

CREATION
FEST

RHYTHMS
OF
FAITH

Mission

A RHYTHMS GUIDE BY CREATION FEST

JUNE 2023

RHYTHMS OF FAITH

This summer at Creation Fest, we will be exploring Rhythms of Faith. To enable you and your community to join us in this journey, we are launching monthly rhythm guides to explore a particular aspect of what it means for us to walk in daily rhythms. In this guide, we'll be exploring the Rhythm of Mission.

WHEN YOU GIVE THEM YOUR BREATH, LIFE IS CREATED, AND YOU RENEW THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

PSALM 104:30, NKJV

Our prayer is that these guides would enable you to find new ways to rest deep in the rhythm of the created and creating God, the one who has designed us for relationship and is walking daily with us.



A RHYTHMS GUIDE PREPARED BY

Amy Orr-Ewing and the Creation Fest Team

AMY ORR-EWING- MAIN STAGE SPEAKER 2023

RHYTHMS OF MISSION

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It has become increasingly fashionable to quote the famous words attributed to St Francis of Assisi "Preach the gospel at all times. When necessary, use words." But it seems from the book of Acts and from church history that words have always been an indispensable part of preaching the gospel. There are more speeches in the book of Acts than in many other historical books of a similar time like the writings of Thucydides or Herodotus. In the Acts of the apostles Luke records the process by which the message of Jesus and the gospel, advances through the whole world and the growth of the church. There seems to be a rhythm of proclamation accompanied by miraculous signs, massive numerical growth and persecution. A repeating cycle.

But have we forgotten about proclamation? Have we lost confidence in the power of the gospel proclaimed?

In reporting the process of the mission of the church, Luke in the book of Acts records 8 speeches by Peter, 2 speeches by James, 1 speech by Stephen, 9 speeches by Paul, and 4 long speeches by those interacting with Christianity (these are Gamaliel – a prominent Jewish scholar, the town clerk of Ephesus, King Agrippa, Roman Procurator Festus).

Acts 2:22-41 is a fascinating passage that gives us an insight into the rhythm of mission. We get to see massive numerical growth happening with the number of Christians moving from the 12 in the upper room and 120 believers mentioned in Acts 1 to the 3120 after Peter's speech and beyond.

The spiritual event of Pentecost didn't make total sense to outside observers. Some were understandably amazed – people were speaking in foreign languages they had never learned and praising God. Others thought this whole thing was the ravings of the intoxicated. Peter puts this to bed as a theory – "they are not drunk as some of you suppose – its only nine in the morning".

The apostle Peter, as he starts his explanation of Pentecost, is not super-spiritual – he was a manual worker, an experienced fisherman, a man of the world. He draws on his experience, that all night parties (even when they go on into the night are usually done by dawn) and therefore the idea that 120 people were blind drunk at gam is implausible, it is highly unlikely. He preaches to those who are listening, through their questions and in a moment of boldness, and a moment of clarity he unfolds to them the story of Jesus, a man born in Nazareth. (v22) 'a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs which God did among you through him as you yourselves know...he was put to death on a cross, but God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.'

What is more (v.33) this raised man has 'received from the Father, the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.'

Here we see mission as proclamation of the gospel that draws on the resurrection hope AND the Spirit's fire.

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in Scripture

It matters that Jesus is real and that he rose from the dead – he is real and he is transforming lives. Jesus ROSE from the dead. Peter's unleashing into mission through proclamation is clear, even with all his baggage, his denial of Jesus, his weaknesses and disadvantages. Peter's stature here as the preacher who effectively kicks off the global church movement, is founded on the reality of the resurrection of the Son of God in history, not on his own ability or social advantages, or linguistic ability. Christ has overcome death... if that is true - it changes everything. Peter's confidence is rooted in the resurrected Christ.

A biblical rhythm of mission in my life will reflect these same truths. I do need to speak up and tell people about Jesus. But the power of this mission does not come from me – it is the work of the resurrected Christ that is the power of the gospel. I need to believe it, and share it, in the spaces I find myself in, including the questions people ask me. Even if the question is as seemingly random as asking if people in a worship service at gam are drunk.

