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SAVE SOME
By Jarrette Aycock

A series of suggestions for
dealing with souls at an altar of prayer

Paul said, "... I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means SAVE SOME" (I
Cor. 9:22).

A Companion Book to
WIN THEM

Beacon Hill Press
Kansas City, Mo.
First Printing, 1953

Also by Jarrette Aycock
Drawing the Net
Win Them
If Christ Had Not Come
The Grand Old Book
The Story of Two Prodigals
The Prince of This World
The Crimson Stream
Mother
The Nightingale of the Psalms

Printed in the U.S.A.

Printed Book No Copyright

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Digital Edition 11/05/98
By Holiness Data Ministry

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PREFACE

Paul said: "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means SAVE SOME" (I Cor. 9:22).

After forty years of active Christian work, I have found no greater thrill, no deeper joy than winning a soul for Christ.

Drawing upon these forty years of soul winning, I take the liberty of giving some advice and presenting some methods I have found worthwhile in dealing with people at the altar.

There is no substitute for prayer or repentance, but there are times when a bit of counsel may help a man's faith to lay hold upon the Lord.

These suggestions have helped me, they have helped others. I pass them on to you.

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CONTENTS

1	Altar Work
2	Qualifications
3	The Altar
4	Work Around the Altar
5	The Bible
6	The Unserved
7	Backsliders
8	The Unsanctified
9	

Use Wisdom

10
Wrong Orders

11
Be Careful

12
Confession

13
Your Mill

* * * * *

1
ALTAR WORK

One of the most important factors in a revival campaign is the work done at the altar. Here the battle is so often won or lost. Here decisions are made, not only for life, but for eternity.

Training

During the years of my revival work I realized more and more the need of sane, careful, and scriptural work at this point. Because of this realization, I began to pick, with the help of the pastor, a spiritual group and in the early part of the campaign talk to them along this line. This message is the result of those talks.

Recently at one of our largest church camp meetings, I spoke on this subject to a number of ministers and laymen and was urged to put the material into print. Hence this book.

Need of Prayer

While this message contains largely suggestions on how to deal with seekers at the altar, I realize and recognize that there should always be a season of sincere, earnest prayer by both the worker and the seeker before instruction, in any major sense, begins.

In every suggestion made, there is the supposition that there has been a time of prayer and that the seeker has reached a place where he needs help to grasp the truth of the way of salvation.

Know He Is Saved

To deal with souls one should have a personal knowledge of salvation. He should be able to Say, "I know Jesus can save, for He saved me."

He should know he is saved according to the Scriptures and be able to give chapter and verse for the scriptures on which he bases his salvation. The Bible says: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (I Pet. 3:15).

The Only Plan

The Bible contains the only divine plan of salvation and any person who does not know, according to the Word, that he is saved is disqualified to deal with a seeker about his soul. If I did not have a scriptural knowledge of salvation, I would not rest this night until I had searched the Scriptures and searched my soul until I could say, "I know because I have met the conditions of the Word."

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2 QUALIFICATIONS

The scripture, "He that winneth souls is wise," has a twofold meaning. Soul winning is a wise work; it pays big dividends and it offers a shining and an eternal crown. But it takes wisdom, spiritual wisdom, to be efficient in it. Just as surely as there are certain essentials necessary for the gospel preacher and the gospel singer, there are definite qualifications for the man who would be a successful altar worker.

Essentials

He should be tactful. So much depends on what you say and how you say it.

He should be courteous. This is a Christian grace that is always in order. Roughness, crudeness, and harshness have no place at an altar of prayer.

He should be sincere. Lightness, insincerity, and levity are a hindrance to people who are seeking God.

He should be firm and without compromise. There may be many ways to get into the church but there is only one way into the kingdom of God. That is through faith and repentance.

He should have a passion for souls. This will come and increase if he will work faithfully to win men to Christ.

Any man with these graces, if he will work, will win, whether he has other talents or not

After all, the Scriptures teach that it is "... not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6).

