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GO YE NEXT DOOR

Everyday Evangelism Through The Crusade For Souls Now
By The General Superintendents Of The Church Of The Nazarene
Hardy C. Powers
Samuel Young
G. B. Williamson
D. I. Vanderpool
Hugh C. Benner

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INTRODUCTION

The Crusade for Souls in the Church of the Nazarene has passed the point of an experiment. In fact, it should never have been thought of as an experiment. Personal evangelism has always been an effective means of winning men to Christ. From the day that Philip said to

Nathanael, "Come and see," until this present time there has been no more adequate means of evangelism. The Crusade is merely a means for challenging, inspiring, and organizing us to do what is native to every true Christian's desire. Its objective is to show the way and stimulate the incentive in God's people to answer to Christ's "Go ye," which finds a response in the heart of every child of God.

The "Mid-Century Crusade for Souls" was launched in the 1948 General Assembly and was continued under the new name "Crusade for Souls, Now" by the 1952 General Assembly. The awakening to its importance has been slow but accelerating. Recent months have shown marked progress. Evangelists, pastors, and laymen are being awakened to a new sense of responsibility for the salvation of their neighbors, their fellow workmen, their associates in business, and the casual acquaintance.

This has reflected wholesome benefits in mass evangelism of the church. Personal evangelism and mass evangelism are complements. Each needs the other, and either without the other is greatly handicapped. As a result of this more effective evangelism, our church membership gains have substantially increased until the 1954 membership records show the largest net increase in membership of any year in the history of the church. And we have just begun. I am convinced that if our district superintendents and pastors can harness our forces and as consecrated Nazarenes we go to work, it will be uncommon for any district to have less than a 10 per cent net increase. Already during this past year a number of our districts have exceeded this percentage.

The Commission on the Crusade for Souls is happy to present this booklet, written by our five general superintendents -- five of the grandest men God ever gave to the leadership of any church! In these messages we get a verbal portrait of these overshepherds. They are all different, and the church is fortunate to have men of varied background, experience, and ability in the highest office of the church. They are all positive personalities. While one majors in an imaginative, evangelistic, picturesque mode tempered by a tender, sympathetic heart, another is gifted with an analytical, penetrating mind moderated by a keen sense of humor. One is energetic, positive, and poised, ready to venture for God and the church, while another is known for his caution, his calm in storm, and his stability, always ready to voice a challenge to the church. Still another writes and speaks in a dramatic, forceful style; he is fearless and his eloquence is enhanced by frequent scripture quotations. These men are all men of God and in them we have a composite of the highest and best in leadership.

Everyday evangelism is the summation of these messages by our general superintendents. They are designed to stir our hearts and inspire a deeper sense of personal responsibility for the salvation of others. As you read these pages, please allow your mind to reach out to that friend, neighbor, or business associate, and ask yourself, "Have I done anything in a positive way to help him see his need of the Christ whom I love?" A disturbing thought comes to me -- there is someone who will be saved or lost according to my faithfulness in bearing witness. All of us need to be alerted to the urgency of opportunity. To this end we commend these messages to all of our people everywhere.

Roy F. Smee

Chairman, Crusade For Souls Commission

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01 -- OUR PHILOSOPHY OF MISSIONS -- HARDY C. POWERS

Dr. Lindsell says that each generation must find for itself a satisfactory answer to the question: "Why missions at home and abroad?" I think the pertinency of this question will be seen in the fact that the soul-saving program of the church (and I am referring primarily to our own denomination) makes such heavy demands upon us in planning, in spiritual energy, in money, and in man power.

The Church of the Nazarene is no longer a small group of a few thousand members. We have been growing. Our church membership is approaching 300,000. Our ministers now number approximately 7,000. Our churches are scattered far and near, and our missionary enterprise reaches around the world. The sun never sets on the activity of the Church of the Nazarene. Financially speaking, it has been only a little more than forty years ago that all of the Nazarenes raised for all purposes in a twelve-month period \$140,000.00. Today the church is raising in a like period of time over \$30,000,000.00. Yet in spite of this growth and expansion, the leaders of the church are finding it necessary to constantly challenge our people with new goals. Each year every phase and branch of the work makes new and heavier demands upon us as a people. How can this program be justified? What is back of the challenge and appeal to our people to do more and more for God and lost men? If our growth in the future is to continue, these questions must be satisfactorily answered, and that is the purpose of this message.

The first part of this current century witnessed the turning away from the historic position of the Church on this question of "Why missions?" Previously the Church had believed that the demands being made upon it for the salvation of men were justified on the basis of a divine revelation which indicated that men are lost and are in danger of eternal damnation. But because of new scientific discoveries and inventions, social and economic upheavals brought on by the first world war, and many other factors, it was thought necessary by some religious leaders of that day to revise this position. Therefore, a commission composed of representative men of most of the major denominations was set up to study the situation. The report of this commission was called Rethinking Missions -- Home Missions and Foreign Missions. It followed faithfully the line of the social gospel, and the liberal modernists apparently had won a major victory.

The damage done by this report is seen in the fact that it stated the Church no longer believed in the uniqueness of the Christian religion. In other words, every man's religion had merit in it, and we should let people serve whatever gods they choose to serve. It discredited the Bible as the divine revelation of God's will and, hence, robbed the Great Commission of its authority.

Had the entire religious world accepted the report, it would have utterly destroyed the Church of Jesus Christ. But, thank God, there was a strong, vigorous, militant minority group who rejected this position. The historic position of the Church on this question is the position of the Church of the Nazarene. We believe that our whole missionary enterprise, whether at home

or abroad, rests on the foundation of a divine revelation. Jesus Christ, the greatest Missionary the world has ever known, said: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." That is the basis and foundation upon which we rest our entire soul-winning enterprise. We have received a divine revelation. We are called and commissioned by God to be fishers of men. This divine revelation is summed up in the Great Commission, which was not advice nor simply a suggestion but a command based on the earth-wide, heaven-high authority of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. It is an ageless commission telling the Church to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

It is finding expression in the Church of the Nazarene today in the Crusade for Souls, and the Crusade is operating, not only in this country, but around the world. Certainly a passion for souls should characterize God's people everywhere, and there are indications that a new sense of responsibility in the conscience of the church has been awakened by the Holy Spirit.

In 1947 I spoke to a fine group of Swazi young people. I tried to challenge them to consecrate their lives to God and tarry for the sanctifying baptism of the Holy Ghost. I tried to point out that they had responsibility, not alone to God and to their own souls, but they were in a measure responsible for the spiritual welfare of their own people. The response was heartening, and when I returned to South Africa a few years later, I visited the leper colony and was thrilled to discover some of those Swazi young people from our teachers' training school and nurses' training school were giving their lives for the lepers. They were preaching, teaching, praying, and leading men to Jesus Christ in that leper colony.

