LORD, CHANGE ME

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:5-11

The Apostle Paul wrote to the saved at Rome and admonished them, "... Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed, ..." Rom. 12:2. God plans for His people, "... To be conformed to the image of His Son..." Rom. 8:28. The completed work of God will be our conforming to the image of His Son. Jesus is our example. We are to follow Him and pattern our lives after Him. "For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." I Pet. 2:21. One of the greatest needs of the Lord's people is to be changed by the Lord.

We need to pray, "Lord, Change Me." We know when our feelings, attitudes, thoughts, and actions are wrong. The Lord can and will change us as we submit to Him. We need to yield to Him under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. The Lord wants the mind of Christ to be in us. The mind of Christ involves humbling ourselves and being obedient to Him. V 8.

Notice the three points of the message.

I. CHANGE ME.
Change me, not my mate. So often we look at others and believe if they would change, our lives would be so different. This is the devil's way of deceiving us. There are somethings about your mate that could and should be changed. Their changing should not be your main concern or problem.

Change me, not members of my family. So often we want to change our children or relatives. Some parents believe if their children would change things would be so different. There is somethings about your children that need to be changed, but that shouldn't be your main concern.

Change me, not members of our church. We usually look at other members of our church and see a great need for them to change. Some members need to change, but that shouldn't be our main concern.

Change Me. The text deals with the personal individual need of having the mind of Christ. I have a personal need for the Lord to change me. It is amazing and astonishing how circumstances and situations change after we get things right with the Lord. No, the truth is we just see our circumstances in a different way or in a new light. We are changed in our circumstances which makes the difference. We are new creatures in Christ. II Cor. 5:17. The reality of this truth is experienced at the point of the new birth. The refinement of this truth is in our surrendering to the Lord.

James 4:7. The result is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
Paul admonishes us, "... But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Rom. 6:13. We are encouraged not to let sin reign in our mortal bodies. Rom. 6:12, 14. Our desire and prayer ought to be, "Lord, Change Me." This should be our first priority. The Lord can change me if I am willing to surrender to Him and accept His will, Word, and way above my own.

II. CHANGE MY MIND.
We are to allow the mind of Christ to be in us. We are to think and reason in the light of God's Word and after the pattern and example of Christ. We are informed of the importance of the thought process in Prov. 23:7. Read Phil. 4:8. Let's notice some of the
reasons why we should ask the Lord to change our minds.

Minds become fixed. Our minds can become firmly fixed and settled. This can be good, but often times it is bad. The Lord often called His people stubborn and stiffheaded when their minds were made up and settled. Exod. 32:9. The Lord described His people this way when they reject His Word and choose to sin. Samuel wrote, “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.” 1 Sam. 15:23. Jeremiah said the people were not ashamed, couldn’t blush, and wouldn’t repent of their sins. Jer. 6:45; 8:6, 12. God’s people make up their minds about church attendance, visitation, and giving etc., and will not change.

Minds become fleshly. Paul wrote to us about the conflict of the spirit and the flesh. Rom. 7:14-25. This struggle and conflict is ever present with us. Gal. 5:17. The carnal mind is not subject to God’s Law and cannot be. Rom. 8:7. Fleshly minds or reason in the realm of the flesh needs to be changed. Abraham and Sarah are examples of reasoning in the flesh. God promised them a child, but they chose to use Hagar in having the child. Look at the trouble that reasoning has and is causing. Gen. 16:1-4.

Minds become frustrated. Minds can become troubled. Jesus said, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.” John 14:1. Frustration is caused by fleshly or self-effort in service rather than faith in the Lord. Frustration causes us to be weary and faint. Jesus taught us what to do when we are frustrated in Luke 18:1.

Minds become fearful. Jesus rebuked His Disciples for lack of faith. Matt. 6:30. Lack of faith causes fear. Fear causes us to doubt God and His Word. The Lord doesn’t want us to be controlled and dominated by fear.