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THE ALTAR

We who believe in the "old-fashioned mourners' bench" and use it as a means of helping people come to a decision for God should be careful and not deify it as essential.

We should never leave the impression that any one particular place is necessary in order to seek and find the Lord.

I believe in the altar. I was saved at one and sanctified at one. So were my family. I know it is an effective place and a blessed place to deal with seekers and I hope it will never be relegated to a back room in our church, but I also know that God will meet anywhere those who desire to know Him.

I have had men find God where they sat while the message was being delivered. I have seen them saved on their way to an altar of prayer.

Scores of testimonies could be had from people who found the Lord at home, in the field, in the store, the shop, the factory, or on the highway. Anywhere men earnestly seek Christ He will be found of them.

Parting of the Ways

A worker should approach the altar in awe, with fear and trembling. The person kneeling there is at the parting of the ways. What he does here may settle the whole course of his life for time and eternity. What he does here may settle the course of lives yet unborn.

There is a life, a soul, in your hands. Deal carefully. If he takes the right way, he may go forth to live for many years a good life and bless others. If he takes the wrong road, it may mean to go forth into a life of sin and disgrace, to be a curse, contaminating all whom he touches or influences.

What you do or what you say may help to turn him right or wrong. Deal carefully.

* * * * *

WORK AROUND THE ALTAR

During the Invitation

It is not often wise, to start the work around the altar until the invitation is over unless the evangelist requests it. In that case, we should kneel on the opposite side of the altar from the seeker and deal quietly with him until the invitation is finished. Your going early may cause other workers to come also, and often the call for seekers is hindered.

Room for Others

A worker kneeling at an altar to deal with seekers, especially if it is during the invitation, should be careful to leave room for others. Kneel in front of the one with whom you deal, as some seeker may need the place beside him. It is also well to remember there are other workers. Be sure you leave room for them to kneel on either side of you.

Prayer

At the beginning of an altar service there should be a time of prayer with someone leading. This will prove very helpful. A seeker needs time to think, to face facts, to be alone with God, and there is no better time or place than during an earnest season of prayer.

Why is The Seeker at the Altar?

After the season of prayer, I would suggest that the worker find out from the seeker why he is at the altar. The best way is to ask him, "Why are you here? Do you want to be saved? Are you seeking to be reclaimed?" Or, "Are you a Christian seeking to be filled with the Holy Ghost?"

Only when you know why he is there can you give definite instructions and pray most effectively. If he knows what he wants and you know what he wants, he can pray more definitely, you can pray more definitely, and God can give a definite answer.

Do Not Assume

Never assume a seeker's need. You cannot always take the word of a friend or loved one. I have known folks to say, regarding a seeker, "He wants to be sanctified." Inquiry proved they were mistaken; the seeker was backslidden and needed to be saved.

Ask the seeker. He should know better than anyone else. His admission of his need also will help him.

I have known a worker to pray earnestly for a seeker to be saved when he had come to the altar to be sanctified. God could bless the worker for his earnestness, but how much better it would be to inquire and know for what he should pray!

If He Does Not Know

Sometimes a seeker will claim that he does not know where he stands. I question this, for I believe the Spirit testifies to the condition of the soul.

However, I have found this to be a good way to deal with a seeker who claims ignorance as to where he stands with God. Say: "If you are not sure where you stand, let us get our feet on solid ground where we will know we are right. Just consider you are not anywhere; begin at the

bottom and ask God to save you right now." In this way God has helped me to get many on solid ground.

Illustration

I remember hearing and seeing a young woman praying earnestly for another for fully ten minutes. I finally knelt by her and said, "What is the young lady seeking?" She replied, "I don't know." Surely God could bless this lady for her earnestness, but her work and prayer would have been far more effective if she had known specifically what the seeker was praying for.

Urge Prayer

After ascertaining the need of the seeker, the wise worker will urge him to pray. Tell him that prayer is like talking to a friend and God is man's best Friend. Urge him to tell God right from his heart just what he wants.

