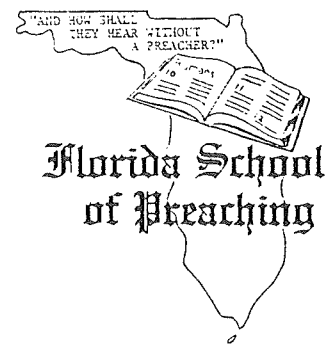


THE HARVESTERS



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JAMAICA RECAP

By

Jackie M. Stearsman

July 29, 1989, a group from the Florida School of Preaching went to Jamaica to participate in evangelistic activities. They returned August 12, 1989. While in Jamaica they participated in gospel meetings in Ty-Dixon, Linstead, South West Constant Spring and Maxfield Park. The group also worked in Vacation Bible Schools in all the above locations except Constant Spring. At this writing (August 15, 1989) 29 were baptized. There is an evangelistic meeting in progress through this week in Constant Spring where the group worked and made contacts during the past two weeks. We are confident others will obey the gospel as a result of these efforts. Preaching in the meetings were Cecil Haffelfinger, Jack Gray, Robert Garrett, Dave Rogers, and I. Gary Burford served as the leader of the group. Expenses for the Florida School of Preaching group were paid by the Central Church of Christ in Clearwater, Florida.

I believe much was accomplished in this effort. I would like to reflect upon this under two headings: Contributions to Jamaica and

Contributions to The Florida School of Preaching.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO JAMAICA

1. Strengthening The Brethren

Paul desired to reassure and stabilize brethren as he carried the message to the world of his day (Acts 15:36; 18:23). We kept before us this need and tried in every way possible to encourage and strengthen the souls already serving the Lord.

2. Sowing The Seed

We made a concentrated effort to reach as many with the message of Christ as possible. This we did by knocking doors, passing out tracts and inviting people to the meetings and conducting Vacation Bible Schools.

3. Exposing Error

False religion is in Jamaica as it is in the States. Many times the error must be uprooted before the truth may be planted and given a chance to produce fruit.

Brethren there must be informed of religious errors if they are to be protected and prepared to meet false doctrine. The Boston cult is there and books exposing this error were given to brethren that they might help the new convert refuse this heresy.

4. Sacrificial Service

Those working in the campaign rendered a service to Jamaica and the brethren and all such service bring glory to God. The sacrifices were not burdensome but became a joy as the days of toil and labor continued. We are proud of the fine spirit of cooperation manifested by all involved. All sacrifices diminished as visible results reassured each that the service was not in vain.

5. Directive for Life

Jamaica, like America needs to have its vision focused on the Lord. Souls in darkness need the light. The fruits of darkness are abundant to those who have eyes to see. Joy fills the soul when one comes to realize the

beauty and holiness involved when God directs and comforts the soul.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING

1. Training

Class room instruction is valued more when applied in life. Time and again students reflected upon their class work and the help it provided them while teaching others. The Bible teaches that experience is essential if we discern between good and evil (Heb. 5:11-14). Those who served in Jamaica received additional and valuable training.

2. Growth

Many were the times that those on the trip reflected upon the progress individuals had made during the concentrated work. They grew in respect for the Bible, the love of souls in darkness, the knowledge of the power of darkness over troubled hearts, the love of one another, and confidence in their own ability to teach others the truth.

3. Confidence

Those in the group are confident of the Word of God being the power of God to save the lost. The power of the gospel to oppose error built confidence in all. The greatest burden any bore was himself. The greatest weapon any had was the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

4. Fellowship

What a fellowship! We have fellowship with God the Father, Jesus Christ, and all the faithful. We enjoyed the fellowship of others in service in Jamaica, the fellowship

of those who sacrificed to pay the fee for our trip, and the new fellowship of those in Jamaica who are now fellow travelers on the road to eternity.

5. Joy in Giving

The Christ teaches that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35). Without exception I believe that everyone on the trip would echo that great truth. What a loss it is to those who have never known the joy of giving. How barren is the soul of one who only practices the art of getting. How unlike the Father is the heart of one who can only give to those who give to him (Matt. 5:43-48).

6. Need

For the Gospel

Those from the School of Preaching are more confident than ever of the need for the Gospel. They rejoice in obeying it. They are saddened when it is absent. They are filled with zeal when others obey. They are more determined to take the truth to a lost and dying world.

Conclusion

To those who made the trip possible we express our appreciation. To those who sacrificed their time, talent and energies working in the campaign we pay our respect. To the brethren who met our every need in Jamaica we extend our debt of gratitude. To one and all we pray God's richest blessings be upon you in your service to Him.

SPIRITUAL SWORD LECTURESHIP

October 15-19, 1989, is the date for the Fourteenth Annual Lectureship. The

theme is Jesus: The Servant of Jehovah. The text will be The Book of Mark.

Among those speaking will be brothers B. C. Carr, Winford Claiborne, Curtis Cates, Jim Laws, Alan Highers, Clarence Lavender, J. Noel Merideth, V. E. Howard, Robert Taylor, Wendell Winkler, Flavil Nichols, Winfred Clark, Roy Deaver, Joe Gilmore, Tom Holland, et al.

