

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN SOUL WINNING

By Rev. William H. Pratt

"Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:9).

Since the day that Cain slew his brother Abel, man has sought to free himself of personal responsibility. The pertinent question, "Where is thy brother?" still haunts the conscience of the indifferent. The challenge of human responsibility must be accepted by all true followers of Jesus Christ.

When our Saviour dwelt among men, His mission and ministry were not confined to the masses. To the contrary, the urge to reach the individual was constantly bringing Him into contact with personal problems and the pressing needs of the people who crowded the busy thoroughfares of life. There are many such instances. He entered a private home where a woman lay sick of a fever. He took her by the hand and lifted her up. Immediately the fever left her. Along the way a leper came running, beseeching Him, and kneeling down, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Jesus put forth His hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be thou clean." Four interested personal workers brought a man to Jesus, sick of the palsy. Jesus saw their faith and said unto the man, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." By Jacob's well Jesus spoke to a sinful woman and gave her the water of life.

Near the closing days of Christ's earthly ministry, He said unto the disciples, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem." His most direct course would have been southward through the beautiful valley of Esdraelon. There, in the spring of the year, the flowers were blooming and the birds were singing. The air was balmy and all nature invited the traveler to tread the pleasant paths through scenes of gorgeous beauty.

Strange as it may seem, Jesus did not take the easy road. Instead, He turned His course toward Jericho, where a poor blind man waited by the wayside to hear the words of the healer Divine, "Receive thy sight."

As Jesus passed within the city, Zacchaeus, a chief publican, looked down from a sycamore tree and beheld the upturned face of the Master. His eyes pierced the heart and conscience. His commanding voice spoke not only condemnation, but comfort. In haste Zacchaeus came down and joyfully received Jesus into his house. Blind Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus were two of the last of Christ's converts to be won by personal effort of the Master before the hour of His death on Calvary.

To successfully win men for the Lord, the call of duty is imperative. Man is lost! This startling, stinging statement should arouse us to action as much as an announcement of a child being lost in the forest. Christ's ministry to the lost was impelling.

"I must be about my Father's business" (Luke 2:49).

"I must preach" (Luke 4:43).

"I must work the works of him that sent me" (John 9:4).

"He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer" (Matthew 16:21).

Jesus has gone to heaven. He has no personal representation on earth but His children. "Ye are my witnesses." Angels in heaven rejoice when a sinner returns to God, but they have no part in telling the story of redemption. They do not know the joy of forgiveness. They can only do the next best; they look on

and rejoice. If a sinner should ask an angel: "Were you ever bound? Did Jesus ever save you?" The answer would be in the negative. The redeemed alone have the glorious responsibility and privilege of telling the news of salvation.

How slow we have been in assuming our responsibility. Consecrated hearts are needed as channels to convey the living waters of grace. Yet the responsibility has been transferred to a few who have caught the vision. Shirking the task of personal work has blocked the progress of soul winning and hindered the Spirit. Revivals have been retarded and thwarted because the Holy Spirit could find no medium through which He could operate. He seeks embodiment in the hearts of Christians that He might enable them to be fishers of men. We need the same baptism of the Spirit with which Jesus was baptized before His public ministry. Another Pentecost must come to the church which will send us forth as flaming evangelists of truth, publicizing Jesus Christ and His power to save.

A minister was called to conduct the funeral of a young lady with whom he had never become acquainted. Seeking to know her spiritual condition, he asked the girl's Sunday school teacher, and was informed that only two weeks before the sudden death, this teacher had been strongly urged by the Spirit to speak to her about becoming a Christian. She had failed. Now it was too late. The minister then went to the mother, only to learn that she, too, had failed to make any effort to lead the daughter to Jesus. How pathetic; the Spirit had sought to get lips to speak, but without success.

It is not always easy to approach people personally about their soul's need, but opportunity brings responsibility. I have seen hungry people weeping in a revival service. All around were professed Christians who idly stood by, making no effort to assist the struggling soul. Conviction for sin had seized the heart and the sense of overhanging judgment had made the soul ready to respond; but like the poor man at the troubled waters of Bethesda, there was no one to help. "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool."

"Am I my brother's keeper?" Indeed I am! And may God help me to be faithful to the souls of men.—Pilgrim Holiness Advocate.

WHEN THE SPIRIT SPEAKS

The Holy Spirit is able to make the Word as successful now as in the days of the apostles. He can bring in souls by hundreds and thousands as well as by ones and twos. The reason why we are no more prosperous is that we have not the Holy Spirit with us in might and power as in early times.

If we had the Spirit sealing our ministry with power it would signify very little about talent. Men might be poor and uneducated, their words might be broken and ungrammatical; but if the might of the Spirit attended them, the humblest evangelist would be more successful than the most eloquent of preachers.—Oswald J. Smith.

readily for misconduct and for unkind words. Put into practice in the home the full message of the Church.

Never rest easy until every single member has surrendered to Jesus Christ. "The promise is unto you and your children." Live and die on this promise.—Wesleyan Methodist.

Evangelism in the Home

By Oliver G. Wilson

"The father to the children shall make known thy truth" (Isa. 38:19).

Evangelism has been defined as "the presentation of the Good News of God in Jesus Christ, so that men are brought, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to put their trust in God, accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour from the guilt and power of sin, follow and serve Him as their Lord in the fellowship of the Church and in the vocations of the common life."

Evangelism is more than a type of preaching, it is a living flaming passion; more than a creed, more than a dogma, more than a systematized method of work. It is a constraining emotion that will not be quenched until men find rest and safety in the atoning sacrifice of Calvary.

Let us apply this definition to life in the home—the place where souls are marked for heaven or hell.

The presentation of the Good News of God in Jesus Christ must be a day-by-day presentation in precept and example. The members of the home must be confronted with the beauty of the Gospel so persuasively and so effectively that they will be inclined to accept it as a way of life.

In many church homes the children are unsaved, indifferent to things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and the parents are apathetic concerning the matter and are content to go on year after year while their children become confirmed in their attitude of indifference to spiritual things.

The blessing of the Lord comes not upon a home simply because the Bible is present on the center table nor because ancient religious rites are observed, but because God is honored by a life that becometh holiness.

When the ark of God was taken to the house of Abinadab of Kirjath-jeerim where it rested for twenty years, nothing occurred worth mentioning. One member of the family looked after it while the other members went about their ordinary concern, unmindful of the presence of the ark. It meant no more than an ordinary chest, and no blessings of God came down.

How different it all was when the ark of God rested in the home of Obed-Edom for three months only. The blessings which came to Obed-Edom were the talk of the community. It was reported to David that "the Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that pertaineth unto him because of the ark of God." The difference in the blessings on the house of Abinadab and Obed-Edom was in the men themselves.

Thus it is today. The Bible may lie unused, and its commands disregarded in one home, while in another the Bible is read with reverence, its teachings accepted and its commands obeyed. In the one home the Bible is a silent condemning witness against the members, but in the other it is a source of comfort, a fountain of instruction, a citadel of strength.

To evangelize your home, give a large place to the Bible. Build an atmosphere of worship that is Bible centered. Submit joyfully to its demands, see that it is the book of instruction for child training and child discipline.

In order to make the Bible teachings effective in your home, speak kindly, apologize

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The King's Highway