

“The Ubergeek Bible”

Now you're taking my language!

By John Cospers

When the Holy Spirit came on the early believers (Acts 2), God wanted to spread his word as far and wide as possible. So the Holy Spirit anointed the disciples with the gift of tongues. This gift allowed them to preach the gospel in the various languages spoken by Jews who were visiting Jerusalem at Pentecost. The purpose was not only to let the gospel spread like wildfire, but that every person could hear the good news in their own language.

Fast forward to today. Most churches – not every church, but most – look pretty much the same on a Sunday morning. We have our praise bands or our choirs lead us in worship, then a nice man gets up at the podium and delivers a three-point outline. Then the band/choir sings one more song and the pastor waits for people to respond.

While the tried and true Sunday format still works for many people, it does not work for everyone. People today are even more diverse and different than they were in the time of Christ. There are language barriers, but also cultural and sub-cultural barriers that keep people from hearing the good news. How do we connect with the people that would never, in a million years, set foot in a church?

First, we have to take the gospel to them.

Second, we need to do it in a way THEY can understand.

Stephen Baldwin understood this. That's why he formed a church and ministry in California dedicated to reaching one sub-culture: skaters. There are other churches in this country dedicated to reaching out to other groups: cowboy churches, trucker churches, and even clown churches.

It's not difficult to branch out from what we know and grew up with to reach someone from a different background. But it does take an effort. Like Paul, who took the time to get to know the people and culture of Athens before speaking to them (Acts 17:16-34), we need to spend time with those the Lord calls us to reach. What are their interests? What are their core beliefs? How did they come to hold the values they do?

We can reach the whole world with the good news. But before we do, we must be willing to stop, listen, and learn. God is doing his part to reach every heart he can. Are we willing to do ours?

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