

Jesus teaching on reaching

Introduction

The call of God to Christian witness and service is the highest privilege of man. Pursued with zeal it yields a Hudson Taylor -a Billy Graham a Charles Spurgeon who is forever notable for faithfulness on the grand scale. It also yields Paul Augustine Luther and Wesley who are pivotal in history. But it yields millions who are minnows by human comparison but precious in the Lord's sight. Such people are the unknowns behind these great figures and the supportive pastors of souls throughout the ages who have wrestled on towards heaven. They also were acutely conscious of the call of God.

A personal word from the author's testimony

When I was converted in my 13th year-54 years ago(2009)-I knew the deep peace and assurance of God in my heart-which has scarce been punctuated all the years since. To God be the glory & praise. Then at 15 rising 16 I felt God's claim upon my life acutely. I could take you to the place-a little lane leading to the Tipperary woods near Newcastle Co Down. So compelling was the call I laid down the buckets I was carrying-I was filling two pails at a little locked well for a gracious Christian lady-and I told the Lord I would obey -only I would need success from Him in studies-for my background was poor-owing somewhat to health. When I told my mother of what I knew God wanted me to do she reminded me that before my birth she was told to abort but refused and prayed saying "I will give my son to You if you spare him". Like Lincoln I can say, "All that I am in life I owe to my angel mother-or better I owe to my praying mother and her Lord and mine." ***The call of God: it is simple, it is stirring, and through many vicissitudes it is sustained and sustaining***

The vision of the harvestman

Jesus as He heralded the kingdom and healed saw the throngs and had compassion on them-not because of their ailments particularly but because they were without a Shepherd. The religion of the period had precisely no care for the individual and his or her spiritual guidance as to finding the door or finding pasture or securing them from the wolves who endangered lives or best of all affording them eternal security. They were feeble and wandering into danger.

Prayer is the secret

Jesus had prayed before calling the disciples He wanted (Luke 6.12) He operated the counsel He gives His church. Pray the Father for reinforcements for the spread of the gospel. This is the first and most vital principle. He is specific. He asks we pray for "workers" or "labourers" (εργατάς-people who will work strenuously -as the ox or the fisherman)

The geometric progression of mission

The Lord had not long since chosen the twelve. Now He teaches them to that the Father will thrust more like them into the harvest. This is to be an on-going task. More and more Preachers Evangelists and especially people with a pastoral heart are needed for the kingdom to progress in lives.

The selection principle Luke 6.12

Jesus called disciples to Him and as churches do today both in preparing pastors and in calling them He modelled a selection procedure. His principle was not just "the willingness to work for men" but clearly gift and putting first the kingdom. Elsewhere He spoke of "seeking first the kingdom of God" and "hating father and mother" in the sense of putting His call in first place.

The willingness to spend time with Christ

Jesus chose disciples who would be "with him"-now He sought men who would be willing to work on their own and to preach as He preached; pray as He prayed and care as He cared.

"That" and "How"

Jesus asked that we pray the Father that He would send workers. This is a plain request for numbers of reapers or evangelists and pastors. The word *ὅπως* also signifies "how". So we are to pray that God will show us how we are to face the unfinished task and therefore what sort of methods we are to use in preparing and training the persons who are to go. There are many lands and many languages. There is need to consider how nationals can work with ex-pats-all to the growth of the kingdom. God's way is best and we need to be aware of how He would want us to work in His field.



From paper to practice.

Where have you seen any evangelistic opportunity? Have you *seen* the need?

What evidence have you of people wearied with life's lack of meaning and feeling lost? Have you *felt* the need?

Are you reaching, caring, teaching? Are you *responding* to felt need?

Are you willing to pray that God will *meet* the need?

