

MISSIONARY PAGE

Soul Winning

The Irresponsibility of Christians

By J. Oswald Sanders

A passion for souls is rare among church members today. The great mass of Christian people feel not the slightest responsibility for the souls of their fellowmen. If they can manage to save their own souls, that is the end of their concern. The reasons for this apathy are not far to seek.

I

An Absence of Conviction that every Impenitent Soul is Utterly Lost

There may be a willingness to subscribe to the orthodox creed concerning future punishment, but there is a world of difference between a credal belief and a working faith. "Were I a religionist," declared a noted infidel, "did I firmly, truly, consistently believe as millions say they do, that the knowledge and practice of religion in this life influence destiny in another, religion should be to me everything. I would cast aside earthly enjoyments as dross, earthly cares as follies, and earthly thoughts and feelings as less than vanity . . . I would esteem one soul gained to heaven worth a life of suffering . . ."

I would strive to look but on eternity and on the immortal souls around me, soon to be everlastingly miserable or everlastingly happy." Is our attitude to this life and eternity as that described in the infidel's statement?

II

An Absence of Concern for the Lost

An old Puritan used to speak of having a "concern," and a meaningful expression it is. Christ had a concern for the individuals and for the multitudes. His concern was so real and so deep that at times the flood of manly tears could no longer be restrained, and rolled down His compassionate face. Jesus, the manliest of men, wept. Paul, the brave, besought men night and day, with tears, to be reconciled to God. When a young missionary, who had been invalided home, was asked why he was so eager to get back to his people, he said, "I cannot sleep for thinking about them."

Oh, for tear-filled eyes; oh, for sleepless eyes, because of the imminent danger and doom of the unsaved. Do the tears ever start unbidden from our eyes as we behold our city filled with sin and suffering and shame? Does sleep ever flee our eyes because of our concern for the souls around?

III

An Absence of Conception of the Value of a Soul

Christ conceived the human soul to be of such transcendent value that He gladly exchanged the shining courts of glory for a life of poverty, suffering, shame, and death, rather than that souls should perish. Let us endeavour to arrive at some true estimate of the value of a soul.

(1) **Its nature and origin.** Man was made in the image of God, and into him was breath-

ed the breath of God. Man is an immortal being.

(2) **Its powers and capacities.** The capacities of a human being, even in this life, seem almost limitless, but they have been prostituted to base uses in the service of the usurper. But man is still capable of fellowship with God—the highest privilege conceivable to the mind of a human being.

(3) **The duration of its existence.** The human soul exists eternally, and either in bliss or in woe. See II. Corinthians 4:18; I. Corinthians 15:53; Romans 8:11; Jude 7; II. Peter 3:6-7; Matthew 25:46.

4. **The cost of its redemption.** It required . . . crimson drops of precious blood from the broken body of Christ.

AT ANY COST . . .

**O Lord, my God, much grace by Thee
Has freely been bestowed on me.**

**Thy mercy, love, yea, wondrous light
Delivered me from blackest night;
And now, can I, dare I, choose ease—
Go back to things myself to please?
Nay, Father, stir me for the lost,
To give myself—at any cost!**

**Shall grace bestowed on me be vain?
Shall many still in sin remain**

**Because this stubborn will of mine
Refused obedience unto Thine?
Nay, Lord, one glad, eternal "Yes"
I give, and many shall confess
Thy blessed name. Thus vow I must—
I'll follow Thee at any cost!**

**From henceforth all to Thee I give;
I know not where my life I'll live,
And care not, only if God's Son
Can look on me, and say, "Well done."
In joy? In pain? What matters where,
If I but know He sent me there?
Cost? Nay! 'Tis gain to follow Thee—
Lead on, Thou Lamb of Calvary!**

—Heart and Life

(5) **The struggle required for its possession.** Why is the unregenerate human soul the battleground of both God and the Devil, the one actuated by love, the other by hate? Because both knew and rightly appraise the possibilities for good and evil of only one human soul. No wonder souls are not lightly won with such an adversary. If, then, a soul is of such passing value, to save it no expense is too large, no pain too agonizing, no trouble too great.

Such a concern will be produced in the heart only by using the means adopted to stir up our minds on the subject. Paul's concern, as one has said, sprang from a threefold conviction. First, one great verity which we must all face—the great white throne. Second, one experience through which all men must pass—the resurrection either to life or to condemnation. Third, one destiny towards which all things are moving—the great eternity.

From The Field HARTLAND M. S.

Dear Highway Friends,

We rejoice this morning and praise God for His great salvation that has been provided for all mankind, and which is able to save from all sin, and unto the uttermost, all that come unto God by Jesus Christ.

The Altona Quarterly which closed on the 13th was outstanding in many ways. The most important feature was the presence and blessing of the Lord, in the services and business sessions, and upon the messages and altar services. The Altona brethren had made good preparation for the entertainment of the Quarterly, and of course the sisters must be included in this. The usual mark of a great occasion was there in the provision of a cow for meat. Besides the cost of this cow and a goat, the Sunday offering was very good, being over four pounds. The attendance for the closing service was over three hundred people. The new recruits for the Gospel ministry, and those coming to us from other denominations, both as members and as workers, also made it an outstanding occasion. Then I might mention another point of importance, and that was the final arrangement for the placing and replacing of your missionaries. For the Morgans to take over the Hartland area work, and the Sanders family to move to Lowsburg to try to open up that new field.

It is not altogether a new field at Lowsburg for we already have several outposts in that area, and brother George Sanders, Miss Campbell and two families of native workers have already done work at Lowsburg. We are praying that the Lord will be pleased to use his servants in their new fields, and trust that the work as a whole will be much benefited. We are glad to know that there are many in the homeland who will continue to pray for us as we try to win souls for our Savior in these places that are new to us. We thank God for the coming of the Morgans, making possible this change.

I feel that God has great things for us here on the foreign field, and that we are nearing the point where revival can break out. We feel the need of an old fashioned revival in this missionary work, and unless we do see this happen, things are not to go ahead so fast or so deep. Let us join in praying for this vital need.

We missed Sister Campbell at the Altona Quarterly but were glad that she has had opportunity to have a visit to the homeland, and trust that she may be made a blessing during her visit there. We also missed Sisters Kierstead and Sanders who were not able to attend on account of poor health. However, we are rejoiced to know that both of these sisters have gained very much in health. Surely nothing is impossible with our God.

So now we begin, or continue to look forward to the next Quarterly which is to be here at Hartland, and during which we hope to have the church opening at Lujowane. We are already praying for the success of these meetings.

C. D. M. SANDERS.

Have you prayed for Africa today?