Moses set forth a principle we ought to live by. He wrote, “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” Exod. 14:13

Minds become failing. Every battle in life is won or lost in the mind before it is ever fought. The Israelites failed to fight Goliath because they measured him and the situation up in their minds and concluded they couldn’t win. They excluded the person and power of Almighty God in their reasoning and failed.

Minds can become fixed, fleshly, frustrated, fearful, and failing. Lord, change my mind. Help me to see clearly. Give me the grace to give up, give in, and give over to you as the Holy Spirit convicts me. May we submit to Your will, Your way, and Your precious Word. Help me to understand that you are my Shepherd and I need to follow you. Psa. 23:1.

The Disciples told Thomas the Lord arose from the dead. Thomas said, “Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.” John 20:25. When Thomas saw the Lord, he changed his mind. He acknowledged Jesus as Lord and God without putting his hand in the prints in Jesus’ side. John 20:27, 28. Lord, change my mind.

III. CHANGE MY MOTIVES.

The reason or motive in the Lord’s service is important. We are admonished to serve the Lord. We are to desire and seek to please God. Whatever we do, it is to be done for the Lord. Many of God’s people are not serving today because of the wrong motives in service.

Some serve for praise. Jesus said the heathen pray loud and long to be heard of men. Matt. 6:6-8. If we simply want to please men instead of God, we cannot be the servants of Christ. Gal. 1:10.

Some serve for power. Some people are like Diotrephes. He wanted to have power among the people. 3 John 8. Some people like to be powerful. They like to direct things. They like to feel that they have the power in the services of the Lord.

Some serve for position. Diotrephes loved to have preeminence among the people. He wanted to stand out among the people. Jesus taught the Disciples that the greatest disciple was the one who served others. Luke 22:24-27.

Some serve out of pride. Some people serve out of pride. They like to talk about what they are doing or have done. They seem to want the glory instead of giving the glory to the Lord. Pride elevates self, eliminates God, and evaluates with the world. Pride causes destruction and a fall. Prov. 16:18.

Some serve for the people. Our service to God involves serving the people. Some do all they do simply for people. They do not serve the Lord, they serve people. They labor for man and his praises, but fail to serve the Lord.

Lord, change my motive. Help me to serve you. Jesus said, “If a man love Me, he will keep my words.” John 14:23. The greatest motivating and moving force in my life is love for my precious Lord. If I love the Lord, I will serve Him regardless of friends, foes, family, functions, or friction. If I love the Lord, I will live for Him regardless of praise, power, position, etc.

How we need to pray, Lord change me, my mind, and my motives. He is the only one that can change us. As we allow Him to form and fashion us, He can make something beautiful out of our lives. The song goes, “He’s Still Working On Me.” I am personally glad that He is still working on me. May we pray together from the heart, “Lord, Change Me.”

GOD IS MERCIFUL

Text: Psalms 119:58; I Peter 5:7

Introduction:

God demonstrates His mercy to sinful mankind and to His children through many characteristics that personifies the compassionate and longsuffering personality of our Heavenly Father. His mercy is seen in these facts:

I. HE PROVIDES

A. He provides redemption for lost mankind. II Cor. 5:21
1. He wrecked the relationship. Rom. 5:12
2. He provided the remedy, Isa. 53:6
B. He provides loving care for His children. Rom. 8:32
C. He provides a rich inheritance. Psalm 119:57; Phil. 4:19

II. HE IS AFFECTIONATE

A. He is affectionate to the point that He never forgets His children. Isa. 49:15
B. He is affectionate to the point that He never leaves us. Hebs. 13:5c
C. He is affectionate to the point that He cares for us instantly; much like the eyelid takes immediate action to protect the eye. Deut. 32:10

III. HE IS ATTENTIVE

A. He is attentive toward His vineyard. Isa. 27:3
B. He is attentive in faithfulness. I John 1:9
C. He is attentive in watching. Psa. 121:4-8

Muncy Harris
WHEN IS IT TOO LATE

D.B. Wright

TEXT: Hebrews 12:14-17; Ecc. 12:1; II Cor. 6:26

INTRODUCTION:
A. For "one meal" this man Esau sold his "Family Birthright."
   1. Does this speak of "lack of appreciation" for it?
   2. Was he really that hungry?
B. The Bible tells us one who for "fling" paid with death, betrayal, and loss of the joy of being saved.
C. For "material gain" many have thrust themselves through with many sorrows.
   1. I Timothy 6:9-10
D. Esau saw the error of his way, and sought the FAMILY BLESSING of the first-born with many tears...AFTER IT WAS TOO LATE!