In Argentina I addressed a fine group of young people in our Bible school. As they knelt around the altar weeping and praying at the close of that service, I heard some of them apologizing to God for the fact that the mother church in North America had been forced to send missionaries to their continent to point their people to the Son of God. Later in a testimony meeting, they gave voice to the fact that they had received a new vision and were accepting their responsibility to evangelize their own nation and continent. Thus, we see the explanation and justification of the Crusade for Souls around the world. God has commanded; the church is obeying. The missionary enterprise is the result.

The divine revelation upon which the missionary enterprise rests has a base with three bearings, the first of which is that all men everywhere out of Christ are lost now and are in danger of becoming eternally lost. If that is not the case, then we cannot justify the Crusade for Souls or the missionary enterprise. But our divine revelation discloses that men are lost, doomed, and damned eternally without God and without hope if they leave this life without Jesus Christ. No one will become concerned over personal soul winning until he comes to that belief. There is no other way to justify the heavy demands of a program of world-wide evangelism. There are many desirable by-products of the Christian message social, economic, and otherwise, but they are only incidental. The primary reason for going on a Crusade for Souls is the fact that men without Christ are lost.

Our message is one of spiritual deliverance and victory over sin. We are called to give Christ to the nations. He alone can reach the source of evil in the human heart. The Bible tells us that Christ is the "stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the

corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Jesus Christ is the only hope of the world, and it is only when we accept this position that we are able to explain Calvary. Man was in awful danger, and there was no other way to save him except by the terribly glorious sacrifice on Golgotha.

This concept of man's lostness is borne out in all of the teachings and history of the life of Christ. He stood and looked out over the great city of Jerusalem and wept. Why did He weep? What was it that brought tears to the eyes of Deity? Was it not because Jesus Christ, looking past outward appearance, saw the ravages of sin in the hearts, lives, and homes of men here and now? And more than that, He saw its terrible and eternal consequences in the life which is to come.

The history of the race teaches us that Christ was not some misguided fanatic in this concept of sin. The virus of sin has entered the blood stream of the race. War, lust, hatred, suspicion, crime of all kinds, running rampant in the past and the present, speak in eloquent terms of the fact that the human race has fallen victim to a terrible spiritual malady that threatens to destroy here and hereafter. This is what we believe. Men are lost, terribly lost.

Another segment of this foundation upon which our missionary enterprise rests is to be seen in this fact-the divine revelation discloses that all men may be saved from all sin through faith in Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord! Regardless of the deep dye of sin, regardless of the handicaps of birth or environment, whosoever will may come. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Behold," Jesus said, "I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." The angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Thank God forever! There is power in the atonement of Jesus Christ to redeem the worst sinner or the most discouraged backslider.

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Thou dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its pow'r
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Are saved to sin no more.

But this is not all -- we believe that all men can be saved from all sin here and now. It is not my purpose to prove this point theologically. We simply declare our faith that the atonement of Jesus Christ, brought within reach of the consecrated, believing soul, is an adequate remedy for all sin. Reliable witnesses in this and other generations whose testimony would be accepted in any court in the land are ready to testify that sin has been eradicated, that the Holy Ghost has come to abide in sanctifying power. It could be truthfully said of them as Peter said of the gentile Christians: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8-9).

There is sanctifying pow'r like a sweet refreshing show'r
Waiting for each consecrated heart;
Pow'r to cleanse us from all sin, pow'r to keep us pure within,
Pow'r for service which He will impart.

The third phase of this divine revelation by which the church justifies the demands of her program of world evangelism is an urgent conviction that the Christian Church is held responsible to give the world the Christian message. The missionary enterprise cannot advance very far until the people who are promoting it are convinced that Jesus Christ is indispensable in the lives of all men. And this conviction can come only when Jesus Christ has satisfied those people on the level of their deepest spiritual needs. When the church can truthfully sing, "Jesus is all the world to me, my life, my joy, my all," then, and then only, will we feel compelled to share this, our indispensable Christ, with those who do not know Him.

The story is told of a man who had been grievously afflicted with asthma, observing a fellow passenger traveling on the same train racked by terrible paroxysms of coughing. He approached the sufferer and said: "I was once like that, but I found a physician who brought about my complete recovery. And I could not sit silently by and watch you suffer without telling you of my wonderful physician friend." Thus it will be in the Church of Jesus Christ when He has met her need; she will feel constrained by the love of God to tell others about Him. The missionary enterprise is but the expression of this personal love for Jesus Christ.

Throw out the lifeline across the dark wave.
There is a brother whom someone should save.
Somebody's brother! Oh, who then will dare
To throw out the lifeline, his peril to share?

Throw out the lifeline with hand quick and strong.
Why do you tarry, why linger so long?
See! he is sinking. Oh, hasten today--
And out with the lifeboat! Away, then, away!

Soon will the season of rescue be o'er,
Soon will they drift to eternity's shore.
Haste then, my brother, no time for delay,
But throw out the lifeline and save them today.

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02 -- WISDOM IN SOUL WINNING -- G. B. WILLIAMSON

Text: Proverbs 11:30

Introduction

Sweeping generalizations are often easy to make and hard to prove. Here is one as easy of proof as it is of assertion. Soul winning is the most important work in the world. And now the proof: Jesus said, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The obvious conclusion is that a soul is worth more than all the world beside. James, inspired of God, said, "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." What further proof is needed? Soul winning is the greatest work in which one can engage.

Men who devote their lives to the medical profession are charged with responsibility for curing physical ailments through the knowledge of medical science and surgery. For the delicate work of curing sick bodies and prolonging life, they are required to spend years in arduous preparation. When their credentials are in hand, they offer their time and skill, acquired at great cost of labor and money, in a true spirit of service to mankind.

The soul winner could well learn a lesson from the doctor of medicine. The work of the former is more delicate, for he deals with the sensitive spirits of men. It is more important, for he seeks to save their immortal souls. A blundering, awkward, ineffective doctor whose patients died more often than they recovered would soon lose his credentials and his clientele. He would deserve such a fate. Then should the soul winner go haphazardly to his work, without preparation, and without that sense of responsibility that keeps him alert to need, compassionate in spirit, and diligent in effort to use every means available to win a soul for Christ?

"He that winneth souls is wise."

The Need Of Wisdom In Soul Winning

Some prospects deliberately turn away from Christ because His demands are too great. The price is too high. The way is so narrow and rugged. Others shrink from the scorn of the gainsaying world. And probably a few sincerely fear they cannot be faithful to the end. But many people everywhere are turned away from the Saviour by the bungling efforts of those who represent Him. In this area of failure Christians should sense keenly their responsibility and seek

to gain that wisdom which will reduce to a minimum the number lost because well-intended attempts miscarry.