If his need is salvation, remind him that to be saved he must forsake every known sin. Jesus said, "... Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

If he is seeking sanctification, tell him that to "sanctify the people with his own blood, [Jesus] suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12). To obtain this experience we must die out to the world of self. We must consecrate our all to God.

Instruction

After these few brief words to get the seeker on the right road, do not be too hasty to begin any extended instruction. If he is praying, wait awhile; let him pray and talk to God. Nothing helps the seeker more than praying for himself.

When you feel he is ready for instruction, begin by urging him to believe,* but be sure you tell him what to believe. Believe in God? No. It is that, but more than that. Believe His Word, believe His promises. Believe He will do exactly what He has said He would do.

[*There are seekers who need instruction, but who are not yet on "believing ground." Therefore, when a seeker is "ready for instruction," it is not always proper to "begin by urging him to believe." He may need to repent, to confess, to make a restitution, or to die to self, or to meet some other demand that God is at that point requiring of him before he can truly "believe". -- DVM]

Have Faith

In urging a seeker to believe or have faith, be careful lest you confuse him. When as a youth I knelt at an altar of prayer, a worker said to me over and over, "Just believe, believe, believe." I did not really know what he meant and left the altar unsaved and confused.

So few seekers know anything about the plan of salvation. Even from Christian homes they know very little. If you will deal with all as though they did not know the way, you will hit it more often than you will miss it.

When you urge them to believe, to have faith, give them some promise to which they may pin their faith.

* * * * *

5 THE BIBLE

As you instruct a penitent toward the way of life, use your Bible. Read to him the promises of God. Get him to read them right from the Bible or Testament. Emphasize the promises as he reads them, that God "who cannot lie," has said this, and if the seeker will meet the conditions God will do the rest.

Should any question or criticize you for using the Bible, ask him what he has or knows that is better than the Word of God.

The Best Tools

The best tool for the altar worker is a copy of the Christian Worker's Testament. In this the best promises to use in dealing with seekers are marked.

Memorize the Word

Every Christian worker should commit to memory those great and precious promises which seem to be especially written for the sinner, the backslider, and the unsanctified.

In dealing with a seeker, whether you are praying or talking, these promises should be quoted often. As you use them, they will inspire your own faith and then find a way through your voice into the ear and heart of the one with whom you are dealing, inspiring him to trust and believe.

* * * * *

6 THE UNSAVED

I have found the following promises very wonderful to quote and read to the unsaved.

"... whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13).

"... him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

"Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18).

* * * * *

7 BACKSLIDERS

In dealing with seekers desiring to be reclaimed, you will find the following promises of untold value.

"Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you ..." (Jer. 3:14). Here God said, "I am married to the backslider."

"... Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts ..." (Mal. 3:7).

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away ..." (Hos. 14:4).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:7).

Exhortation

The following exhortation has often helped me in dealing with backsliders at an altar of prayer.

I would say to the seeker: "You may not feel at first as you did when you were saved; not many backsliders do. Remember, God did not leave you; you left Him.

"Your getting back to God depends on your being willing to give up every known sin, step out on His promise, and trust Him to take you back.

"Can you make this your prayer? 'Lord, after You saved me, I went back on You, but here and now I return; by Your help, I will give up every sin. I will pick up my cross where I laid it

down and, feeling or no feeling, the best I know how, I take You back and I trust You to take me because You said You would. From this moment on I am going to live for You.'

"If you will do this and really mean it, He will take you back now; and though at first you may not have the feeling you once had, as you go He will restore your joys and give you a better experience than you had before."

Many, longing to be back with God, are held up just at the border line, and some simple word of instruction or exhortation is all they need to enable their faith to take hold and claim the victory.

Isaiah 55:7

Isaiah 55:7 is a wonderful promise to quote in dealing with a backslider. I have used it in this way.

"God said: 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.'

"God asks the backslider to do two things, forsake his sins and return unto the Lord.

"God, in turn, offers to do two things for the backslider who will do this, i.e., have mercy upon him and abundantly pardon him. God doesn't give a little pardon.