I. WHEN IT IS TOO LATE TO PRAY! (That's a sad thought!)
A. The Bible tells of prayers that obtained great benefits.
   2. The prayer of the lost tax collector: a. A simple one sentence prayer.
      Luke 18:13
   3. IT ALWAYS WORKS for the believing sinner! Romans 5:1
      Luke 23:42
   6. Romans 10:13
B. Promises that encourage prayer:
   1. Isaiah 55:6-7
   2. I John 1:9
   3. Romans 10:13
C. IT CAN BE TOO LATE TO PRAY!
   1. It was for Esau!
   2. It was for the rich man of Luke 16: 19-31
   3. Are you praying for yourself TO BE SAVED? FOR FORGIVENESS? FOR THE JOY OF SALVATION?
   4. Are you praying for your LOST LOVED ONES?

II. WHEN IS IT TOO LATE TO REPENT:
A. The "urgency" of repentance for known sins.
   1. Acts 17:30-31; Heb. 9:27; Rom. 14:11-12
B. The Lord teaches us that we REPENT OR PERISH!
   1. God doesn't want any to perish!
      II Pet. 3:9
C. Repentance is unto life. Acts 11:18
D. God in His goodness is leading us to repentance! Romans 2:4
E. IT CAN BE TOO LATE TO REPENT!
   1. Remember the words of Luke 16:26
   2. TODAY IS GOD'S TIME! II Cor. 6:2b

III. WHEN IT IS TOO LATE TO SEEK MERCY OF THE LORD!
A. Salvation is by the mercy of God!
   1. Titus 3:5
B. MERCY IS AVAILABLE! FOR ALL!
   1. Isaiah 55:7
   2. The tax collector-sinner obtained it!
   3. Paul obtained it! I Tim. 1:13; II Tim. 1:9
C. It can be TOO LATE TO SEEK MERCY! Luke 16:25
   1. My dear friend listen to the WORDS OF JESUS, Matt. 16:26

IV. WHEN IS IT TOO LATE TO BE "CONCERNED!"
A. God is concerned about the "spiritual welfare" of each person!
   1. I Timothy 2:4
   2. John 3:17
   3. John 1:9
   4. God gave us the Bible...A SWORD TO PRICK OUR HEARTS to make us conscious of our sin and need to be saved. Heb. 4:12; Rom. 3:19-20
   5. Jesus left His Church in the world...
   6. God sent His Holy Spirit to convince. John 16:8
B. Jesus is concerned about your soul's welfare and destiny!
   1. He gave His life for you!
   2. He shed His blood to cleanse you from sins.
   3. His invitations are many!
   4. HIS ORDERS TO HIS CHURCH CONCERNS YOUR SOUL! Mark 16:15
C. Mature believers are concerned about others who are not saved!
   1. Romans 9:1-2
   2. Romans 10:1
   3. I Cor. 9:22
   4. Paul writes of one EPAPHRODITUS. Phil. 2:20
D. God wants all who are saved to be "CONCERNED" about the salvation of others and about the straying saved!
   1. Ecc. 11:6
   2. Psalm 126:5-6
   3. Galatians 6:1
E. IT CAN BE TOO LATE TO "SHED A TEAR" "SPEAK A WORD" OUT OF CONCERN!
   1. Jesus told us of one who DID WAIT UNTIL HE GOT TO HELL TO CARE ABOUT FIVE UNSAVED BROTHERS.
THE BENEFICIAL TEACHINGS OF CHRIST (Part 5)