The would-be soul winner needs wisdom to capitalize upon the assets he possesses. Perhaps his greatest reinforcement is his own testimony to a personal experience of salvation, which has changed his life and satisfied his yearning spirit. To tell others of how great things God has done for his soul, with confidence and humility, is an art all who seek to save the lost should cultivate. Millions of people living in sin have found that worldly pleasures are "broken cisterns, that can hold no water." They are longing for something that will satisfy their soul thirst. As many more find their worldly wealth and honors only mock their soul's sad cry. And countless others who know but a formal religious pretense are in eager quest of reality. All are ready to listen to someone who has that for which their souls so long have sought.

It goes without saying that such testimony must be backed by righteous living. The pretended concern of a person whose life belies his profession is not only ineffective; it is revolting. Only those whose lives produce the fruit of righteousness should attempt to lead others to Christ. If there is any reason to know that a prospect lacks confidence in a worker, even if the impression is without foundation, the contact had better be made by another.

A radiant, joyful spirit is an invaluable aid to soul winning. Agony and travail in prayer are in order. Fasting is at times necessary. But when in the presence of the one whose salvation is at stake, the countenance should be animated, the spirit triumphant, and the conversation positive and confident. A face illuminated by an inner light is a never-failing attraction. The soul winner does not allow his holy joy to degenerate into levity or jesting. Neither does he dissipate spiritual power by emotional indulgence. He knows the joy of the Lord is his strength, and he exerts such power to the ultimate end of leading others to Christ as Saviour.

His membership in the church is another asset to the soul winner. Wisdom is needed that he may use and not abuse this powerful advantage in the salvation of men. It is possible to talk so much about the church that those who hear will conclude that the primary interest is in their joining the organization. Such an impression should not be made. The paramount concern should be to lead every prospect to a personal knowledge of Jesus. On the other hand, the worker for Christ should have always an attitude of devotion and loyalty to the church, its teachings, its leaders, and its program, so that when a person has been saved he will conclude the next logical step is to unite with the church. To many people the church stands for everything in the spiritual realm. Therefore they must be led from that starting place to the glorious realities of saving grace. There are others who have deep-seated prejudice against the church, and they must be shown that salvation is a personal matter apart from fellowship in any denomination. Then when born again, they can be helped to see the things that pertain to the kingdom of Heaven.

The soul winner also needs wisdom to overcome his liabilities or handicaps. He must resist all temptation to laziness, indifference, and preoccupation. It is easy for a Christian to become smug in the very knowledge of his own salvation. Unless he keeps the passion for souls alive by personal devotion and active service to God, he will relapse into complacency. Only as the Christian is engaged in saving others will he save himself. By preoccupation with the legitimate cares of life, love of God and the souls of men may be choked out. One dare not rest

in the excuse that he is too busy, for failure to engage in soul winning. If the heart is on fire with zeal to lead men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, time will be found and opportunities will come to win souls. The heart aflame with love is the cure for all rationalized defense for fruitless living.

Ignorance also is a handicap to be overcome. Many fail in efforts born of the best intentions for the lack of the know-how. Having blundered a time or two, it is easy to yield to discouragement. The soul winner needs to have wisdom in meeting baffling situations and flimsy excuses. He must know how to answer the prospect who says, "I'm as good as anybody. Why should I be a Christian?" Or, "I am too wicked and sinful; there is no hope for me." He will find some who believe they have committed the unpardonable sin, and others who rail on the hypocrites in the church. He will meet many who say they are members of the church, and therefore they are all right. Unless one prepares himself to answer these and many other excuses, he will fail more often than he succeeds. He must also be prepared to get beyond apparent indifference and even open opposition to religion.

Another all but universal handicap to soul winning is timidity. Some people are backward in approach to new people on any subject. But almost everyone tends to be hesitant in speaking with others on the subject of religion. This can be conquered more quickly by determined practice than by any other means. But again, the understanding as to how to open the way can be acquired by almost all who have the will to do so.

The Source Of Wisdom For Soul Winning

The next logical step is to find out the source of wisdom in soul winning.

The Bible, God's Word, is the most reliable and exhaustless fountain of knowledge for all who would point the lost to the Saviour. Whether one is a preacher, teacher, parent, or personal worker, he must know the Word of the Lord. It is the Word of God that awakens the conscience, enlightens the understanding, and becomes the foundation for faith. It is available to all, and therefore there is no pardon for lack of knowledge of it. The soul winner should have in mind its admonitions, its warnings, and its promises. He should have always on his tongue such words of encouragement as I John 1: 9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And Rom. 10:13: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." And Acts 16:31: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved." And John 6:37: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

But more than these never-failing words of assurance should be familiar to the one who seeks to win the lost for Christ. He can have an acquaintance with the entire Bible which means, in the great majority of instances, he has an answer for every question and every excuse and is prepared to banish all doubts.

In addition to the Bible many books are available to give practical guidance to the soul winner. *Win Them and "Save Some,"* by Dr. Jarrette Aycock, are especially helpful. The manuals prepared by the Crusade for Souls Commission are practical and usable. It would be well if every local church would provide a library of such volumes for its workers. There are

many books of inspiration and instruction in circulation. Wide-awake pastors plan classes for their crusaders. Attention should be given to sermons and lectures in local churches as well as in district Crusade conferences and zone rallies. Every pastor should preach sermons Which have bearing on soul winning. The experiences and testimonies of those who have succeeded in this great work are always interesting and helpful.

But no person, howsoever skillful, possesses adequate wisdom for soul winning unless he be filled, anointed, and guided by the Holy Spirit. He, the Spirit of truth, will guide us into all truth. He illuminates the sacred page of God's Word. He anoints the mind and spirit of His servants. He gives guidance to the Christian worker and soul winner. He also prepares the way to the heart of the person to be won. Without Him we can do nothing. If He goes before, accompanies, and remains after the worker is gone, the work will not fail; the Word will not return void; the harvest will be gathered; glorious victories will be won for Jesus.

When one has gathered wisdom for soul winning from all human sources, he must turn in faith to God. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (Jas. 1:5). This means that the soul winner must receive his wisdom and his power from God in answer to prayer. No mechanical procedure following man-made rules of thumb or any set formulas can lead a soul to Christ. The soul winner must have the help of the Holy Spirit. His help is never wanting if, after prayer, he goes in the faith that he is not alone in his all-important undertaking.

The Use Of Wisdom In Soul Winning

Having discovered his need of wisdom and having sought it from all known sources, the soul winner is prepared to use that which he possesses as he actively engages in the work.

Wisdom should be used in making the approach to the person one desires to win. Variety in making first contacts is often needed. No two people are alike. They have different backgrounds, temperaments, and environments. The soul winner should be alert to sense such a difference and adjust his approach accordingly. Often the conversation may be introduced at a point of common interest. It could be the weather, politics, current events, mutual friends, work, or business. Advantage can be taken of recent developments in the home, such as the birth of a baby, a wedding, a death, a new house, or anything else which opens a conversation that may soon be turned to things spiritual.

