

Highlighting Our Heritage

Week 5—Our Mission: Publish

Verse: “The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.” – Psalm 68:11

Life Application: Publishing the Gospel through the printed word, the spoken word, and through our personal lives.

Text: Isaiah 52:7; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 13:44-49; Romans 10:13-15

Supplemental Scriptures:

Psalm 126:5-6; Daniel 12:3; Matthew 9:37-38;13:10; John 1:8; Philippians 2:14-16

Historical context: The concept of Publish was chosen as the third key in our mission statement. It reads: “We publish the Gospel through the printed word, the spoken word, and through our personal lives, daily looking for opportunities to spread the message, “Yes must be born again.” One of the most effective phases of evangelistic work carried on by the Apostolic Faith Church has been that of printing Christian literature. After a century of publication work, the Gospel message has circled the globe, and has proved instrumental in leading thousands of people to God and establishing congregations around the world.

Possible opener: Bring a number of combs to the class. Have students comb their hair, with the stipulation that they cannot bend their elbows. It is quite hilarious to see them trying to comb hair with straight arms. It is basically impossible unless the person has very long hair and can bend over very far. Then give the same comb to a neighbor and again with only straight arms, have the neighbor comb the hair. It is possible for this to happen. Make the point that there are things we cannot do for ourselves--another person must do it for us. One of those things is sharing the message of the Gospel!

Questions:

- What are the three basic methods of publishing, as described in our mission statement?
- The word *apostolic* actually means “one sent out.” Using this definition, why do you think our organization name, *The Apostolic Faith*, is so appropriate?
- What role does the Spirit of God have in our personal attempts at publishing? In our corporate attempts? Why is His role so key?
- Do we “publish” the gospel only to unbelievers?
- Who first published the Gospel to you? To your family?
- In what ways might we be able to publish the Gospel even if we are restricted in our ability to go?
- Explain the significance of the first part of our key verse. Why is this so important?
- Name five instances in Scripture when God’s Word was “published.”
- Why do you suppose God chose many to be His “publisher” when He could have used angelic messengers or other methods?

Extra helps for teachers:

You may wish to review with your students this additional historical information. The publishing of the first Apostolic Faith paper had a humble but significant beginning. In the city of Los Angeles, soon after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in 1906, thousands of inquiries began to flood into the Azusa Street mission from people who wanted to know more about the Latter Rain Gospel. The publishing of a church paper containing teachings from the Word of God and reports from the meetings at the mission seemed to be the best answer.

Without mention to the public of the much-needed finances, and without a cent in sight with which to launch a publication work, Christian workers, including Florence Crawford, went on their knees in prayer and asked

God to send the means. Contributions began coming in through the mail, and soon the work of producing the paper was on its way.

In time, Florence Crawford felt the call of God to move to Portland, Oregon, and in 1908, she did so. At that time, the Azusa Street ministry turned over the responsibility of publishing *The Apostolic Faith* paper to her, so she brought that work with her. Funds were low, but God let her know that He would provide the way. She stepped out in faith, with only ten cents on hand, and in July of 1908, the first paper to be issued from the Portland headquarters was published. The first foreign editions of the paper, in the Norwegian and German languages, were printed in that same year. The printing and free distribution of Gospel literature has continued uninterrupted until this time.

Activity ideas:

Divide your group into four teams. Ask each team to imagine that they belong to an outreach committee for our church. Give each team one of the following Scriptures, and ask them to create a one-sentence statement explaining why a young person should witness to his or her friends, based on that Scripture. Then have each team share its sentence with the rest of the group. Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 10:2, John 15:8,1 John 4:19-21.

Explore the role of an ambassador. How are we ambassadors for Jesus?

Role play witnessing to others.some just living the Christian life, others actively telling about Jesus.

Generate a list on the board of ways to publish. See how long you can make the list.

Do a sword drill or worksheet based on instances in Scripture where God's Word was "published."