As we continue to notice some of the beneficial teachings of Christ in this general series entitled, "The Life of Christ," our focus in this lesson will be on Matthew 5:7. "BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL: FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY." This is one of the Beatitudes contained in the Lord's message which is commonly referred to as the Sermon On The Mount. Someone has likened the Beatitudes to spiritual mountain climbing or upward steps in the Divine life - the "new" life that we have in Christ. Mercifulness is an attribute of God which when exemplified by the child of God indicates further advancement or development by the child of God in their growth process in Christ. Being able to exemplify mercy means to have the disposition to forgive, spare, pity, forbear, or to show compassion. By the Lord and through the ministry of the spirit this quality can become a part of the make-up of the child of God. In this brief lesson let's notice the following:

I. The Emphatic Declarations Regarding This Element.
II. The Examples of Mercy.
III. The Enlightenment Regarding This Element.

I. THE EMPHATIC DECLARATIONS REGARDING THIS ELEMENT!

These declarations are given to us in the following verses of scripture. Prayerfully and sincerely allow the Lord to speak to you through the verses.

Prov. 3:3-4 "LET NOT MERCY AND TRUTH FORSAKE THEE: BIND THEM ABOUT THY NECK; WRITE THEM UPON THE TABLE OF THINE HEART: SO SHALT THOU FIND FAVOUR AND GOOD UNDERSTANDING IN THE SIGHT OF GOD AND MAN."

Prov. 11:17 "THE MERCIFUL MAN DOETH GOOD TO HIS OWN SOUL: BUT HE THAT IS CRUEL TROUBLETH HIS OWN FLESH."
Luke 6:36 "BE YE THEREFORE MERCIFUL, AS YOUR FATHER ALSO IS MERCIFUL."

I believe that you will concur with me in saying that these are certainly some emphatic declarations concerning the admonishment to each of us to be merciful. Remember - we just quoted from God's Word. Do we believe what He said? Have we allowed the Lord, through the Spirit, to impress upon our minds and hearts what we've just read? If we have allowed the Spirit of God to minister to us we will be moved to become DOERS of His Word and not just hearers.

II. THE EXAMPLES OF MERCY.

The first example that we'll notice who exemplified mercy is Abraham. The material from which this lesson is gleaned is Genesis 18 and 19. The Lord had informed Abraham that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah due to their extreme wickedness and ungodliness. Abraham began to intercede for them. This was possibly done in part because he had relatives who lived in Sodom, but none the less, he desired and prayed that God would be merciful. Don't you believe that God was pleasèd with this concern and compassion that Abraham exemplified? As a result of this intercessory prayer and the exemplification of a merciful spirit, Lot and a part of his household were spared.

Another exemplification of the spirit of mercy is recorded in Ezra 9:12-13 when Ezra reminds the people that God had been so merciful unto them in not utterly destroying them due to their rebellion and abominations.

Jesus expressed and exemplified mercy. One example of this is recorded in Luke 9:51-56. "AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN THE TIME WAS COME THAT HE SHOULD BE RECEIVED UP, HE STEADFASTLY SET HIS FACE TO GO TO JERUSALEM, AND SENT MESSEN-

Glen Tropp

GERS BEFORE HIS FACE: AND THEY WENT, AND ENTERED INTO A VILLAGE OF THE SAMARITANS, TO MAKE READY FOR HIM. AND THEY DID NOT RECEIVE HIM, BECAUSE HIS FACE WAS AS THOUGH HE WOULD GO TO JERUSALEM. AND WHEN HIS DISCIPLES JAMES AND JOHN SAW THIS, THEY SAID, LORD, WILT THOU THAT WE COMMAND FIRE TO COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, AND CONSUME THEM, EVEN AS ELIAS DID? BUT HE TURNED, AND REBUKED THEM, AND SAID, YE KNOW NOT WHAT MANNER OF SPIRIT YE ARE OF. FOR THE SONS OF MAN IS NOT COME TO DESTROY MEN'S LIVES, BUT TO SAVE THEM. AND THEY WENT TO ANOTHER VILLAGE."

