

Pray—Go—Give

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Study by W.D. Frazee—October 31, 1959

“But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest” Matthew 9:36-38.

What are we to pray for? That the Lord will send forth laborers into His harvest. Our hearts are to be burdened with Christ's heart to reach all the world with all the Word.

It is interesting to notice what followed this Scripture. In the original language in which the Bible was written there were no division in chapters and verses such as we now have. So the tenth chapter follows immediately on with the ninth chapter with no breaks.

Jesus perceived to work in harmony with the suggested prayers, and called the twelve together and sent them out on their first missionary tour. He told them to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

“But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give” Matthew 10:7-8.

Notice three outstanding words. Each is composed of just one syllable. Each is a verb. The first one is pray. The second is go. The third is give.

We are to have a part in all three of those. And surely if we pray we shall want to give, and if we give we shall want to go. Not all of us can go to the ends of the earth. We can't all go to the Solomon Islands or to Fiji, South America, or South Africa. But through our means and prayers we can reach all over the world.

“Three things the Master hath to do,
And we who serve Him here below,
And long to see His kingdom come,
May pray, or give, or go.

He needs them all, The open hand,
The willing feet, the asking heart;

To work together and to weave
The threefold cord that shall not part.

Nor shall the giver count his gift
As greater than the workers deeds;
Nor he in turn his service boast
Above the prayers that voice the need.

Not all can go, not all can give
To arm the others for the prey;
But young or old or rich or poor,
Or strong or weak, we all can pray.

Pray that the full hands open wide
To speed the message on its way;
That those who hear the call may go,
And pray that other hearts may pray.”

May we all enter into that fellowship of intercession that leads us into the fellowship of giving and sharing the wonderful truth of God.

It is interesting to notice that God has established the plan to make this possible. Let's suppose that we are simply individual Christians. Each one of us has given his heart to the Master. Each one reads the Bible. Each one seeks to witness in his neighborhood for the truth of God. But how would you and I make our witness to reach India? How would we make our influence to reach Greenland's icy mountains, or the burning sands of Africa? The answer is simply that it couldn't be done. And one of the reasons God has established His church in an organized capacity is that in this way you and I may share in reaching all the world.

Occasionally I need someone who speaks of the invisible church. I have not found that expression in the Bible. I know what they mean, but I am thankful that the church is a very visible organization here in this world.

An invisible church could never give the ordinances of the Lord's house to me. An invisible church could never administer baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. An invisible church could never gather visible funds or visible missionaries to the length and breadth of the world.

So I am thankful that when Jesus organized His church He ordained men called apostles to lead out. Later deacons were ordained, and other officers were selected under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

So successful was that enterprise that after forty years Paul said the Gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven (Colossians 1:23). I think that is a wonderful record. Under the combined working of God and man every creature had been reached with the wonderful proclamation concerning the coming of Jesus in the flesh, His death upon the cross, His resurrection, His ascension, and His mediatorial work within the veil of the heavenly sanctuary. And with it was coupled

the glad announcement that some day He would return to the earth to take His waiting children home.

They had an organized body to carry on that work. We see Paul, a great pioneer missionary, going out into fields that had never heard the Gospel story. We see him as he raised churches and ordained elders in every city. Why? It is a part of church organization.

We see him instructing the converts in Christian stewardship. We read his letters to the Corinthians and Galatians and others dealing with proper use of the means that God had put into their hands, urging upon them the claims of heaven.

We see him traveling among the churches gathering up funds, carrying them back to Jerusalem, the headquarters of the church. Yes, stewardship was a part of the work of the early church, and it is the work of the church today.

The world today is much bigger than the world of the apostles. The population of the world has increased, and we have the gigantic task of reaching between two and three billion people with the message. You and I know that He will not come until the Gospel has been preached into all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come (Matthew 24:14).

I was thinking how differently men would do this if men had the power that God has without His wisdom. Just suppose that you had so much money that you could use gold to pave streets. No end of money. And there was a job that needed to be done that took money. So you send out to a poor little group like this and say, Look here. To reach the needy ones in the mission field we need your nickels and dimes and dollars.

Would you do that? Well, God does. God sends out the word. He who owns all the universe, and could multiply gold or silver just by speaking, sends the word, I need your help.

