

Go Ye Into All the World and Preach the Gospel to Every Creature

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona
Dec. 9th, 1945

Dear Highway Friends:

Cards and letters from Canada are reminding us of our friends and also that it's time for a few more lines from us.

The weather is so very warm, especially as we are having very little rain. The people have started ploughing, but will soon have to stop, unless we get rain again as the ground is so hard and dry.

Christmas is fast approaching. I had my Christmas closing for the S. S. children last Friday as school is closing this week. Through the holidays I shall have Sunday School on Sunday mornings as usual. Just about one hundred were present on Friday afternoon. The children listened attentively to the Christmas lesson, read from Matt. 2 and many answered well the questions asked them. Nearly eighty had had perfect attendance and each received a little gift. We chose four from each class who had done well with their lessons and these each received a book. I had pretty Christmas cards (these have been sent by friends in Canada) for all and also fudge and a handful of raisins. Our present teacher is not much interested in Sunday School work and as my Zulu is not too fluent, I find it rather difficult at times to carry on. But the Lord has helped me and I do pray that He will continue to lead and guide.

Our last Young People's service had a very small attendance, due to a heavy rain that day. Two young people, Charley Lukeh and Salaphina Msibi, had charge and the service was good, even though only about twenty-five were present.

We had a very good service here on Sunday. Nearly fifty were present. Losaya preached from Rom. 8:1. Quite a number testified. One woman's words blessed me very much. Recently a son had died and last week a nephew also passed away. Yet she was thanking God for her many blessings. She was grateful that these boys died trusting God, that she expected to see them soon as she had no desire to walk after the flesh but after the Spirit, etc.

The nephew of this woman was the son of Chief Sibuja, I believe. His name was Aaron, and he was attending school at Altona. He was a bright young boy of about twelve years. I think appendicitis caused his death. It was a great shock to his family and we do sympathize with them.

Eugene went to Lounsburg on Friday and has not returned. He expected to spend Sunday at Rev. Paul Nkosi's home, as there was

to be a special service there that day. We do pray that God will continue to bless His work in that direction also.

May God bless and be with you all and may you enjoy a blessed Christmas season. We do thank all who have sent cards, letters, etc., to brighten the Christmas season for us.

Yours in Christian love,
GLADYS KIERSTEAD

THE CHURCH'S UNFINISHED TASK

By Ernest L. Beuter

When the Lord Jesus departed from this earth to take His place at the Father's side, He left before His disciples a single, well-defined task. His sole program for this age, as announced by Himself, was the building of His church (Matt. 16:18). The method to be employed was the simple proclamation of the Gospel message "unto the uttermost parts of the earth," and the saving of all that should believe (1 Cor. 1:21). His parting instructions (Acts 1:8) were brief and unmistakable. The disciples were to witness of Him in ever-widening circles, until all men everywhere had heard the good news of salvation from the guilt and power of sin through the incarnate, crucified and risen Son of God.

Of course, the Apostles would not be able to complete the task by themselves; but as the Gospel was spread abroad, new believers would be added to their ranks, and these in turn would tell others, and so on, and on, until the evangelization of the earth for Christ should be accomplished, and the full number of the elect gathered in.

The Book of Acts is the inspired record of the beginnings of this great and glorious project. In it we see that a literal obedience to the Great Commission was the driving passion of the early Christians. Missions was not regarded as a sideline, but rather as the main channel of Christian activity; not merely a by-product of the church's existence, but the very reason of its existence. The Lord had set before them but one task, and that task will continue to be the sole business of the church 'until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.'

Furthermore, it follows that if world evangelization is the sole task of the church, then all the other Christian activities should be held subservient to that great purpose. Centuries of church history have been wasted because of the failure to perceive this truth. Likewise, hundreds of thousands of dollars from the pockets of sincere believers are even now being virtually thrown away on gigantic campaigns whose chief effect is to amuse the Gospel-hardened sinners of America, when the same money could be used, and should be used to carry the Good News to unreached multitudes in other lands,

who would be ten times more likely to accept it as such.

Surely it must be evident to every Christian that such unequal distribution of the Gospel is neither Christlike nor business-like. We read of our Savior (Luke 4:31-44) that when His preaching in Capernaum seemed to have reached the very peak of success, He deliberately dismissed the crowds that sought Him, saying, "I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also: For therefore am I sent." And He departed into Galilee.

We find this same impartial policy carried out in the book of Acts. It was not God's will that the Apostles should confine their labors to Jerusalem, or even to all Judea, until everyone there had been converted, for then they should have had to remain there always; but it was His plan that as soon as the majority of people in those places had had opportunity to know the way of salvation, the Apostles should go on to the neighboring Country of Samaria, and from thence "unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This is strikingly illustrated in chapter eight, where we see Philip called from a highly successful campaign in Samaria to go down into the desert to preach the Gospel to a lone Ethiopian. In the eyes of God, the black man held a priority over the Samaritans because the latter had heard while the Ethiopians had not.

Similarly we read in the sixteenth chapter that although the need was yet great in Asia, the Spirit of God forbade Paul to preach there any longer, but called his attention to the still greater need which existed in Macedonia.

Certainly if God has so plainly revealed His will concerning foreign missions, we can do nothing but obey, regardless of our previous notions on the subject. It is not enough just to be doing any kind of Christian work. We must have a clear conception of the divine mission of the church, and see to it that our efforts are only those which are best calculated to hasten its completion.

The Great Commission has not changed in the least since the day it was given. As long as there remains on earth a single unevangelized tribe, it will continue to say to every spiritually fit and able-bodied follower of Christ, "Go!" Have we really taken this command seriously? or do we give missions second place in our thinking, in our praying, and in our budgets? Would we be willing to go if a little praying and planning should prove that it was possible? or are we content to win an occasional soul at home? And if it should prove impossible for us to go ourselves, even to some such field as Europe or Alaska, will we earnestly do our utmost to arouse, train and support others that they may go?

May God help us, every one, to perceive more