Finally, we conclude this section by noticing the example of the good Samaritan. This example is seen in Luke 10:25-37. Jesus tells about a certain man who was on a journey and as he traveled he encountered some thieves who robbed and wounded him, leaving him half dead. He then tells about a priest and a Levite who came by afterward and would not help the poor man. They did not exemplify mercy. However, there was a certain Samaritan who came by and had compassion on Him. He fixed his wounds and brought him to a place where he could be cared for. Then notice the words of Jesus in Luke 10:36-37. "WHICH NOW THESE THREE, THINKEST THOU, WAS NEIGHBOR UNTIL HIM THAT FELL AMONG THE THIEVES? AND HE SAID, HE THAT SHewed MERCY ON HIM, THEN SAID JESUS UNTO HIM, GO AND DO THOU LIKewise."

III. THE ENLIGHTENMENT REGARDING THIS ELEMENT.
The only way that you and I can learn how to be merciful is by the aid of the Lord. This involves the truth of Christ living in and through us. This presents the truth of the giving life and not just the receiving. This involves learning how to share with others. This presents the truth and importance of forgiving. Notice Matthew 6:14-15. This embraces the truth of the importance of forbearance. Notice Eph. 4:1-3. This also includes the law of sowing and reaping.

"BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL: FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY."

CONDEMPTION
OF THE
RELIGIOUS MAN

TEXT: Romans 2:17-29
MAXIE HAYNES

INTRODUCTION:
Great danger of today—substitution of a profession of religion for the actual experience of Christianity. God looks on the inside, upon the heart while the world examines the external. I Sam. 16:7; Matt. 7:21-27

1. THE CALLING OF THE JEW: V 17-18
   A. REST IN THE LAW.
   B. BOAST IN GOD.
   C. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WILL.
   D. POWER TO DISCERN.
   E. INSTRUCTED IN THE LAW.

2. THE CONFIDENCE OF THE JEW: V 19-21
   A. GUIDE TO THE BLIND.
   B. LIGHT TO THOSE IN DARKNESS.
   C. INSTRUCTOR OF THE FOOLISH.
   D. TEACHER OF THE IMMATURE.
   E. SQUARE AS FOR KNOWLEDGE AND TRUTH.

   A. ARROGANT, SELF-RIGHTEOUS.
      1. Teacher of others, but taught not themselves.
   B. INCONSISTENT PRACTICE.
      1. Should not steal—but thou steal.
         Mal. 3:8-9; Mal. 1:11-14; Rom. 13:8-9
      2. Should not commit Adultery—do thou.
         James 4:4; Matt. 5:27-28
      3. Abhorrest Idols—Rob temples.
   C. CAUSED NAME OF CHRIST TO BE BLASPHEMED.

IV. THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE JEW:
   A. RITE WITHOUT REALITY only Condemns. V 25
   B. REALITY WITHOUT RITE is acceptable. V 26
   C. CONSISTENT UNORTHODOXY condemns Inconsistently Orthodox. V 27
   D. INTERNALS are more telling than externals. V 28-29a
   E. INTERNALS and what is happening there is more important than externals and what is happening there. V 29
   F. Divine Appraisal is more important than Human Approval. V 29

HAVE THINE OWN WAY LORD

TEXT: Acts 9:1-6

INTRODUCTION:
A. IT is not the easiest thing to say, "Lord, have thine own way."
1. Especially to the lost person it is not easy.
2. Because his way is directly opposite than God's way.

B. The backslider cannot pray that prayer until his heart is right with God.
1. As long as an individual is out of God's will, he will be a miserable human being.
2. He has lost the joy of his salvation.

C. Paul was one of the greatest Christians who ever walked the face of this earth.
1. He was at one time an opposer to God's truths.
2. He was sincere in what he was doing, but wrong.
3. He got saved and was a great warrior for the Lord.