It is probably safe to say that never should one be bluntly reminded of his sins or the inconsistencies or failures of his life. This applies in preaching as well as personal work. Yes, sin must be confessed, but the application of truth that produces conviction is the work of God's Spirit. When He does His work, the sinner will confess and repent. A classic illustration of artful approach is seen in Jesus' dealing with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well. He began with a request for a drink of water. He led her to call upon Him for that living water and to confess her own sinfulness.

The right approach to a sinner is always love's approach. That which love inspires, wisdom will approve and God will bless.

The soul winner will also use wisdom in a patient persistence. He does not nag, but neither does he give up. He will be constant in prayer and unfailing in interest. If one door is closed and barred, he will try another. He will watch for some providential circumstance that will open the mind and heart to a consideration of Christ's claims.

Again, the soul winner will demonstrate wisdom in bringing his prospect to the hour and moment of decision. This should not be forced or mechanical. But when the Spirit of God has done His work, that opportune moment will come, and it must not be omitted. Strike while the iron is hot! Enter when the door is open! Do not give up too soon, nor consider partial victory satisfactory. Lead your friend to definite assurance of the new birth, then on to entire sanctification, and into the membership and service of the church.

And then wisdom must also be employed in an effective and faithful follow-up. Many new converts falter and fail because those who led them to Christ assumed the victory was won and did not show continued interest in their establishment in salvation and adjustment to a life of fellowship and service in the church. Sometimes personal calls are needed for weeks and even months. It is certain the enemy will provide obstacles, discouragements, and counter-attractions. New friendships must be formed. New activities must be provided. Guidance in personal devotions and in establishing family altars and regular habits of church attendance must be given. When salvation is obtained, the victory is only half won. The fruit of our labors must be preserved; the harvest must be garnered.

In conclusion, it should not be overlooked that the soul winner must be winsome. He must be a good representative of Jesus Christ. When Jesus sent forth His disciples to tell the good news to others, He admonished them to be wise as serpents. It is a well-known fact that a serpent has the power to charm its victim. Could Jesus have meant that His followers are to have the power to charm others -- to cast an irresistible spell upon them? Is it unreasonable to expect that human personalities can be charged with the power divine, until they have an atmosphere and magnetism of, love about them that will draw others to themselves, and then to salvation, because the beauty of Jesus is seen in them? A glowing face, a life of loving thoughts, words, and deeds will make the soul winner winsome. He will prove himself a friend to all.

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3).

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03 -- THOSE WHO KNOW MUST TELL -- SAMUEL YOUNG

Text: Ask them which heard me . . . they know (John 18: 21).

They Hated Him Without A Cause

The trial, condemnation, and subsequent death of Jesus, the Galilean, on Golgotha's brow was a travesty upon justice. Fair play in trial and sound principles of jurisprudence were set aside

in His case. Three times they changed the court of venue, and when He was finally condemned by the mob and sentenced by the judge, the latter washed his hands ceremoniously, declaring, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it."

The high ecclesiastical leaders of Jewry were the ones who plotted His trial and incited the mob against Him, but not one of them took the witness stand. Instead, they employed unscrupulous fellows, who perjured themselves for a price and repeated the lies they had been instructed to tell. Even their stories did not agree but were mutually contradictory.

The charges laid against Him could be divided under three headings, but they were "trumped up." Actually, they hated Him without a cause, for His life was sinless and pure. They said He was a disturber of the peace, for "he stirreth up the people." But Pilate concluded after examination, "I . . . have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him."

Then they argued that He was a rebel against the Roman government, "forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King." But the record on this issue was His declaration, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Also to Pilate He declared openly, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." This was the technical charge under which He was crucified, for Pilate had them write in three languages over His cross, "This is Jesus the king of the Jews."

The third charge was a religious one and crucial so far as His enemies were concerned. They said, "He is guilty of blasphemy, for He claims to be the Son of God; therefore, He is an impostor."

Someone has conjectured, What if Jesus had received a fair trial even on this last count? What if available witnesses had been gathered who had heard His teachings and had watched His life and ministry during those three years of itinerant preaching and healing, and they had told what they knew?

Available Witnesses

Let us re-enact such a hypothetical trial. Let us gather up a few available witnesses who had known Jesus and let their testimony answer the charge that He was an impostor, a blasphemer, a charlatan in claiming to be the Son of God.

1. Here is witness number one, a man who ate of the lunch that Jesus served one day in a desert place. Let him speak for himself.

"My name is Mr. A. I followed the crowd one day as we raced around by land to meet the Teacher from Nazareth called Jesus, who had gone with His disciples by boat. That afternoon we hung on His words until the sun was setting, for never man spake like this Man. Then when His disciples admonished Him to send the crowd away -- there were about five thousand men there -- He suggested they arrange us in companies of hundreds and fifties instead. He took a boy's lunch

and fed that multitude with it. I was there and ate some myself; in fact, I could not finish the bread and fish that was given me. Also, they gathered up twelve baskets full of fragments after everyone had eaten and seemed satisfied. I saw all this with my own eyes. It was done by the man called Jesus, who is now the accused."

2. Witness number two, a woman who had been healed by Jesus. Let her tell it in her own words.

"My name is Mrs. B. I had been a very sick woman for twelve years, in fact, had spent all I had on doctors' bills and medicines; but when my money was gone, I was worse than before. One day I learned of a new Healer who had moved into our area. His name was called Jesus. Those who knew Him declared that He had healed all manner of sickness: blind men, paralytics, cripples, and even lepers. So I followed the crowd, but I felt so insignificant and so weak. Then I said to myself, If I can but touch the edge of His robe, I believe I'll be healed. So I pressed close and barely touched the tassel on the edge of His garment, and instantly I felt the lift of His power and healing. Then He stopped abruptly and looked about, saying, 'Who touched Me?' I was very nervous before, but now I was shaking with fright, and I thought He was looking my way. One of the disciples spoke up and said, 'Master, why do You ask who touched You? Everybody is jostling and touching You.' But His silent gaze moved in my direction, so I 'stepped forward and confessed, 'Master, I touched You, and I was healed.' Then He commended me for my faith, and I went home well. I have been well ever since. That is what the accused did for me."

3. Witness number three, a leper who had been healed. This is his story.

"I was a young man when I joined the leper colony outside our village. I left my wife and four children to the mercy of relatives and friends. One day, with a great crowd surrounding Him, a Teacher from Nazareth came to our village. I was huddled together with nine other men, most of whom were older and in more advanced stages of leprosy than I. Presently one of our company declared that this Jesus who was moving in our direction was also a great Healer, so we took up the cry in unison, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.' He then drew near enough (though the crowd hung back) to speak in a quiet voice, 'Go shew yourselves unto the priests.' Down the road we went, and on the journey each man discovered that he was cleansed of his leprosy. It happened to me, and I saw those other nine receive the same cure. The priests discharged every one of us and allowed us to go home again."

