

The Pastor's Message

SOUL WINNING

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"He that winneth souls is wise" Proverbs 11:31.

Soul winning is the greatest task of the Christian and is the life of the Church. It is our earnest prayer that God may help us to accomplish more in this great work.

There are few if any that are used exclusively in the salvation of a soul. It generally follows that Paul plants, Appollos waters, God always giving the increase.

The first thing to note is that souls need to be saved; that if they are not saved they are eternally lost. This fact alone is sufficient to stir our hearts and impel us to be soul-winners.

"He that winneth souls is wise." We must have both natural and acquired wisdom. As Matthew Henry states: "We must have wisdom to win souls and he that wins souls has wisdom." Perhaps the easiest way to demonstrate winning a soul is to use an Old Testament analogy. In Genesis we have Abraham commanding his servant to go and obtain a wife for his son Isaac. Abraham represents God. Isaac represents or is a type of Jesus; the servant represents the Christian worker and Rebecca represents the Church or the bride of Christ.

We would note that the servant employed is the oldest of Abraham's household, hence he is acquainted with Isaac and understands the type of wife that would be suitable for him. He is instructed where to go to obtain the bride and specifically instructed to locate the one whom the Angel had selected. In like manner the Christian worker is to seek the bride of Christ. The angel is a type of the Holy Spirit and as the former directed the servant to the correct party, so also will the Holy Spirit direct the Christian to the one whom He has arrested and made known his claims.

We would note that when the servant came within range of the city that he offered special prayer for divine guidance. The Spirit of God who enabled him to identify Rebecca, also had spoken to Rebecca so that she was in the proper place to be identified. In like manner, if we as Christians will live close to God He will arrange providences in our lives where we will contact those whom we might be successful in winning to Christ.

The servant was teachable. At first he did not comprehend that his work was to be supplemented with that of the Angel consequently he suggested that Isaac go with him. Abraham objected. Possibly Isaac would be infatuated with the wrong women; at any rate he was not to go.

It was the privilege of the servant to make clear to the proper party that Isaac was well fixed in temporal affairs and that by virtue of her union with him, all that he had would be hers. If the woman refused to follow the servant, then he was free from his obligation. By virtue of our union with Christ, "all things are yours; whether Paul or Appollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Thus the Christian has a wonderful message to give to his fellow-men. Praise the Lord!

Rebecca is soon identified as the "right

one." She is fair to look upon and a virgin. The servant offers a prayer of thanksgiving, and inquires for a night's lodging. Before gratifying his hunger, he makes known his errand, thus putting his duty to his Master before self-preservation. Everything works out perfectly and Rebecca goes to be the wife of Isaac.

The lessons learned from the analogy are quite obvious. First of all there must be obedience. The servant gave his oath that he would do as Abraham directed him. Next he is teachable. He is willing to suffer defeat rather than go contrary to the directions of Abraham, relative to going alone. He is a man of prayer, consequently has Divine guidance. "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my Master's brethren." He is thankful. He is self-sacrificing, putting the interests of his Master ahead of his own; as noted while he sat at meat. Further he is humble. Having accomplished the task of his Master he retires from Rebecca, that he might not come between her and Isaac.

Lastly, the servant did not compromise in order to win Rebecca. He did not advocate that she go with Isaac as an experiment, but made it clear that it was a lifetime contract. According to Peter, Sarah lived an exemplary life, obeying Abraham, calling him Lord. Nothing less than this would be satisfactory for Isaac. Thus to win souls we must not compromise. Her brother and her mother desired that she remain with them for ten months or a year and then go with Isaac. The servant called for an immediate decision and a complete separation. What Sarah was to Abraham in obedience and modesty, so Rebecca was to be to Isaac. Thus to be a successful soul-winner, we must not only lead them to a decision but also educate them in obedience and holiness.

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RECOVERING THE LOST GLORY

One of God's useful men of another day was asked to give the secret of those mighty revivals. His reply was most enlightening. Said he, "Our first aim was to get the glory of God on His people. Our first prayer was, 'Come on Thy people, O Lord.'" That, indeed, is a message for us. We need a revival. We have been thinking—talking—and praying revivals. We have had showers of blessings. But we have not seen the Pentecostal outpourings that God wants to give us. Greater things lie ahead of us in the realm of the possible. Let us get "the glory of the Lord" upon us and ye shall see greater results. "The glory is a term not used much today. But we need it more than we need anything else."

What is "The Glory?"

By "the glory" we mean the bright lustre, the glow and splendor, the shining countenance when the Spirit of God comes among and upon His people. It may be difficult to define and describe, but it is glorious to experience. Its loss is a tragic loss. In 1 Samuel 4:10-22 we have the record of a case where the lost "glory" was such cause for sorrow that a mother could not rejoice over the birth of a son; but gave him a name that would be a reminder of the days when the Divine Presence with its rich blessings was visible. The sad-hearted mother died, mourning the lost glory.

There is ground for hope, however, in the fact that the lost glory may be recovered.

Our God is a merciful God; and when we repent and try to recover His presence, He restores His glory.

Second Chronicles 7:3 tells us of the manifest glory of God, "when Solomon had made an end of praying;" that is, when he had, as we say, "prayed through." Read that reference, please, as well as Exodus 24:17; 40:30; 1 Kings 8:11; and Acts 7:55.

"The Glory" May be Lost

It is a sad and dangerous day when any individual, church, or institution does not crave the glory of the Lord more than money or popularity. Nothing else really counts if the glory is gone. We may have better educated leaders; we may have nicer church edifices; we may have more elaborate forms of worship; we may have more funds than ever; we may have more prestige among our fellow-townsmen; but if there is not an increase in the number of souls won and in the extent of the church's influence for holy character and righteous conduct, of what avail are these other and lesser things?

It is possible for preachers, churches, camps, schools, and other institutions—as well as laymen—to lose the glory. Once they were radiant, powerful, fervent; once they were more than conquerors, now they hardly conquer; once they had a passion to win souls, now they have (at best) only a passive interest in evangelism. There is no glory. It is gone. They may still speak the language of the spiritual life and observe its forms; they may be as strict outwardly as ever (and may be bitter along with their strictness!) but there is no fragrance and fruit about them. "The glory" is missing.

There is no virtue in the name our Church possesses unless the spirit of its founding father and the glory of our God rests upon us.

What Will Hinder "The Glory?"

One very common cause is the neglect of the truth. By the truth we are set free, by it we are guided into the will of God; by it our joy is made full, by it our message is made authoritative; and by it we know what special subjects to emphasize. There is nothing more radical than truth and nothing more popular than error. May God keep us balanced by "the truth."

Another cause for the lost glory is an indifference toward duty; an inclination to argue with God about the light He sheds upon us concerning habits, amusements, associates, adornments; or indulgence in something God forbids; the choice of a career out of God's will; or the possession of a murmuring, grumbling, fault-finding spirit that creates restlessness and rebellion against the will of God for the soul. The maintaining of an unwholesome attitude toward another (who may be innocent and who, furthermore, may be ignorant of this attitude) will stay "the glory" and starve your own soul into painful barrenness.

A failure to obey, promptly and willingly, the leadings of the Holy Spirit when He reveals something to confess or to forsake; something to restore or some new duty to commence; or some position and attitude to abandon, all these things hinder the glory of the Lord from resting upon the soul. And as this affects you it affects others whom your being blessed might also help to get blessed.

Perhaps the greatest cause for the lost glory is the not taking time to be holy; a slackening of the devotional period, a letting down in

(Continued on Page 7)