D. Paul's life is very interesting and informative.
1. He had a desire to do God's will after he got saved.
2. A lost person's will is not according to God's will.

PAUL'S HEART WAS CONTRARY TO GOD.

A. He hated the saints of God.
1. He breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord.
2. He had no use for the people of God.

B. IT is true today with some people.
1. There are those who oppose God's people and His children.
2. By their very actions, it demonstrates the desire of their heart.

C. Christians have been hated by the devil's crowd down through the years and ages.
2. A lost person feels out of place around Christians.  
D. A lost man's heart is on something else other than things of God.  
1. A person's conversation will be where his heart and treasure is.  
Luke 12:34  
2. Paul's heart was against God and his conversation was to do away with the people of God.  
E. Jer. 19:7  
1. The Lord said it in Jeremiah's day  
2. Paul proved it by his actions in his day.  
3. People today are still proving it by the way they live.  
   a. Contrary to the will of God.  
   b. Not saying, "Have thine own way, Lord."  
II. PAUL WAS CONVICTED OF HIS SIN BEFORE GOD.  
A. The Lord spoke to Paul.  
1. Acts 9:4  
2. The Lord doesn't strike people down and speak to them in this manner today.  
3. The Lord has something to say to Paul and he wanted him to hear it hear it good.  
B. Sin always brings misery.  
1. Paul in his miserable condition asked the question, "Who are thou, Lord?"  
2. In his misery he was beginning to seek the right way.  
3. There is always hope for people when they begin to inquire about Jesus.  
C. Paul's conscience was guilty.  
1. The Holy Spirit brings conviction upon the heart that isn't right with God.  
2. This is His job. He is good at it.  
   Convicts lost and saved.  
D. Evil hearts have always been troubled by the Lord.  
1. Belshazzzer, the king of Babylon, thought he had it made.  
2. He threw a big party, eating, drinking and being merry.  
3. The same hour the Lord's finger wrote on the wall of the King's palace.  
4. Daniel 5:6  
5. The Lord does reveal sin in the lives of individuals.  
III. PAUL WAS SAVED & DESERED TO DO GOD'S WILL.  
A. When Paul yielded his soul to Christ, he was actually saying, "Have thine own way Lord."  
1. He was saved, he then wanted to be obedient unto the Lord.  
2. God places a desire into the heart of a saved person to follow Him.  
B. Baptism should be the first thing in the life of a Christian.  
1. Have you said, "Have thine own way" in your life concerning baptism?  
2. You will never be happy until you do.  
C. Can you say, "Have thine own way Lord" in my giving to the Church?  
1. God gave His best. He set the example.  
   We are to follow.  
2. Paul spoke of the liberality of the Macedonian churches. II Cor. 8:5  
D. Can you say, "Have thine own way Lord" in my church attendance? Coming to the House of God with a prayer on your heart desiring to receive a blessing from God. Coming regular enough to be missed when not there. Lost person will you say, "Have thine own way"?  

WHAT GOD HAS SAID  
HE WILL DO FOR YOU  

TEXT: Exodus 6:6-8  
INTRODUCTION: There are many promises in the Bible that God has made to the believer. Using an analogy lets see some promises God has made to all of mankind.  
I. SOME BASIC FACTS CONTAINED IN THIS PASSAGE  
A. God promised He would bring Israel out from under Egyptian burdens.  
B. God promised He would rid them of their Egyptian bondage and redeem them.  
C. God promised Israel that they would be His people.  
D. God promised that He would be their God.  
E. God promised He would bring them to a land that He had promised their fathers.  
II. SIMILAR FACTS THAT APPLY TO US TODAY.  
A. As God said He would bring Israel out from under their Egyptian burdens, so He tells mankind "I will bring you out from under Satan's burdens." Gal. 1:4  
B. As God promised that He would rid Israel of their Egyptian bondage, and redeem them, so He promises to rid mankind of the bondage of Satan and redeem men.  
Rom. 6:22  
C. As God promised Israel they would be His people, so He promises all men who trust Christ that they shall be His people. I Pet. 2:9-10  
D. As God promised Israel He would be their God so He tells all men "I will be your God." II Cor. 6:17-18  
E. As God promised Israel a land of their own, so He promises all who accept His Son a special place prepared for them.  
John 14:2-4; Rev. 21:10-27  