4. Witness number four, another woman. Listen to her unusual story.

"I was a widow woman living in the city of Nain. I lost my husband when my boy was only a few months old. I struggled to raise him right. Early in life he began to work, and soon he was making the livelihood for both of us. Then one night, after a brief illness, he died. My grief was uncontrollable. All of my lights had gone out that night. I wondered how I could carry on after this loss.

"The funeral that followed was large and sad. I was still numb with grief. Sleep had left me, and I was bewildered. As we neared the grave, a procession bigger than our funeral company met us, going in the opposite direction. In the center was a Man with shining countenance called

Jesus. He is the Man who is the Prisoner at the bar. He spoke to me, 'Weep not.' Then He stepped forward and touched the bier containing the lifeless form of my only boy, and stopped our procession. Then He addressed that corpse, 'Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.' Now you may find it hard to believe this, but I am telling you the truth; my son sat up and began to speak. Then the strange Galilean led him to me. The crowd about me was frightened but glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet is risen up among us'; and, 'God hath visited his people.' That is my story, and my son is alive and well today. You can see him for yourselves."

If these four and other available witnesses had told of their experiences and related their personal knowledge of Jesus, how could one explain their testimony? There is only one plausible explanation that remains, namely, that Jesus was not only the Son of Mary; He was also the Son of God. He was no impostor.

He Stood Alone

However, at the actual trial of Jesus, no one spoke for Him. They all forsook Him and fled. One of the chosen twelve betrayed Him with a kiss and took bribe money from His enemies for identifying Him. At the time of His trial, one of the inner three disciples denied and cursed and said he never knew Him. The ancient prophet's words were fulfilled, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of my people there was none with me." Again, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation?"

But they condemned Him to death and led Him to be crucified -- the end, they thought, befitting vile criminals. They nailed Him between two thieves as though to say, "Don't judge this Man by the purity of His countenance, but rather by those villains that hang on either side of Him." Then He died, praying for His enemies and speaking words of hope and assurance to one of the derelicts who repented in his dying moments.

When they came to bury Him, Jesus had no tomb, and His treasury was bereft of funds to buy even a burial plot. But Joseph of Arimathaea, the rich councilor and secret disciple, now gave Him his own new-made tomb. The Lord of all the earth now lay within its bosom. But He did not tarry long; He rose again on the third day, even as He had promised. For forty days He showed himself to His own followers and left them with "many infallible proofs." When He ascended on high, the word of the heavenly messengers was, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

But the world is still asking about Jesus, even as the high priest did on the day of His trial. They are asking about Him and about His teaching. Was He more than a man, or is He just a religious genius -- a freak among humanity? Is there a power in His name? Can a man today receive divine forgiveness by praying in His name? Does this Jesus send the Holy Spirit to believing men today? Is He truly the Son of God with power? To all of these questions and many others high heaven is answering, "Ask them which heard me . . . they know."

Have you heard? Do you know? Then why not tell it?

Those Who Know Must Tell

The Crusade for Souls Now in the Church of the Nazarene carries a sense of urgency with it. It is a spirit of sharing, a passion born of love, an effort to answer the world's bewildering cry. It is a witness born of personal, Christian experience and includes the whole church, both ministers and laymen, young and old alike. We are here to tell the good news to our brother next door, and to the one on the other side of the globe. Our message is, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and we believe this to be worthy of all acceptance.

The motivation of such witnessing must have its source in the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. The divine urge comes to those who make a commitment to God in full consecration, and who in turn receive the Holy Spirit as a cleansing, indwelling Presence. But day-by-day obedience to God's will and work is necessary if we would learn the know-how of God's Spirit and the practical implications to our consecration.

1. Our basic witness must arise from lives that are redeemed. Our word is not simply a ready gift of "gab"; it is a redemptive, healing word. The old life of sin and self is gone and men cannot help noticing the change. It is not enough to mark our separation from the world; we must also bear witness to the Source outside of ourselves responsible for the change. Our lives become radiant because they have been made pure.

2. Our daily influence in ordinary living is itself a witness. We are willing to stand up and be counted. Our religious life covers seven days of the week. It touches our business ethics and our social code. We cannot despise any man in whom we find anything of Jesus Christ. Our light shines, and we cannot hide it. This is our unconscious witness.

3. Then there is the deliberate, articulate witness to men wherever we find them in our respective fields of influence. Our testimony is humble and honest. Everywhere along the road of life we find men who have lost their way or have been derailed by sin.

Our gifts do not need to be spectacular. Often the situation is undramatic, but the opportunities are ever-recurring and frequently come in unsuspected places. It may be the man that works beside us at the bench, the bricklayer on the same wall, the schoolteacher next door, the woman who has just lost her first-born, or the man who has learned of a malignancy and there is no cure. The constant sin and sorrow of the human family constitute our unfinished task. Will we tell them of the world's Saviour, who has changed our lives and who sustains us in all of the vicissitudes of life?

During my visit to the British Isles in 1950, I met a little woman in Glasgow, Scotland, who had known my parents in other years, and who remembered me as a boy in knee-length pants. She had seen the advertising and write-ups of our meetings in the newspapers and decided that I must be the one of the three young boys she had known some thirty-five years before. I called on her some days after she had pushed her letter of request under the pastor's study door on a Sunday night when she came to hear me preach, for she was too shy to introduce herself. I

found a little woman in her late seventies with cheery countenance and whose Scottish accents were music to my ears and took me back to my early years in Glasgow. She received me cordially and soon had the kettle singing on the hob for that pleasant cup of tea that cheers but does not inebriate. We had not exchanged more than three or four questions and answers until she was sure that I belonged to the same Young family that had been her neighbor in other years. I could gradually recall incidents as she related them. When she inquired concerning my parents' health, I confessed that they had left us, but I believed they had gone to the home of God. Then she said, "I'm not surprised that you turned out to be a minister; your mother was a good woman," I told her I had a brother who was also a minister in the United States. Then she told me, in substance, this story.

"More than thirty-five years ago when your family and mine were living in this neighborhood in the same close [block], my life was not so pleasant as you find it today. I was married to a drunkard, and we had a large family. My man was a good man at heart and when sober was kind to us. But drink had him, and too large a portion of his weekly wages went to Scottish whiskey. He had a trade and made good wages, but the amount that we were able to rescue from him was not large enough to pay the rent and buy food and clothes. Often we were down to poverty rations. In those difficult days your mother was kind to us. Out of her own limited resources she would share. She would come to my house with a smile and, carrying a pot of tea in one hand and a plate of hot buttered scones in the other, would say, 'Here. I was making scones today, and I thought you would like a wee taste.'"