"A sinner is a man who has never been converted, has never known God; therefore he cannot return to Him.

"This verse seems to be written especially for the backslider. He has known God, has gone away from him, and God calls to him, 'Return unto Me.'

"Do you right now give up every known sin and return unto God the best you know how?

"What did God say He would do for the man who would return? Two things, have mercy and pardon him.

"If you have returned, what does He do for you right now?"

Scores of times, after using this scripture in this simple way, I have seen the light break over the face of the seeker and he would rise to testify to God's reclaiming grace.

* * * * *

To be saved and sanctified means far more than two trips to the altar. The sanctification of a believer is a definite work, a great Blood-bought experience of grace. It is a dying out to self and a complete consecration to God on man's part. It is a cleansing of the heart and the filling with the Holy Ghost on God's part.

Demonstration

We do not belittle demonstration; the joy which comes with the blessing or the stirring of the emotions is often manifested when the Spirit comes. We glory in the shouting of the saints. However, these are only manifestations that may or may not appear. They come and go. This grace is deeper than that. The real evidence is an experience that cleanses the heart from all sin, that works in the hard places and keeps one sweet in the testing time.

In dealing with a believer seeking to be sanctified, a worker should be careful always to give him something tangible to which he can pin his faith, some promise on which to stand when emotions have subsided and feelings are gone.

Promises

We have always found the following promises very helpful in leading believers into this deeper work of grace.

"If ye then, being evil [human], know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matt. 7:11.)

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification ..." (I Thess. 4:3).

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly ..." (I Thess. 5:23).

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12).

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

We read in Acts 15:9 that God purifies the heart by faith.

Jesus said, "... the altar ... sanctifieth the gift" (Matt. 23:19).

"... Whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy" (Exod. 29:37).

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. 11:29).

Illustration

It was Sunday morning during a campaign I was conducting in a large church in the far West. The altar was lined with seekers, among them a fine looking man near fifty. I inquired of the pastor about him and was told he was a good man, lived clean, and had been seeking to be sanctified for years but somehow could not seem to grasp it.

Kneeling by him I said, "Brother, what do you want God to do for you?"

He answered, "I want Him to sanctify me."

I asked him, "Are you sure you are saved?"

He replied by saying: "Yes, I have no doubts there. I know my sins are forgiven and I have been seeking for a long time to be sanctified, but I just can't seem to get anywhere."

I continued: "Have you consecrated your all to God, your past, your present, your future? -- all you have and all you ever expect to have?" He responded, "Yes, everything is on the altar."

I said: "Do you understand that when we speak of the altar in a spiritual sense we do not mean the place where we kneel to pray but that Jesus Christ is the Christian's Altar?"

He replied, "Yes, I know that."

I asked, "Then have you turned everything over to Christ?"

Again he replied, "Yes, everything."

I inquired, "Can you say with the poet,

"Here I give my all to Thee,
Friends and time and earthly store,
Soul and body Thine to be,
Wholly thine forevermore?"

He responded, "Yes, that is my desire and my prayer."

I encouraged him by saying: "If this be true, then you are on believing ground. You must believe God, take Him at His word. The Bible says, 'The altar sanctifies the gift.'

"If the altar sanctifieth the gift," I said, "and you are the gift and Jesus is the Altar, and the altar sanctifies the gift, what does Jesus (the Altar) do for you right now?"

He sprang to his feet, his face shining, and said, "He sanctifies me now, and I have sought the blessing for sixteen years and never saw it until this morning."

For several years we kept track of this man and he lived as though he had the blessing. This man is only one of many we have seen sanctified and satisfied after dealing with them in this way.

Walking in the Light

I knelt one night beside a man who for a long time had been seeking to be sanctified. He had ceased to weep and struggle and was kneeling with a look on his face that depicted he was deep in thought. After questioning him on his need and the completeness of his consecration, I opened my Testament and had him read that wonderful verse, I John 1:7: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

When he had read it, I asked: "Why is the person he is talking about cleansed from all sin? Is it because he works hard, gives his money to God, feels good, or is it because he is walking in the light?"