RICK WILLIAMS
PRAYER
FOR
HARVESTERS

James Kirkland

TEXT: Matt. 9:36-38; Eph. 6:19,20; Col. 4:3,4

I. SHOULD WE PRAY FOR THE HARVEST?

Should we pray for salvation of the lost?
A. Scripture does not record that Jesus ever prayed explicitly and directly for the salvation of a lost soul.
B. Neither Jesus nor any New Testament writer ever commanded us to do so.
1. We are commanded to pray for those who persecute us. Matt. 5:44. Greatest benefit to a persecutor would be his salvation.
2. We are urged to pray for those in authority. I Tim. 2:1,2. So that governmental authority would not hinder the free working of the church. Prayer for unsaved government officials is implied. I Tim. 2:4.
3. Paul prayed for the salvation of Israel. Rom. 10:1. The only example in Scripture of direct prayer for salvation of the lost.
4. I don't mean to discourage prayer for the lost but to show that the NT puts emphasis on another kind of prayer.

II. WE SHOULD PRAY FOR THE HARVESTERS.

Matthew 9:36-38; 28:19-20

A. "The fields are white already unto harvest" expresses the urgent need for getting the gospel to the lost.
B. How should we pray?
1. Pray that God will call and thrust people into the harvest.
   a. Pray for Him to call men to preach? Yes.
   b. Pray for Him to lay a burden on men's hearts for planting new churches? Yes.
   c. But pray also that He will lay a burden on all our hearts for sharing the gospel. Pray sincerely and God will create that burden in you. The risk of sincere prayer!
2. Since God moves in response to prayer, if we do not ask, He will not act. Jn. 14:13. Real evangelism begins not by talking to men about God but by talking to God about men. Crying to God to send out workers into His harvest.

C. How should we pray for the "harvesters" those whom God thrusts into the harvest? Paul's appeals guide us. He was in prison when he made these appeals.
What appeal would you have made under these conditions?
1. Pray for the opportunity to witness. Col. 4:3
   a. He did not pray for deliverance from prison or for ability to hold up under stress.
   b. He prayed "that God may open a door for our message" (NIV)
2. Pray for courage to witness.
   a. Paul twice requested boldness. Eph. 6:19,20 "fearlessly" (NIV).
   b. It is possible to witness but to be so hindered by fear that the presentation of the gospel is blurred. Prayer produces courage to present the gospel without being paralyzed by fear.
3. Pray for words to communicate the message. Eph. 6:19
   a. We already have the message, called "the mystery of the gospel" Eph. 6:19 and "the mystery of Christ" Eph. 4:13. "Mystery" is a truth sovereignly withheld by God and then revealed to men at a given time in history. New truth God has chosen to reveal. This new truth falls outside human experience; that is, men would never have thought of it and cannot receive it without divine help. So, the gospel needs to be presented clearly if men are to understand it. Col. 4:3 NIV

D. How should we pray about our unsaved loved ones and friends? Pray for God to send Spirit-filled Christians across their path.
1. If you know of no specific Christians who have contact with your loved one pray for God to bring one into that person's life.
2. If you know of a Christian who works with your unsaved loved one, start praying for that Christian to be built up and equipped. Then pray that God will use that Christian to witness effectively to your loved one.
3. If you are living with an unsaved loved one, recruit several Christians to engage in "harvester" praying for you; that is, that you will have opportunity to witness, courage to witness, and words to make the message clear.
WHERE HE LEADS ME
I WILL FOLLOW

Text: John 21:15-19

Hiram Melton

INTRODUCTION:
A. While Jesus was on earth He called out His followers.
B. He is now at the right hand of the Father but He still calls out His followers through the Holy Spirit.
C. Will you be one that will follow Jesus?