Peter is also filled with the Spirit's fire. A tongue of fire had lit up Peter's head, he had spoken in tongues and NOW he is preaching to a vast crowd with real anointing.

There is no contradiction between grasping truth – realising the truth of the gospel and being convinced and confident in truth so that you can proclaim the resurrection of Jesus to sceptical people and being filled with the Holy Spirit – the two-go hand in hand.

Fullness of the Spirit in the book of Acts leads to others hearing about and responding to Jesus and his gospel. The Spirit's fire falling on us draws people to Jesus. Being filled with the Holy Spirit propels us into proclamation of the gospel.

This is the crux of Peter's message. God has come into the world he made in Jesus and he has suffered death by crucifixion for us. But Death could not hold him. He was raised from the dead. From weakness, God arises. There's a rhythm of mission there too. To recognise our human weaknesses whether we're too young/old/theologically uneducated/busy at work/poor/linguistically challenged is a foundation for mission since none of these are barriers to the Holy Spirit.

Peter preaches in the fire of the Spirit, in his human weakness. Mission and evangelism are God's work and we get to be a part of it.

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in Scripture

To begin in weakness and be filled with the Holy Spirit, to be on fire for him looks like zeal. British people are a little afraid of zeal and we can have a tendency to dampen it. Don't do that. Godly passion, a zeal for the Kingdom and the King is a beautiful and needed part of the rhythm of mission. J. C Ryle the first Bishop of Liverpool wrote:

"Let everyone who professes to be a Christian beware of checking zeal. Seek it. Cultivate it. Try to blow up the fire in your own heart and in the hearts of others, but never, never check it. Beware of throwing cold water on zealous souls, whenever you meet with them. Beware of nipping in the bud this precious grace when it first shoots. It is a shoot of heavens own planting. Beware of crushing it for Christs sake. Zeal may make mistakes- zeal may need directing- zeal may want guiding and controlling and advising. Like the elephants on ancient fields of battle, it may sometimes do injury to its own side. But zeal does not need dampening in a wretched, cold, corrupt miserable world like this."

We need the Holy Spirit's empowering and filling. Why not pray this week for more of the power, presence, fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit? Let's pray for that fire that Peter experienced.

We need the confidence of the resurrected Lord. He has authority over death, life with him lasts beyond the grave. Death could not hold him, and we are his. Let confidence in that truth ground us when anxiety swirls.

The gospel is proclaimed and not just enacted – do we believe it is too hard to speak up or that we're too ordinary? Let's invite the Holy Spirit to come and shatter any self-imposed limitations and embrace the rhythm of mission that propels us into proclamation.

RHYTHMS OF MISSION

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RHYTHMS OF MISSION
4 ways to practise

**1. LOVE A
FRIEND**

**2. SHARE A
MEAL**

**3. SERVE YOUR
NEIGHBOR**

**4. INVITE TO CHURCH
(OR CREATION FEST!)**

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Ways to practise

WITH FAMILIES

Exploring the rhythms of faith with our families is one of the most important parts of our spiritual journey. Alive Family Worship resources help families set aside precious time to pray together. This resource has practical and creative ways to engage in mission with your family.

ALIVE FAMILY WORSHIP

PARTNERS WHO CELEBRATE

Check out the work of Christ for all Nations (CFAN). CFAN work to reach Souls with the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

CFAN

The Message Trust is a worldwide movement passionately sharing the love of Jesus Christ in words and actions with the hardest-to-reach young people and communities.

THE MESSAGE TRUST

YWAM is a global movement for youth who are driven by a passion to know God and make Him known.

YWAM

BOOKS TO READ

Multiply by Francis Chan
Strange New World by Carl Trueman
The Simple Gospel by Ben Jack



RHYTHMS OF FAITH

At Creation Fest this summer, Amy Orr-Ewing will teach on Rhythms of Mission on the Friday as we consider what it means to live in relationship with the God who loves us. See you there, 3-6 August 2023 and find out more at creationfest.org.uk.

3-6 AUGUST 2023
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