By this time the tears were coursing down the cheeks of this charming little lady, and I was having some trouble at that point too. Then she added, "She would also talk to my man and tell him to give up his drink and give his heart to the Lord Jesus, and He would save him and make him what he ought to be."

Before I left -- and we had a nice, long visit together--we got down on our knees while I prayed to our Heavenly Father to give this dear mother peace and an assurance of sins forgiven. I also prayed that when her day was done God would take her to the home where sorrow, pain, and suffering were unknown. As I arose to leave, she came up with a gold coin (half a guinea) and started to give it to me. I protested and tried to refuse the gift, but she insisted with her tears, saying: "I'm an old woman and will probably never see you again. Take this gold coin as a keepsake in memory of your mother, who made the hot scones and shared them with us when we were in poverty." I have thought of that story a hundred times since 1950. It typifies the Crusade for Souls movement in our church today. It is the spirit of sharing and loving and telling men and women of our Saviour. Of course, all are not drunkards; but without Christ, they are without hope. All are not poor, but they are destitute without the power of Calvary's cross in their lives. Let us speak of His grace, for we know!

Our witness must also include the deliverance from the sins of disposition wrought by the incoming Holy Spirit. We must speak of the Holy Spirit in redemption on the personal level, how He comes and what He does for us and through us. Here our witness must never bear the marks of condescension but of grateful praise and humble testimony.

4. Also, we can witness by the practical demonstration of our complete consecration to God as we offer Him our tithes and offerings through the church for Kingdom building and extension. Of course, our giving must never be a substitute for personal witnessing; it is only a part of it. Our chief business is not to build an estate that will soon crumble, but to help build His kingdom, that will endure. Our chief investments must be in the country void of moths, rust, corruption, and thieves. Our treasures follow our hearts even as our hearts follow our treasures. A true witness is interested in telling the worldling next door as well as the heathen far away. He supports the pastor and the evangelist that he knows, and also plans on home missions and foreign missions as a regular thing. He tells of Christ by giving!

A Plea

The call of our church in the second half of this century is for an all-out effort to win new converts and backsliders to Christ now. It also seeks to lead believers into an experience of holiness. It has a sense of urgency in it; we are as men out of breath working for God. If only half of our present membership around the world would give God and His Church from one to two hours a week in house-to-house visitation and in direct personal work as God gives us opportunity, there is no telling the harvest of souls He would give us. No man is too big to share in this enterprise, and no child so insignificant that he ought to be excluded. We must contact men for the church, but we must win them personally to Christ. How challenging and disciplining is this assignment! There is no time for questionable things and places in our lives. Our supreme business is to represent Jesus Christ and to exemplify His grace. To the sinful, sorrowing, suffering millions of earth today as they grope and wait for light, our Lord is saying, "Ask those Nazarenes in your neighborhood . . . they know."

Oh, let us tell of Him now!

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04 -- FISHERS OF MEN -- D. I. VANDERPOOL

Text: Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men (Matt. 4:19).

Upon coming from the wilderness of temptation, Jesus heard of the imprisonment of John the Baptist. Immediately He left Nazareth, His home town, and came to Capernaum to dwell. Then He began His earthly ministry, declaring the same message that John had declared: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The Saviour's program of world-wide evangelism was now on. His need then, as now, was for men upon whom He could depend. One morning as He walked along the shore of Galilee, which was dotted with boat landings, docks, and places for boat mending and net washing, there were various activities. Some men had anchored their boats and gone into Capernaum for the day; others were walking along the shore. As they called to each other inquiring about their success, the general assent was that fishing was not so good.

Out from the shore perhaps a hundred yards from a sign which read, "Pete and Andy's Place," Jesus saw two strong men casting their net into the sea. Others had said, "Let's go home;

fishing is no good today," but not these fellows. Their faith was up; they were still at the task. Their perseverance and the co-operation shown in casting the net attracted the Saviour. Or what was it that caused Him to give them a call? At any rate, He saw something in them that caused Him to say, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him."

As He walked on a little farther, Jesus saw another fishing company sign which read, "Zebedee and Sons." Then He saw Zebedee and his boys, James and John, mending their nets. They knew the folly of trying to catch fish in a broken net. These men were not discouraged; they were getting ready for another try. Something about these two fellows caused the Saviour to give them a call to follow Him. "Immediately [they] left the ship and their father, and followed him." Why did not the Saviour call Zebedee to follow Him? He knew that someone should look after the business. He knew too that His work called for the rugged strength of youth. Zebedee could hire helpers and be a good disciple looking after the essential, temporal matters. Not everyone is called to preach the gospel.

These four men received a definite call to the ministry. As Christ passed by several men that memorable morning He made His choice of certain ones. So today He lays His hand upon certain ones, giving them a call to follow Him.

Why Christ calls some people to be workers may be a wonder in our eyes; but if the call is genuine and the obedience complete, the time will come when all doubt is removed by the success the individual has in His service. With His call there are always plans for success. His call was upon Joseph, but long years and rough roads were ahead of Joseph before his triumph. God called Elisha, but for years he was only a servant and errand boy for Elijah. But that was not time lost nor effort wasted. Those things were only preparing him for the day when the crushing weight of Elijah's mantle should come to rest upon his shoulders. Certainty of God's call is a guarantee of God's resources.

Christ's call to these men was clear when He said, "Follow me." Do not think this call did not have honor and a challenge in it. No greater honor was ever conferred upon men than was conferred in this call, "Follow me." Follow Christ! What an honor! Follow the One with power to hush the unleashed storm raging in its fury. Follow Him, the Great Physician, before whose touch and word every disease was dispelled. Follow Him before whom devils fear and flee! A Captain who fought on a thousand fields and never lost a battle! Oh, what a challenge to follow such a Leader!

Following Christ calls for frequent climbs to the mountain to pray, a place apart from the noise and din of the world. There the Saviour prayed for strength, for guidance; prayed in worship and fellowship until the early morning hours. After the nights of prayer He came with locks and garments wet with the dew of the night, but His face shone with a holy glow. If we would be soul winners and catch men for Christ, we must learn the secret of night praying, mountain-top praying. Praying apart and alone gives strength for the day and guidance for the task. There can be no substitute for prevailing prayer. If we triumph in the Crusade for Souls, we must follow Him in His habits of prayer.

We contacted a man for Christ but found him hard and much opposed to the church and to preachers in particular. I talked to him and pleaded that he change his attitude and give God a chance to remake his whole life. He seemed hard as nails and gave me only little hope. I had prayed earnestly for the man. My heart was so burdened that I slept very little one night. The next day I went to see him. When he met me at the door, his whole attitude was changed. He was all broken up and in a little while was wonderfully converted. The night of prayer had brought definite results.

