

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness.—Isa. 35-8

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THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST

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You will find the Scripture which suggests the title to this article in II. Tim., 4th chapter and 5th verse, where the Apostle Paul admonishes Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist." "Make full proof of thy ministry, for the time of my departure is at hand." Now, with just these few words as an introduction, we will proceed with the thoughts suggested in our text. First let me say that we infer from the wording of the text that evangelism is real work, for it means preaching the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and that greatly taxes the preacher's physical strength.

Now a man may lecture or preach about the gospel or other topics, or recite his sermons over and over again which he has memorized, without very much drain on his physical powers; but that is not doing the work of an evangelist, for it does not produce the desired results in the extension of the kingdom of God.

Next, I would say if the work of an evangelist involves real arduous toil, then he should have a fair chance to do his work. I mean that he should have a comfortable room where he can read, pray and wait on God, until he gets his message for the people, and keep his own soul under the divine anointing. Of course he should have proper food to eat, and that would be whatever agreed with him and was easy to digest. In the matter of food, every man must be a law to himself, for what is suitable for one may not do for another. It is not always easy to procure a proper place for the evangelist to stay, for various reasons. First, because many who are well able to entertain him are not willing to do so because he would make a little extra work or expense, and they have not enough interest in God's work in the salvation of souls to make a little extra effort.

Again, many would be unwilling to have a man of God in their home too long, because he would learn some things about them and their family which they prefer that he would not know. They could have him come in for dinner or tea, when they were all prepared for him, and they could be real pleasant and quite religious for a short time and make a very favorable impression on him, but it would never do for him to stay too long, hence they could not conveniently keep him through the series of meetings.

Again, there are always those who would be glad to keep him, but they have children in their family which occupy all their rooms. Of course he could be boarded at a hotel or regular boarding house, but very often the church is not financially able to do that. Then again, there is a

general and very manifest decline of the spirit of hospitality in these last few years. We seem to have fallen upon times when people do not like to entertain company as they did a generation ago, which makes it quite difficult at times to hold religious meetings, such as quarterly meetings, etc. This rapidly-growing spirit of selfishness is one of the indications mentioned in holy writ that we are nearing the end of time. "For men shall be lovers of their own selves."—II. Tim. 3-2, and have a form of godliness. But I must not wander too far from my text, for I was speaking about the work of an evangelist, and yet an evangelist to be successful must have the co-operation of the church members.

So we infer that the work of an evangelist is primarily preaching the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and someone has said that one hour of such preaching will take as much energy as eight hours using a pick and shovel. When we say the gospel, we mean the whole gospel, which includes every phase of truth, with the object of course of bringing men into complete harmony with God's will concerning them, which involves conviction for sinners, regeneration for the penitent, entire sanctification for the justified, and the edification of all of God's people. Now, in order for an evangelist to do this work some things are involved. First, he must know experimentally what he is preaching to others, and be living in conscious fellowship with God every day with God's approbation, and with victory in his own soul. Next, in addition to these he will need great patience, because men's hearts are hard and their wills are stubborn, and it takes time to bring them to a point of surrender. Sometimes the preacher seems to forget this fact and seems to think that if there is not a ready response on the part of the unsaved, that it is because the professors of religion are all backsliders; hence, he often turns on them and mercilessly abuses the faithful children of God and the professors of holiness, telling them that they are a backslidden bunch, until the unsaved and unsanctified lose confidence in the church, and the enemies of the doctrine of holiness use his unfair criticisms as weapons against us. Brethren, I believe it is very unchristian and unjust for any preacher to ventilate and hold up the weaknesses of the holiness movement, or of any church as a movement, to ridicule before a company of unsaved people who know nothing of these things and whom we are trying to get saved. I am not saying that we should not preach against hypocrisy and all sin everywhere, but we should avoid being personal, for no person likes to hear his own family slandered in public, even by a preacher. I am not unmindful of the fact that in many cases

the low spiritual condition of the church is a hindrance to a revival, but I also know that after the church has done its duty, men are still free moral agents; they were able to resist Jesus and the apostles in the days of their earthly ministry, and they are still able to do so. There is a way of preaching the gospel that wounds and discourages God's best people; and again it is possible to preach the same sermon in such a spirit of tenderness that makes men feel that while you are against their sin, that you love them. I find that only as I preach in that spirit do I have God's smile and blessing on my own soul. We need to remember that the Word is the sword of the Spirit, not the sword of man. We are having a sample of the kind of preaching that I am recommending right now by Bro. Hilyard, who is here with us in special meetings. While the preaching is straight and powerful, is drawing the people in to hear him, and many are being saved. We have not the space here to discriminate between the work of an evangelist and the work of a pastor, but there is a difference, and may the dear Lord help each of us to find our place and do our work as unto Him.

WESLEY, THE WORKER

"John Wesley averaged three sermons a day for fifty-four years, preaching all told more than 44,000 times. In doing this he travelled by horseback and carriage more than 290,000 miles, or about 5,000 miles a year. His published works include a four-volume commentary on the whole Bible, a dictionary of the English language, a five-volume work on natural philosophy, a four-volume work on church history, histories of England and Rome, grammars on the Hebrew, Latin, Greek, French and English languages, three works on medicine, six volumes of church music, seven volumes of sermons and controversial papers. He also edited a library of fifty volumes known as 'The Christian Library.' He was a pastor greatly devoted to pastoral work. Later he had the care of 'all the churches' upon him. He arose at four a. m. and worked solidly through to ten p. m., allowing only brief periods for his meals. In the midst of all this work he declared, 'I have more hours of private retirement than any man in England.'"—*Watchman and Examiner*.

It matters not how long you have lived, but how well.—*Seneca*.

Thou mayest as well expect to grow stronger by always eating, as wiser by always reading.—*Fuller*.