He replied, "Because he is walking in the light."

I asked him, "Are you walking in all the light you have?"

He answered, "Yes, I am."

I said, "If God should give you new light, no matter what it is, are you willing to walk in it?"

He quickly answered, "I sure will."

I said, "To be sanctified means to be cleansed from all sin. Is that what you want God to do for you?"

He responded, "Yes, that is what I want."

I said, "If the Blood cleanses the man who walks in the light, and you are walking in the light, what does the Blood do for you right now?"

He lifted his face to mine and with a new light and a new hope in his eyes he said, "The Blood cleanses me and God sanctifies me now."

The Promise Is True

The promise won't save,
Though the promise is true;
'Tis the Blood we get under
That cleanses us through.
It cleanses me now,
Hallelujah to God!
I'm out on His promise;
I'm under the Blood.

All on the Altar

Some called him a chronic seeker because in almost every meeting, if the minister gave an invitation, he would come seeking to be sanctified. He was a good man, lived clean, believed in holiness, but seemed unable to grasp the truth for himself.

Kneeling by his side at the altar in a camp meeting, I said, "Brother Will, do you believe God has the power to cleanse your soul from all sin and sanctify you wholly?"

He answered, "Brother Aycock, I know He does."

I continued: "The Bible teaches that when we come to Him we must believe that 'he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' Do you believe God is willing to sanctify you?"

He replied, "Sure I do. I would not be here if I didn't."

I said: "Brother Will, to be sanctified, we must consecrate our all to God. We must put everything upon Jesus Christ, the Christian's Altar. Are you willing to do that?"

He responded, "I have already done that; I am not holding anything back."

"Right now," I said, "you are all on the altar?"

"Yes, right now," he replied.

I led him on by saying, "Brother Will, God speaking through His servant Moses, in Exod. 29:37, of the sacredness of the ancient altar, which was typical of Jesus Christ, your Altar and mine, said, 'Whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.'

"You say you are all on the altar. God says, 'Whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.' He did not say it may be or can be but it 'shall be holy.'"

I further stated, "If you are all on the altar, you must be touching it; and if whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy and you are on it, what must be your condition now?"

At that moment the light broke in upon his soul. He stopped seeking and began praising God for His cleansing, sanctifying power.

Let Them See

Never tell people they are saved, reclaimed, or sanctified. Lead them as near the light as you can, quote to them the promises of God, then wait and pray for the light to dawn upon them. If their faith fails to take hold, start over again. This will require more faith and patience on your part, more prayer and more promises from the Word. Often the worker must go over the same path

many, many times before the seeker is gripped by the truth. However, it pays; for when he does see the truth, he has a foundation on which to stand.

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9

USE WISDOM

It is unwise for two people to talk to a seeker at the same time. They may both be sincere and good, they may both desire the same result, yet it must be very confusing to the seeker.

Try to concentrate on something you are reading and at the same time listen to the radio. Try listening to two conversations being conducted, one on either side of you. If this is difficult, how much more difficult it must be for the penitent soul when someone is talking in each ear!

Illustration

A humorous story is told of the seeker with whom three people were dealing at the same time. The one on the right was saying, "Brother, just hold on, just hold on." The one on the left was saying, "Brother, just turn loose, just turn loose." A third, kneeling just back of the seeker, kept patting him on the shoulder, saying, "Brother, just be faithful, just be faithful." The poor confused man did not know whether to be faithful in turning loose or holding on.

A Better Way

Instead of trying to talk to a seeker while others are speaking to him, it is better to say kindly and courteously to the worker, "Would you please let me talk to him for a few minutes? Perhaps I can help him."

If you do not seem to be making headway, move on and give someone else a chance. I have seen many a person find victory shortly after I turned him over to another, although I had done my utmost to help him.

Loud Praying

Praying audibly around the altar is all right and loud praying is not to be despised. Some workers seem to have more liberty and freedom in prayer if they can lift up their voices.