Following the Master involves crossing "no man's land" and contacting the poor, the broken, the sinful, and the cultured rich, and doing it both day and night. Jesus found the sinful woman by the well, the blind beggar by the wayside, the cultured Nicodemus who came by night, and the demoniac near the tombs. In the untouched homes of our church communities there are thousands that wait for a word of welcome. They thirst for the water of life; they look for a light to show them the way out of darkness. They sense their need. They note that the waters are troubled but, like the man at the Pool of Bethesda, they have no one to put them in.

Near a church where I held a meeting lived an old man. He was rough and hard, and so given over to drink that no one had hope for him. Impelled by the Spirit, I paid him a visit and found him under the influence of drink. I talked to him of his former home, his mother, father, wife, and children and discovered that his heart was hungry for a better life. I saw him converted and united with the church. His own folk and the whole neighborhood were astonished at the marvelous transformation of the man.

He represents thousands who sit in the shadow of the church, waiting for a word to cheer and a hand to guide. Following Christ will call for the investment of self in the Crusade for Souls -- "He stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." His work was clearly outlined before Him. He knew that it would mean suffering, persecution, and even death. But His love for lost men, and His loyalty to those who trusted in Him, compelled Him to invest himself. Ease, comfort, position, applause, and financial compensation will always be pushed into the background as we follow the sacrificing Saviour. Jesus said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Only as we follow the Saviour in the investment of self can we hope to catch men for Christ.

Some years ago God seemed to impress an elderly lady, living in a beautiful California home, that she should close up her home and move to a Middle Western town and remain there until a Church of the Nazarene was established. Though it was hard and upsetting to her life of ease and retirement, she obeyed the voice of the Spirit. She had a carpenter board up the windows of her home, hired a gardener to look after her lawn, roses, and few orange trees, packed her trunk and suitcase, and within three weeks she was established in a two-room apartment ready to begin the task of starting the Church of the Nazarene. She began a visiting program and called in scores of homes, finding heart hunger everywhere. She rented an old garage building with some apartments in the second story. Then she sought an evangelist.

Months went by before I finally could go for the revival. She had made the third earnest call for me to come. When I first met her at the train, she was care-worn, thin, and nearly exhausted with her intensive efforts to prepare everything for the revival. She laughed for joy

when she saw me and said that I was the fellow she had seen in one of her seasons of prayer. She assured me that God would answer prayer and give us a revival and a church in that little city. Scores were converted in the meeting, seven were called to the ministry. Within twelve months' time there were seventy-five members in the new church, and God's cause was making wonderful progress. This woman had invested herself, and God gave a glorious harvest.

Following Christ implies leaving everything behind and making God's work first. When Joseph and Mary found Jesus after three days' seeking, they found Him in the Temple. When they inquired why He had not followed them homeward, His only answer was, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" God's business must be first. These men left their boats, their nets, their fishing business, and their kinsfolk to follow Jesus. Every holding band and every hindering tie that would keep us from being at our best in the soul-winning business must be severed and left behind.

The Saviour's promise was, "And I will make you fishers of men." He makes us as we follow -- follow Christ in the school of prayer, follow Him into no man's land amid the suffering multitudes, follow Him in the investment of self, until love for the lost and loyalty to those who trust us lay firm claim upon all there is of us. Following Him in His example of making God's business first will make spiritual, compassionate, consecrated, soul-centered individuals of us. Show me the one that is spiritual, compassionate, consecrated, and soul-centered, and I will show you a soul winner, a fisher of men.

We will not all fish in the same stream nor use the same tackle nor depend upon the same lure. But we will soon discover where we can find the most fish, which of our lures are the most attractive, and which rod and reel we can best handle. Someone may feel that he is most effective when casting the net of "mass evangelism" and making his appeal to the lost by mighty evangelistic preaching from behind the pulpit. Others may set their nets and lines through Sunday school and religious education programs, and hope to make a sure catch at some future date. There are still others who go forth with flexible rod, smooth reel, and flitting fly to ring doorbells, contact lone individuals, and thus try to land some shining beauties for the Master. Fish in the boat, or fish in the creel, is the goal of every true fisherman who goes forth.

There is no glory in the fisherman's returning at the close of the day and being able to say, "I never got wet, my lunch was wonderful, the water was right, I never got a scratch, never lost a leader or broke a hook, but I never caught a fish." Who minds wet clothes, lost leader, or broken hooks? It is fish that the true fisherman is seeking.

Christ's coming into the world His life, death, resurrection, and ascension -- was for but one thing, namely, to save men from sin and its consequences. His call for Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him was for one mission only, namely, "fishers of men." Preacher, laymen, the church with all of its organization and effort in religious work, have but one mission, namely, bringing men to Christ. The erection of a new church building with correct appointments, or a new, comfortable parsonage, mortgages burned, budgets paid, large crowds, community approval, fine choirs, or beautiful pipe organs -- all are empty and purposeless unless in the end they contribute to the one chief aim of the church, winning men to Christ!

We will catch men only as we are clothed in His might, warmed by His Spirit, and walk in His footsteps.

"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

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05 -- MEASURING OUR RESPONSIBILITY -- HUGH C. BENNER

Success in any realm is achieved largely by meeting responsibility. Most of the problems of our day are rooted in the attempt to evade responsibility. In our social, political, and economic relationships, too many desire the maximum of privilege but the minimum of responsibility. And the church has not escaped, for thousands of people whose names are on church rolls are accepting all the advantages of the church but are unwilling to bear any commensurate share of burdens and responsibilities.

We need to keep in mind constantly the basic character of Christian stewardship, for not only are we saved by the grace of Christ, but we must also and always recognize that we are to be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (I Pet. 4:10). Thus, when we read that we are to give an account of our stewardship, it involves more than money or other possessions; it involves a spiritual stewardship.

Someone may ask, "What is my responsibility, and how can I know the measure of it?" The answer to this question is defined clearly in words of Jesus when He declared, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48). Here is a sliding scale of responsibility which is logical and just, and we shall be judged finally in the light of this principle.

Again it may be asked, "What do we as the Church of the Nazarene have, and what is the measure of that which has been given to us?" At this point it is easy to become victim to the temptation to plead our relatively small numerical strength or our comparative youth as a denomination. But if we face the facts, we realize that God has given us a great and rich heritage in spiritual possessions, and the elements of this heritage constitute the measure of our responsibility.

We have a rich doctrinal possession in the full light of scriptural holiness. We know that not only may sinners be forgiven, but that Christian believers may be sanctified wholly and filled with the blessed Holy Spirit. We are rich in the possession of the truth of vital spiritual experience, understanding that Jesus Christ calls to more than a code or standard of living. He brings us into vital relationship with God and gives to us an experience of peace, joy, and assurance. We have an abiding faith in the Word of God and a confidence in His faithfulness. And from our beginnings, the Church of the Nazarene has been committed to an evangelistic emphasis, so that soul winning has always been a fundamental and primary activity in our group. God has given us the unity of the Spirit and the freedom of the Spirit. How wealthy we are!