I. I CAN HEAR MY SAVIOUR CALLING.
A. He is calling for the lost to repent and trust Him as Saviour today. 2 Cor. 6:2
   1. Tomorrow could be too late. Luke 12:16-20
   2. To those who have put their trust in other things to save.
B. He is calling the saved to "take up thy cross and follow me."
   1. Each saved person has a cross to bear.
   2. Jesus asked Peter do you love me more than these. V. 15
      a. These what?
      b. These fish & fishing as he was a fisherman by trade.
C. Do you love Jesus more than these?
   1. More than your job, money, etc.? 2
   2. More than your friends and family?
   3. More than anything else in your life?
D. If you love Jesus more than anything else prove it as Peter was told to do. John 14:23
E. What does it take for us to miss or leave off:
   1. Our prayers each day? I Thess. 5:17
   2. Our Bible study? II Tim. 2:15
   3. Our attendance at God's house? Hebs. 10:25
F. Do you love me more than these Peter, or Christian of today?
   1. Feed My lambs.
   2. Obey My Words and put Me first.

II. I'LL GO WITH HIM THROUGH THE GARDEN.
A. It is easy to sing the song but when it comes to doing it are we willing?
B. If we go with Him through the garden we must be willing to suffer because He suffered there. Matt. 26:36-42
C. Many are doing the same thing today that the apostles did then. Matt. 26:43-46
D. If we are going to follow where Jesus leads we must suffer persecution.
E. You cannot be the friend of Jesus and the friend of the world at the same time. James 4:3-4

III. I'LL GO WITH HIM THROUGH THE JUDGMENT.
A. If one doesn't have Jesus as Saviour they will not have Him at judgment time.
   1. You will appear there on your own merits. Isa. 64:6
   2. Now He is willing to save but then His wrath will come. John 3:36

   1. If we have been true to follow His leadings we have nothing to fear.
   2. If we have put other things ahead of Him then we must face this.
   3. Have you fed His sheep? Or did the things you know to do? James 4:17

IV. HE WILL GIVE ME GRACE. I Cor. 15:10
A. If you are lost and want to be saved you can be saved by the grace of God.
   Eph. 2:8-9
   1. You can't be saved by works.
   2. Church membership won't save.
   3. You can only be saved by the blood of Jesus. I Peter 1:18-19
B. If you are saved and really want to follow Jesus He will give you the grace.
   1. Peter said I have true love or affection for you.
   3. Jesus said, prove it by feeding my sheep.
   4. Are you truly in love with Jesus today?
   5. If so prove it by your works for Him.

I WANT TO RECEIVE THE PAPER

NAME_________________________ZIP CODE_________
ADDRESS__________________________
CITY__________________STATE_____
CHANGE OF ADDRESS______NEW SUBSCRIPTION___

ABUNDANT SUPPLY

1. ABUNDANT GRACE to save us. Rom. 5:20
2. ABUNDANT PARDON to forgive us. Isa. 55:7
3. ABUNDANT SATISFACTION to fill us. Psa. 36:8
4. ABUNDANT PEACE to quieten us. Phil. 4:7
5. ABUNDANT LIFE to equip us. John 10:10
6. ABUNDANT JOY to gladden us. Phil. 1:26
7. ABUNDANT POWER to energise us. Col. 1:11

Forgiven

I. SPECIFIC in its blessing. Col. 2:13
II. SOVEREIGN in its bestowment. Psa. 85:2
III. SUFFICIENT in its atonement. Lev. 20:26
IV. SOUL-STIRRING in its enjoyment. Psa. 32:1
V. CERTAIN in its assurance. I John 2:12
VI. EXEMPLARY for our imitation. Luke 6:37
VII. HAPPY in its enjoyment. Rom. 4:7