss him dearly, but we know that multitudes in heaven now rejoice with him in heaven because of his dedicated mission as an evangelist to **plunder hell and populate heaven**. God used Reinhard to reach the lost because Louis Graf got lost in a forest in Germany and met Reinhard's lost grandfather, August Bonnke. What a reunion in heaven with Louis Graf and the Bonnke family! God delights in using receptive vessels to display his awesome power and purposes in the course of human history. It all began with a man from Nazareth we have come to know as the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the greatest of all evangelists. Amen!

