

SOUL-WINNING ... AN INTRODUCTION

The devil, - the enemy of God and all things Godly, - has persisted in a plan throughout the ages to undermine and to hinder the proclamation of the Gospel of God's saving Grace. He has done it in many guises. In the Old Testament he manoeuvred himself and his evil philosophy into the Jewish religion and he perverted it in such a way that the God-instigated faith became polluted by outside religions such as the worship of Baal. In the Old Testament the priests of Judah gave credence to other religions and the Power behind their own faith became as an outcast.

By the time you come to the New Testament the Jewish religion had gained so many 'additives' that the message of John the Baptist by the riverside of Jordan was an anathema and foreign to the great majority of Jews.

Throughout the ministry of the apostles, - and in particular, Paul, - there had risen opponents of the Gospel inside the Church,

- * There was Hymenaeus and Alexander and Philetus, - Paul described them to Timothy as blasphemers (I Tim. 1:1) and 'cankers' (II Tim. 2:17).
- * There was Diotrephes; John wrote about him, [3 Jn. v.9 ... who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.](#)
- * Jude also records that [v.4 there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.](#)
- * And Jesus, ... He said exactly the same thing, [Mt. 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.](#)

We can trace through the centuries and record the many attacks upon the Gospel made by those from inside 'the camp' with their gospel which is no gospel at all. It is a gospel of works that takes away from the goodness and grace of an Almighty God, - He has nothing to do with a manmade gospel and therefore it doesn't save.

The great ‘giants’ of the Church contended with these exponents of false gospels and yet God, - in His Divine Sovereignty and perfect eternal will, - has blessed and is blessing the preaching, and until the gates of Hell are finally closed God’s pure, perfect and righteous Gospel will continue to be preached.

Spurgeon wrote, “The old truth that Calvin preached, that Augustine preached, that Paul preached, is the truth that I must preach to-day, or else be false to my conscience and my God. I cannot shape the truth; I know of no such thing as paring off the rough edges of a doctrine. John Knox’s gospel is my gospel. That which thundered through Scotland must thunder through England again.”

There is no substitute for this old Gospel and it is the foundation upon which Godly soul-winning is built; Paul wrote, [I Cor. 2: 2:1](#) [And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.](#)

There is absolutely no way on the face of this earth that a truly born-again, Bible-believing servant of God can give credence to the proclamation of any other Gospel than that which emanates out of the mouth of God and gives to Him all the honour and all the glory. The Gospel is this: [I Tim. 1:15](#) [Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.](#)

- * Do we believe that?
- * If we believed it, what effect would it have upon our witness?
- * If we believed it, ... how would we pray?

DO WE BELIEVE THAT?

- * Do you really and genuinely believe that [Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners?](#)
- * One of the fears I always have when I’m preaching is that I am simply heard to preach *theory*. It is not too difficult to believe in theory. It is when ‘theory’ is pressed to conform to fact that we often have the problem.

- * When the Word of God is preached on a Sunday morning and the examples are set out before you on how to live for Christ it is tremendously easy to nod the head and to give assent to the *theory*; however, many professing believers do not put the theory into action and make it to become fact.
- * So, I ask again, do you really and genuinely believe that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners?** ... He is the only means by which sinners are saved? Do you believe that?
- * Is there the remotest possibility that a good-living, clean-living individual can of themselves work their own salvation ... even in some small way contribute towards it? Is it absolutely necessary for them to come to Christ, to repent of their sin and turn to Him ... otherwise, on the day of God's judgement, they will be cast into the fires of eternal hell? ... Do you believe that? Is there the remotest *chance* anyone can be saved apart from Christ?
- * What does the Bible say? **Jn. 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**
- * There is absolutely no other way by which a man, woman, boy or girl can be saved *except through the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus Christ through the blood of the sacrifice that He shed on Calvary.*
- * There is no 'age of understanding' that the Bible speaks about; faithful allegiance to good principles or to another religion won't save. The only way for a sinner to be saved is through the eternal plan that God has based salvation, and it is this, **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.**
- * Do you believe that? I can tell you that it seems many Christians do *not* believe it ... for it doesn't seem to make an impact upon their lives. ... What do you mean? Well, I'll answer it by asking our second question ...

IF WE BELIEVED IT, WHAT EFFECT WOULD IT HAVE UPON OUR WITNESS?

- * There is the famous story told about General Booth of the Salvation Army, and he was asked what the best training for evangelism and soul-winning he could prescribe.