THE NEED FOR SELF-DENIAL

By

B. C. Carr

It is my sincere opinion that one of the greatest hindrances in the Lord's work today is a lack of the spirit of self-denial. Men seem to be basically selfish. Too many are seeking to please self or family rather than seeking to please God. Surely they are not aware that the Lord demands sacrifice and self-denial of those who would follow him. Our Lord said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23) I see evidence that a lack of self-denial hinders:

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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

(1) Those who would do mission work. (2) This spirit hinders those who could serve as elders. (3) This spirit hinders those who would be teachers in the church today. (4) A lack of self-denial hinders those who would start a new work for the Lord. (5) This spirit of selfishness also hinders some from giving as they have been prospered. (6) There is another group that concerns me even more at this time. This group is made up of those who should preach the gospel of Christ but who are unwilling to sacrifice or deny self in order so to do.

WOULD-BE PREACHERS LACK SPIRIT OF SELF-DENIAL

Following I have listed some of the excuses that I have heard as I go about trying to recruit men to become gospel preachers. These have some desire to preach and many of them have great natural ability but they lack the spirit of self-sacrifice.

(1) There are those who say, "I can make more money in my present occupation than I could ever make preaching." Hence, they are not willing to sacrifice wealth in order to preach. Such men need to read about the rich fool in Luke 12. The Lord called him a fool because he had put first his wealth. These might also read a parable of the rich man and Lazarus. (Luke 16:19-31)

(2) There are those who have said, "I would like to preach but I'm not willing to live in some of the houses that the church would provide for their preacher." They want a house filled with all the conveniences of our society. These need to read carefully what is said about Abraham who when called by the Lord left his homeland

and his kindred to go into a country that he had not seen and to dwell in tents. So far as we know, Abraham gave up what men today are unwilling to give up. But he was called the "Friend of God" and the "Father of the Faithful."

(3) Still others will not deny themselves to preach the gospel because they feel that they must compete with their friends in the world so far as material things are concerned. We suggest that they read the words of Jesus when he said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life will lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what has a man profited, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matt. 16:24-26) All the wealth of this world could not buy one soul for heaven in the world to come.

(4) Others have asked the question, "What about my retirement?" Maybe in their present jobs they have many fringe benefits, including a good retirement plan. They are unwilling to put this aside in order to preach the gospel and trust God for the benefits. God does have a retirement plan for his ministers. The apostle Peter asked our Lord about this plan. Jesus answered, "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." (Mark 10:28-30) The real question is, "Can we

trust the Lord?"

(5) Others have said, "I would preach but my wife would not be happy being a preacher's wife." Such men put pleasing their wife above pleasing God. The apostle Paul recognized this temptation. Hence he said, "But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife (I Cor. 7:32-33). If a man has this problem he needs first of all to convert his wife. This attitude may also explain why it is easier to recruit single men than those who are married.

(6) Another group who would like to preach but will not, say they are concerned about the future of their children and their material success. They fear that they could not educate their children on the salary of a preacher. I am reminded of the Israelites whom God led out of Egypt and would have delivered them safely into the Promise Land but for their lack of faith. Some of these were concerned that their wives and children should become a prey. They wanted to return to Egypt. These men were told that



their carcasses should fall in the wilderness but God said, "Your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised" (Num. 14:3, 29-31). God has promised to take care of those who seek him first. Many have the attitude of Lot who pitched his tent toward Sodom. Sometimes like Lot they see their children lost in a land of plenty.

(7) Still another group would preach the gospel but they realize it would require giving up many of the pleasure of this world. They know that preachers could not do many things that others do without criticism hence they are not willing to pay the price. These need to read about Moses who, "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter: choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Heb. 11:24-26).

These are but a few of the evidences I have seen of those who are unwilling to deny self in order to follow our Lord in the preaching of the gospel.

A MATTER OF ATTITUDE OR PRIORITY

As we begin to seek for the real answers as to why so many are not serving God, we realize that it becomes a matter of the heart above all else.

David's attitude should be our attitude concerning what we have to offer God. David had sinned in numbering the people but he repented. He prepared to make an offering to God. As he came to the threshing floor of Araunah he offered to buy that which was necessary to sacrifice to God. Araunah, the King, offered to give David animals and other things necessary to make the offering, but David's reply was, "Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which does cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver" (II Sam. 24:24). We should be willing to make every sacrifice for our Lord because he has done so much for us. Even at best we shall never be able to repay him.

I like the spirit of this song that I used to hear many years ago.

*"I walked one day along a country road.
And there a stranger journeyed too-
Bent low beneath the burden of his load-
It was a cross, the cross I knew.*

*I cried, Lord Jesus, and he spoke my name-
I saw his hands all bruised and torn-
I stooped to kiss away the marks of shame-
The shame for me that he had borne.*

*My cross I'll carry till the crown appear
And then my journey soon will end-
I'll rest from the burden of my load
And there share fellowship with friends.*

*Chorus: Take up thy cross and follow me
I hear the blessed Saviour call
How can I make a lesser sacrifice
When Jesus gave his all?"*

IMPORTANT

NEW CLUB BEGINS President's Club

We are grateful that many of our contributors are increasing their contributions to the school. This is very necessary because of the increased cost of operation and inflation. Several give \$1,000 or more each year.

We would like to encourage you to join this group. Those who give \$1,000 or more will become members of the President's Club and will be recognized at our Booster Banquet.

We still need all of our boosters who are not able to give this amount to please continue to give according to their ability. God will bless their efforts.

B. C. Carr

Fall Semester Began September 11, 1989

Are you registered for classes?

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