However, one should avoid praying in too loud a voice too near those who are seeking, especially if some worker is talking with them. This can be as confusing as two talking at once.

Study the Seekers

Study the seekers as you deal with them. Notice to what they seem to respond in word or song. People are different; therefore, they cannot all be handled alike.

Resentment

Study the seeker for his response or resentment to different workers. Some seem to resent loved ones. This is especially true of teen-agers. The wise worker will not take this as evidence that the loved one is not what he professes, but he will tactfully arrange for someone else to work with the seeker.

Pray Out

I heard a lady say to a seeker: "Pray out, pray out if you expect to be saved. God can't hear you if you don't." She was a good woman. She meant well, but her instructions were wrong. There are some, if you can just get them to pray aloud or to lift up their hands, who seem to be able to break loose some tension or reservations, which helps them to get through. If you are dealing with such a soul, encourage him to lift up his voice to God.

There are others who seem to shrink from such efforts. The more you urge them to pray audibly, the more you seem to hinder them. They just can't. If you are dealing with one like this, urge him to pray in his own way. Assure him: "God can hear you whether I do or not. Just in your heart tell Him what you want Him to do for you. He can hear the faintest whisper of the soul."

Deaf-mutes

Years ago I was holding a campaign in the city of Chicago. One night five deaf and dumb men came to the altar. No audible prayer was heard, no voice was lifted, no word was uttered. They knelt for a time with bowed heads, then an upward look, one hand on the heart, the other lifted, and shining face was the only outward evidence manifested -- but it spoke volumes. It spoke of sins forgiven, of inward peace and soul satisfaction.

Illustration

When I was a young man and a student in Pasadena College, I went to the altar to be sanctified. A group gathered around and began to urge me to pray aloud. I was sincere. I wanted to but it seemed I could not; neither my tongue nor my lips would move. Presently a big student took me by the shoulders and gave me a shake that almost rattled my teeth and said, "If you were here for any good, you would pray out loud." That ended my seeking, at least for that time. He probably meant well, but he failed to help me. Study your seeker and deal with him accordingly.

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10

WRONG ORDERS

One night a passenger train slowly battled its way through a Montana snowstorm. It stopped for a few minutes and a salesman said to a woman and child, "Lady, this is your station. I'll help you off." He did, and the train immediately moved on. Later the conductor, walking through the car, missed the lady and made inquiry about her. The salesman said, "I put her off when

we stopped at her station." "Man," said the conductor, "that was not a station; it was just a siding." Later they found the mother and baby frozen to death.

The salesman may have been a good man and may have been trying to help, but he was not familiar with the road and gave the wrong instructions.

How often at an altar of prayer workers have given the wrong orders -- instructions which, if followed, might hinder the seeker from ever finding peace!

A worker should not only study the seeker but he should be familiar with the way of salvation.

Illustration

One night, in a Southern revival, several came forward for prayer. A young woman, kneeling somewhat apart from the others, was earnestly seeking to be saved. Her hand was raised, the tears were rolling down her uplifted face as she softly but audibly prayed: "Jesus, please forgive me. I'll never go back on You. I'll die before I'll go back. Please forgive me."

A minister friend listened to her prayer for a moment. Then kneeling by her, he asked, "Lady, does Jesus forgive you?"

She opened her tear-wet eyes and in a pitiful voice answered, "I believe I have Him almost persuaded to do it." Someone had given her wrong instructions.

Impress upon seekers that Jesus is not only faithful and just but willing to "cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). We do not have to pray to persuade Christ to forgive us. It sometimes takes considerable praying on our part before we are willing to let Him, but He is ready and willing now.

Restitution

He gives the wrong instruction who advises a seeker to leave the altar to go and make restitution. I know it has been done and has worked out well. Yet I also know that at times dire results have followed.

When a soul leaves the altar to make restitution, the devil follows him and in his endeavor to defeat the seeker he paints the results so black the seeker may lose heart and not go through with his purpose and he may never come back.