- * He told his enquirer, “The best training, - if it would be possible, - is to be held over the fires of hell and listen to the cries of the damned burning in its everlasting flames.”
- * Ought it not to break your heart that you and I have dear loved ones and at this very moment their place in the fires of hell is already reserved! The devil thinks he’s got them.
- * Ought it not to break your heart that the pain and torment will be such that no human suffering on earth can ever compare!
- * You see them today, - they may be your children, your spouse, members of your families, your friends, - and there is coming a day when they will stand before the Judgement Throne of God.
- * As they are at the moment they will stand in horror; their faces will be whitened and pale; there is nowhere they can run or look for there is nowhere they can find release.
- * They are standing there in absolute poverty, - there is not a thing they have been able to bring with them; there is nothing to ease the terror of the moment as they stand before Christ.
- * They are standing wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked ... confronting the holy wrath of the Sovereign God. Many who were rich and comfortable on earth, - ... but death has taken it all away from them.
- * Some standing there knew the Gospel and had heard it from childhood and now they know they have left it too late.
- * There are some there too and they don’t understand, [Mt.7.22](#) [Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?](#) False, empty, man-saved professions!
- * On that day, Jesus said, there will be the dividing of the wheat and the tares; now, do you really believe it ... that it is true ... [Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners?](#)
- * Do you really believe, - not as theory, but as fact, - that Jesus Christ is the only means by which your loved ones will escape the eternal wrath of God in hell? ... Do you?
- * If you saw one of those great big cranes with a big concrete ‘ball’ at the end of a chain and it was precariously hanging over the house in which your loved ones were staying ... and it was the intent of the driver of that crane to knock down their house, - he didn’t know there was anyone in it, ...

- * Would you not go and tell them to escape before the bricks and the house tumbled down on top of them?
 - * Och, no, I'll wait to some other time; I'm busy and they're busy, - I'll leave it ... the time has to be right; but ... when is the time right?
 - * Sure they wouldn't listen to me, they wouldn't believe me, - if the house was going to fall on top of them you would make sure they *would* listen to you!
- * It is not as if the news is bad. If the house was going to fall down and all the doors were locked and they couldn't get out *the news would be bad!*
- * If we left it and said, "You are all sinners and you are going to die and you are going to go to hell because there has been nothing done to sort out the problem" ... that would be wrong, because here is the news: [Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners](#).
- * Christian, do you believe that? Do you really believe that? ... Well, when was the last time you told those whom you love the simple message that is embraced in this verse, [Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners](#)?
- * We are not dealing with theory, we are talking fact.
- * I don't mean that you have to pin them up against a wall with the Gospel, - that doesn't necessarily work ... for it is not the force you use that brings salvation, - it is the power of the Holy Spirit alone that saves.
- * Do you live Christ before them? What if I was to suggest a purely evangelistic Gospel meeting one Sunday evening per month to which you would bring an unsaved family member or friend? Would you do it?
- * If each of us here made an effort we would be doing at least three things:
 - * We would be introducing a sinner to the Gospel that Christ saves,
 - * We would be demonstrating our obedience to our calling to make Christ known, - it is a calling that every believer is responsible for,
 - * We would be causing the light to shine like a glow for Christ above this church,

- * We would be fellow-workers, encouraging each other together in the Gospel,
- * ... And Who do you think would get all the glory? ... God would, and that is our purpose in being a church.
- * **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.** Do we believe that? If you believe it, are you willing to work along with me and believe it as a *fact*, rather than a *theory*?

IF WE BELIEVED IT, ... HOW WOULD WE PRAY?

- * Would it make a difference? Yes, it absolutely would.
- * Sad to say, I don't believe that all in our fellowship are sufficiently convinced that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners** ... otherwise it would show in their service for God. They would be giving Him more than just an hour or so on a Sunday.
- * We had been planning, - in a previous church, - for a mission but there was such strife among church members that any unbeliever coming in would have been driven away.
- * Yes, there is strife; where you get the preaching of the Gospel you get strife for where God's Truth is, so is God's enemy.
- * When you look round you it's never hard to see a hundred good reasons why now is not the time to embark upon soul-winning ... but there is *never* a good time, - *only God's time!*
- * Would you pray with me for the salvation of souls in this place? There is a dearth; we have folk who never attend the prayer meeting, we have folk who cause strife ... but neither the two ought to hold us back from praying and seeking for the salvation of the lost.
- * I marvel at the people Jesus chose to be His disciples, - I wouldn't have chosen the majority of them! Consider the obstacles He had to daily climb with these men who were supposed to be His co-workers ... but yet He made it to the cross, - the pinnacle of His calling and service, - for it was there that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.**
- * Pray believingly? Live Christ before the unsaved. Invite them along to the meeting. Pray for the salvation of their soul ... that God the Holy Spirit in Sovereign Grace and mercy would make them into a new creature in Christ. *He did it with you ... He can still do it with them!*

CONCLUSION This is simply an introduction this evening. We are just laying out the groundwork.

- * **Do you really believe** and are absolutely convinced that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**. ... You have no doubts about that fact?!
- * **What effect is it having upon your witness?** Has it grabbed hold of you that you could be the person who is responsible before God for presenting Christ to your friend or loved one?
- * **How are you praying?** **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners**. Are you praying believing that the person you would introduce to Christ can be saved? Our prayers show the measure of our confidence in God.
- * If we love Him the way we say we do, we shall be praying earnestly and seeking often for the salvation of the souls of lost and hell-facing men and women, boys and girls.