In the light of our rich heritage and of our present possessions as a church, are we doing our reasonable best? I fear that the answer must be in the negative. Other groups, without the clear light of scriptural holiness, and without a spiritual and evangelistic tradition such as ours, may have excuses to offer for their failures. But we who have the blessings enumerated above have no excuse. We must sense and face our responsibility, realizing that the gospel has been entrusted to us, and that we are here "not to be ministered unto, but to minister"; that it is not enough to hold to correct doctrinal positions, or to maintain proper standards, or just to be blessed and rejoice in the joys of heart holiness.

The normal, inevitable result of the experience of holiness should be the winning of souls. The feeling of such a responsibility must be personal and individual. It must be a deep heart interest that enters into the heart interest of Jesus Christ. Such a fundamental concern for souls is more than an enthusiastic support of the church. It involves more than the promotion of an attractive denominational program, more than the raising of increasingly large sums of money, more than developing effective church organization. All this is good and worthy; but if we succeed in all these phases of church activity and fail in soul winning, we fail! There is no adequate compensation in any other realm if we fail in our basic mission bringing men and women to the saving and sanctifying knowledge of Jesus Christ.

There are too many professing Christians who may be charged with a kind of spiritual embezzlement. Many years ago, in a far western state, a man became prominent as the head of a large building and loan company. Thousands of small investors had placed their savings in this company. These investments represented old-age security for some, future home plans for others, or money for the education of children. Suddenly the news broke that this man had betrayed his trust and had taken more than ten million dollars and diverted this vast amount to his own interests. As the word of this major embezzlement spread, there was a wave of popular indignation against such a criminal act.

But in the spiritual realm there may also be a betrayal of trust. In this we deal with more than money and temporal investments. We have been entrusted with the spiritual light and truth, and instead of the limited results for time, we are dealing with the unlimited results for eternity. Immortal souls are at stake, and God will not hold guiltless those who fail in this supreme stewardship.

There are some attitudes which characterize all effective soul winning, and the first of these is compassion. The measure of our compassion reveals how much we really care for the lost. In the Gospels we read frequently of Jesus that "he had compassion on them." In practically every such case, when that phrase appears, immediately afterward our Lord engaged in some ministry of helpfulness toward those concerned. For compassion is more than a cheap sympathy or a passing pity. It represents a disposition to identify one's self with another's need, and to do something about it.

This principle is illustrated perfectly in the story of the Good Samaritan. A man was in distress on the Jericho road, having been robbed, beaten almost to death, and left helpless by the side of the road. Along came a priest, and doubtless he analyzed the situation perfectly. But

apparently he felt no sense of responsibility, for "he passed by on the other side" of the road. Likewise, along came a Levite, and he saw the situation just as did the priest. Probably both of these men blamed the man himself for having taken the risks of the journey without adequate protection, and they may have felt a passing interest. But as with the priest, the Levite felt no responsibility that would interfere with his journey.

But when the Samaritan came by, the situation changed. It is well to emphasize the fact that this Samaritan saw exactly what the priest and Levite had seen -- no more, no less. His analysis of the circumstances undoubtedly was about the same as that of the earlier travelers. But there the similarity ceases, for a new element enters the picture when the record declares, "He had compassion on him." In other words, the Samaritan felt something which the priest and Levite did not feel. And that feeling of compassion would not let him "pass by on the other side," but drew him directly and irresistibly to the dying man's side of the road, to minister to his needs and start him toward safety and full recovery. It is this feeling of compassion that must grip our hearts if we are to be effective soul winners.

Again, we must be gripped by a sense of the spiritual need of a lost world. In many places in our world, the need of humanity is clearly apparent in the poverty, filth, and superstition of the people. In the more favored countries, where standards of living are relatively high, it is easy to miss the fact that the fundamental spiritual need is the same the world over, and that our friends, neighbors, and relatives are in spiritual darkness -- lost -- unless they are touched by the redeeming grace of Christ. We need a revival of the sense of the lostness of all sinners, regardless of their intellectual, economic, or cultural levels. Such a clear understanding is an absolute prerequisite of any deep, powerful revival, and is essential to any adequate burden for souls.

Finally, there must be on our minds and hearts a powerful sense of urgency. We need to share something of the feeling of Jesus Christ when He declared, "I must work the works of him that sent me." We should partake of the Apostle Paul's desperation -- a kind of divine desperation in soul winning -- when he wrote, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." Paul made it clear that he was throwing everything into this prime project of the Church and of every Christian. It appears sometimes as if our people feel that there is plenty of time. But a few moments of consideration will make clear the fallacy of such a nonchalant attitude. Time is passing rapidly. Thousands, yea, tens of thousands of Nazarenes have less than twenty-five years of service left to them before life will be ended and opportunity for soul winning closed. It behooves us all to realize this and ask God to put upon our souls a new sense of urgency.

This urgency has a real point in relation to our worldwide mission. In many parts of the world there are clear signs of growing opposition and even desperate resistance to the gospel we preach. In some cases this development is fostered by fanatical adherents of groups that claim to be followers of Jesus Christ. In others, the opposition is from definitely anti-Christian sources. But the desired results are the same, and these forces threaten to close door after door to the freedom and truth of the true gospel of Christ. In the light of these facts, we as Nazarenes should feel the drive of a new urgency to spread the "good news" as widely as possible, and as rapidly as possible, for individually and collectively "the night cometh, when no man can work."

It is this truth of soul-winning responsibility, with its accompanying attitudes, that underlies the "Crusade for Souls Now" in the Church of the Nazarene. The implications of our very high profession call for an aggressive, impassioned, Spirit-anointed movement of evangelism that has in it all the qualities of a crusade. Unless we are to fail God, we must plan and pray and work for a pungent revival of purposeful evangelistic preaching from our pulpits, supported by a praying, consecrated laity devoted to obeying the Great Commission in the realm of personal soul winning.

A goodly number of our pastors have seen the vision and caught the spirit of the "Crusade for Souls Now." They have utilized the plans which are tested and proved, and the results are apparent in the souls won and in additions to our church membership by profession of faith -- which represents the real achievement of our church. But it is deeply regrettable that so many Nazarene pastors are doing little, if anything, about the Crusade. In such cases, spiritual life is at a low ebb, and the church "levels off" or retrogresses.

In the name of Christ, and for the sake of souls perishing all around us, we plead for an active interest and definite participation in this "Crusade for Souls Now." In the light of all that God has given us, we cannot do less, remembering that "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

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THE END