Do not send the seeker away on such a mission alone. Tell him that God will take him on credit. All God wants is his willingness to make things right and He will save him now and go with him to fix things up.

I have known many more who made restitution after leaving the altar with God in their hearts to help them than I have where they were sent away alone to fix things in their own strength.

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11

BE CAREFUL

If you have had differences or difficulties with someone who is a seeker at the altar, do not try to deal with him. Pray for him. Send others to him but stay away yourself until he has settled that for which he came to the altar. Then go to him.

Possibly you were not at fault and he may have been all in the wrong; but perhaps he does not see it that way, and when you try to deal with him these old things rise up in his mind and hinder.

Even after he has prayed through, when you go to him do not bring up the trouble. If he should mention it, no matter how you feel about it, shoulder just as much of the blame as your conscience and your God will let you. Remember you are dealing with an immortal soul, a babe in Christ.

Arguments

People who raise their heads and smile when you approach them at the altar, who seem inclined to carry on a conversation, ask questions, and raise arguments are usually better off left alone. They are not convicted very deeply, seldom if ever receive help, and will likely hinder others who are kneeling near enough to overhear.

The truly penitent soul, like the publican of old, will "not so much as lift up his head." If he has an argument, it is, "I've gone too far. My sin is too great. I have waited too long." If he has a question, it is, "Can Jesus save a sinner like me? Do you think there is any hope?"

You can help a person like that. For such a soul there is great hope, immediate help; and if you know your Bible you have an answer for every question and a scripture for every argument.

Will You Preach?

Whether a person is seeking to be saved, reclaimed, or sanctified, it is neither fair nor wise to test his sincerity by asking him, "If God will take you, will you be willing to preach or go as a missionary?" I know a seeker must submit to God's will; but remember it is God's will, not your suggestion.

Seekers questioned on these things have been known to leave the altar and never return -- not because, as some thought, God had called them to preach, but because of a fear in their hearts that He would, and their souls, minds, and bodies rebelled against it. Possibly such a thought had never entered the mind of God.

The world has had too many "man-called" preachers and missionaries. It is high time we left all calling of workers to the Lord.

It is also well to remind those who may be struggling over what they fear is a call to the ministry that God is just as pleased with the man who plows as He is with the man who preaches, if that is the work for which he is best suited.

Accept Testimony

Missing from the altar a man whom I had previously noticed, I said to a worker, "Did the man kneeling there get through?" Often I have received the answer, "He said he did, but he did not."

I think such an attitude or answer is a grave mistake. Suppose the man overheard the question and answer, or suppose someone told him. It would be shock enough to wreck his faith, if he had any.

I believe, if a person professes to be saved, reclaimed, or sanctified, we should accept his testimony. No matter how much he may have missed your particular standard, if he claims the work is done, take his word for it until you see something in his life that disproves his statement.

A Heart Work

Salvation is a work wrought in the heart, and there is no immediate or outward sign or demonstration that will prove conclusively what has taken place within.

I have known many who at the beginning seemed so unpromising, yet they remained steadfast and went on to know the Lord in His fullness. Others who seemed at first so bright and clear, and in whom we had such great hope, fell by the wayside. The least a worker can do is to take the seeker at his word.

Faith, Not Feeling

The devil, who fights a soul all the way to the altar and all the time he is at the altar, does not give up the battle when that soul is saved. True, he has lost ground; but he now makes ready to contest every inch of progress and to instill every doubt possible.

Christian workers, unintentionally, often in the questions they ask the young convert, open the way for the enemy to sow seeds of doubt. Such questions as, "How do you feel?" "Is the burden gone?" "Do you feel better?" "Don't you feel like shouting?" -- these play right into the hands of Satan. Such questions have a tendency to get the eyes of the young convert on himself and his feelings rather than on the Lord.

If you must interrogate the seeker, ask such questions as will keep his mind and heart centered on Christ. Ask, "How is your faith?" "Do you believe He saves you?" "Are you going to

keep trusting Him?" "He made good His promise, didn't He?" "Are you determined to go through with Him?"

