

“Factors to a Soul Winning Church!”

Psalm 126:1-6

Intro. – Years ago, famed swimmer Florence Chadwick, tried to swim from Catalina Island to the California coast. After sixteen hours of swimming, hampered by cold currents and dense fog, she gave up. The point where she “threw in the towel” turned out to be less than one mile from her goal. Later in talking to a reporter she said, “I don’t want to make excuses, but I believe if I had been able to see land I could have made it.”

A few months later, Chadwick tried this same swim. This time she made it. When asked why this time, she said, “The first time I tried, my effort depended upon my seeing... Then I learned to believe without seeing.”

Chadwick’s mission in making this swim is a great illustration of what our personal involvement in the Lord’s Church ought to be. If the mission of winning the lost and building the won is going to be realized right here, then you and I must be in the game!

Let me illustrate what I mean “in the game.” A businessman landed in Dallas, TX and realized he had one hour and twenty minutes before his next plane connection. He thought, “How can I be used of the Lord here?” Well, he had a few Gospel tracts with him. He inserted one of his business cards inside each tract. Then he gave these to others waiting for their planes. But he didn’t just hand them out and move on. He said to each person, “Pardon me. I have a little booklet here that explains how a person can become a Christian. Inside is my business card. I would like you to read this over and if you have any questions, I will be sitting over there. I have some time before my plane takes off. Or if you would like to write, my address is there.” At the end of the hour and twenty minutes, this businessman had people standing four deep wanting to ask questions about how to become a Christian. Also, for weeks afterwards, this businessman received questions through the mail. All of this was the result of one man who wanted to be sure he was “in the game”!

How about it, when it comes to being a soul winner, are you personally “in the game”? Are you constantly looking for opportunities to be used of God to win people to Christ? Do you have a burden for those who are lost and are you confident you have exactly what they and the rest of the lost world needs? Is it difficult for you to even speak to others concerning their need for Christ as Lord and Savior of their lives and if so have you evaluated why that is the case? If you are not “in the game” what is it going to take to get you there?

Purpose: to reexamine our progress in being a soul winning church

Our text is called “The Soul Winner’s Psalm.” It list four factors that will lead us to the lost all about us and beyond. These factors are what will lead us to being a soul winning church:

I The Factor of *GOING*

- Our text says = “*He who goes...*”

A. A Fundamental Reason

1. Main reason many are not being won is clear – there are not enough of us who are *going*
2. Donald McGavran put it bluntly: “Our Lord went to the cross for the lost. Those who won’t go across the street for the lost can scarcely call themselves His disciples.”
3. Remember Christ’s Great Commission? – the emphasis was on “making disciples” *as we go* = go to our jobs, school, families etc.
4. Going is a basic factor – history/present experience has taught unless we **go**, they will not be won!

B. A Fundamental Solution

1. Present day statistics point toward a clear solution – 95% “professing Christians” have not won one person to Christ...!
2. The average church has one or two hooks in the water... not a professional fisherman but do know the more lines in the water, better the chances for catching... and what about a net?!!
3. The solution is simple – more people being soul winners as we all **go** into the world...
- Illus. – church sign: “Be Ye Fishers of Men. You Catch Them He Will Clean Them”
4. If friends, associates and family are going to be won to the Lord – you and I must be “in the game”

II The Factor of *COMPASSION*

- Our text says = “*He who goes weeping...*”
- Illus. – Wm Booth (founder of Salvation Army) was talking to one worker who had become most discouraged. “My work is at a standstill. Souls are not being saved... I have tried everything...” Booth looked at the man and encouragingly said, “Have you tried tears?”

A. A Burden for the Present

1. A deep abiding burden for the lost is conspicuously absent from the typical church today...
2. Does it not bother you when decision/invitation not answered or when we have few visitors?...
3. The passion/compassion of early Christians is worthy of note – nothing compares to X’s passion!
 - Illus. – “In view of X’s compassion... may we be taught to love sinners, to weep over them; may our pillows be hard, food tasteless and life more difficult if family and friends be not introduced to X through us! Send us out with compassion and tears to win the lost, O Lord!”

B. A Burden for the Future

1. If our burden for the lost is what it ought to be, the future will be filled with hope!
2. This concern will train up future generations:
 - a. I ask, is there anything more important to teach to our young people than the great need they have and will have for Christ?
 - b. I ask, is there anything more significant than leading, training and urging our youth to know X
 - c. why above everything my/our kids to be Christians = they’ll then will be soul winners!
3. May our tears be watering soul where seed is planted...
4. Note: if our approach to the Gospel be “dry” (i.e. not relevant) harvest both now and into the future will certainly reflect it!
 - Illus. – song by Fanny J. Crosby:

Rescue the perishing, care for the dying
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave.
Week o’er the erring one, lift up the fallen
Tell them of Jesus the mighty to save.
Rescue the perishing, care for the dying
Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save!

III The Factor of *PLANTING SEED*

- Our text says = “...*carrying seed to sow...*”

A. The Seed is God’s Word

1. Truth is what makes man free – John 8:32... God’s Word is truth – John 17:17
2. Word of God instills faith, convicts of sin, opens doors to repentance, confession, baptism into X – i.e. it reveals the grace of God...

B. We Are the Planters

1. As we let the Word shape and mold our lives – we in turn plan the seed in others’ lives.
2. This is why Bible knowledge (knowing the Bible) is imperative...

The factor of planting seed must not – no, it cannot be overlooked!

IV The Factor of *RETURNING*

- Our text says = “...*will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves...*”

A. God’s Word is Powerful

1. It is persuasive... Hebrews 4:12 says it is *convicting*...
2. Holy Spirit’s means of convicting men, women, young people of their need for a Savior...
3. His Word will NOT return empty or void (Isaiah 55:11

- a. 1 out of 20 calls just to get the privilege to open the Word to someone...
- b. God promises that His Word will achieve the purpose for which given...

B. We Labor Not in Vain

- 1. 1 Corinthians 15:58 “...our labor in the Lord is not in vain.”
- 2. Galatians 6:7 “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”
 - a. application is clear = sow seed of God’s Word count on reaping a harvest!
 - b. 2 Corinthians 9:6 – sow sparingly, reap accordingly... sow bountifully, reap accordingly...
- 3. God’s promise = He’ll give the increase IF we go, weeping and planting!
- 4. Song writer Knowles Shaw (body buried Rushville, IN) understood this principle:
 - Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,
 - Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve.
 - Waiting for the harvest, and the time of reaping,
 - We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.
 - Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves;
 - We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Conclusion: It’s just a picture but doesn’t this picture depict well each of us and our need for Christ as our Lord and Savior?

John Geddes was a pioneer missionary to South Sea Islands. Had such a grasp of these four factors that today you can go and see a monument standing: “When he (John Geddes) landed in 1848 there were no Christians here. When he left in 1872 there were no heathen.”

O, that we too would grasp these four principles: GO, WEEP, PLANT and RETURN