This type of question encourages his faith, strengthens his soul, and keeps his mind on God.

Stand Up for Jesus

Often I have seen a man settle the question, seemingly so clearly and definitely -- no doubts, but a simple trust in God. Yet for no apparent reason he remained kneeling at the altar while workers prayed with other seekers. I have seen a good, but unwise, worker kneel by the new convert and say, "Are you really sure you are saved?" After a few questions on feelings and kindred subjects, I have seen his face fall, his head go down in doubt, and Satan had won a victory. Many, after being so clear and definite at first, have left the altar unsatisfied.

To the Rescue

I have never believed in professing people through or telling them they have settled it. On the other hand, I have seen so much doubt instilled into hearts by unwise workers that I want to urge workers to deal carefully with the new convert.

I am convinced that if a person of his own free will professes to have found what he is seeking, it is best to say immediately, "If you have settled it and you are going through with God, stand on your feet as a testimony for Jesus, that others here may know what has taken place."

Standing up then is a testimony and a confession of Christ before others. It will strengthen the faith of the new convert and prove a definite hindrance to the chronic spreaders of doubt.

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12

CONFESSION

As a worker, dealing with seekers, never leave the impression that it is either wise or necessary for them to confess their sins to you. Much harm has been done at this point. Confidences have been betrayed, homes broken, and no doubt many souls have been lost because of such action.

Urge the seeker to confess his sins to God, not to the pastor, evangelist, or some worker. It is God who forgives and it is God who saves. The Pharisees were wrong in their application, but right in their thinking when they reasoned, "... who can forgive sins but God only?" (Mark 2:7.) I suppose, during forty years of ministry, I could have heard many confessions. I have heard only a few, and these were unnecessary and did not help anyone.

Exceptions

There may at times be exceptions. Some seem to think it will help them to unburden their heart to someone, but so often such people seem to take pride in telling everyone and it often

brings a reproach on the cause. Such things are better left with God. However, let me urge all who deal with seeking souls, should someone pour out his heart to you, never break that confidence.

Public Confession

Some preachers have been known to encourage public confessions. I think this is wrong, all wrong. I have never known one to be wholesome. Confess to God and to the one you have sinned against.

One night in our meeting a widow, a mother of two teen-age daughters, quickly arose from the altar and, before anyone realized what was going to happen, said to the entire congregation, "I want to confess that I have been living in adultery." What possible good could come from such a statement?

Always prevent such things if you can. In most instances they will be damaging both to the confessor and to the hearers. Usually they bring reproach on the individual, the family, the church, and, most of all, the cause of Christ.

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13

YOUR MILL

No tactful Christian worker will try to put a seeker through his own mill. Yours may be good and it may have worked wonders in your case, but remember there are many others which have worked just as well.

There is nothing wrong in telling a seeker how you found the Lord and what took place when it happened, but never leave the impression that his experience will be exactly the same as yours.

Three Steps

The steps to salvation are few and simple. I would list three, though in reality there are only two, for one is implied in the other. The three steps are:

First -- Repent

Second -- Pray, or call upon God.

Third -- Faith, believe God.

Repentance means a turning from sin unto God. That within itself implies a calling upon Him. Then have faith. Believe God, believe His Word, and believe His promises. "... believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

Personal Experience

With me, it was so quickly settled, and my experience probably was different from that of many who read these lines. Just a few whispered words of a suggested prayer, a few quoted promises falling upon my ear, and it came to me so clearly. I had done my part and God would and did do His. Doubts lifted like a cloud from my sin-sick soul and a consciousness that He saved me filled my heart.

Yours Was Different

Your experience was much different. Yes, I know it was. There were probably long hours of seeking, there were bitter tears of repentance, and when He came a wave of holy emotion flooded your soul and you shouted with new-found joy. I think your experience was wonderful, and so was mine. Let us not discount either.

If you and I are wise workers for God, we will not try to bring the seeker with whom we deal through our experiences but we will prayerfully point out the way of Salvation and leave the results with God.

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THE END