If we had God's power without His wisdom we probably wouldn't do that. I wonder why He does it? Why do you suppose? Well, I know at least part of the reason. It is because He loves us, and wants us to share the joy of giving and joy of accomplishment. And it is so good to enter into that joy. And He tells us the only kind of offerings are acceptable:

“For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not” 2 Corinthians 8:12.

There must first be a willing mind. That shows me that it isn't our money that God is interested in at all. It is our hearts. That thought is further emphasized:

“Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver” 2 Corinthians 9:7.

God wants us to find joy in giving. We have been told through the messenger of the Lord that it is better not to give at all than to give grudgingly. If that makes somebody breathe a sigh of relief, breathe. God is not poor, but He has a great longing for love and fellowship. Love prompts true giving. Love is increased by true giving. The more we love the more we want to give, and the more we give the more we love. That is true. We know it is.

Think of the ones you love most in this world. You are most interested in giving to them. And the more you invest in them the more your heart is where your investment is. Jesus recognized that when He said:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” Matthew 6:19.

Did you ever have any money stolen from you? Well, if you haven't, you may. Did you ever lose any property through deterioration?

Brother Wilson told an experience he had just the other day. He and his brother went to move a piano from a house. The man had died several years ago, and apparently nobody had been in the house for some time. The vines were growing all over the house in such a way that they had to cut their way in to get the piano.

The things of this earth are not forever. Moth and rust corrupt. And there is another way of deterioration. Some of you know that in Germany, after the World War I, inflation continued and spiraled so that people actually had to use wheel barrels to cart their money around to pay their bills. Each note was worth so little that they had to have bales of paper money to buy a few groceries. Money can depreciate in value.

Is inflation happening at the present time? Does a dollar buy what it bought thirty years ago? Even ten years ago? No, it doesn't. But thank God there is one way, and only one way, we can make our investment secure. Secure against thieves, inflation, destruction of property, earthquakes. Jesus tells us how to do it. Transfer it to the bank of heaven.

How much have you got up there? Do you have some up there? Would you like to put some more?

There are some men in this world that are greatly interested in the returns on investment. If they have money invested in something that is yielding four or five percent and hear of something that might yield seven or eight percent, they are interested. But if they are good business men there is one thing they want to know. Along with the returns on the investment they want to know if it is safe. If they can be assured it is safe, and yielding a high return, they will put money into it.

Well here is something that combines both advantages. It is certain as God is. We are soon to travel to heaven. We will look back through Orion and see this globe all on fire. The smoke will be like the smoke that ascended from Sodom, only a billion times more. Thank God, we don't need to be shedding tears because our investments are going up in smoke. If we are led by the Spirit, and have been willing to be led by the Spirit, God will see to it that before that day comes we shall have transferred our funds to a safe deposit.

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” That's the great reason God wants us to engage in this transfer of securities. He wants our hearts, our love, our interest, our devotion, our attention to be focused upon that upper world.

What are the returns on our investments? It is going to be a wonderful thing to see in the kingdom of God those who are there because of our labors and our gifts and our prayers.

A few weeks ago I was holding a meeting in one of our churches on the west coast. At the close of the meeting someone came up and said, “Do you remember us?”

I said, “No, what is your name?”

They said, “You baptized us thirty years ago.”

In the kingdom of God we are going to see again and again people come to us, and we won't have to say, I am sorry, I don't remember you. There in the kingdom the gift of absolute recall will be ours. And we will recognize those for whom we have labored and prayed as they throw their arms around us and say, I am here in the kingdom of God because you labored for me. I am here because you witnessed to me. And will there be some there we have never met in this world? And there will be some men and women and children from Africa, from China, from the islands of the sea who say, I have just been looking over the books, and find that it was the Sabbath School offering you gave on such and such a Sabbath that paid the missionary who came to my village and taught us the Gospel.

Won't that be a thrilling thing? Won't that be a return on the investment?

There was a man who tried an experiment in advertising work. He put dollar bills in his store window and advertised to sell them for fifty cents. How many people do you suppose he got to come in and buy them? Not one. Do you know why? They thought there was a trick. They didn't really believe it. What would they have done if they had believed it? They would have been standing in line with great sacks of fifty cent pieces saying, Here is my 50 cents, so give me a dollar. In fact, give me a hundred.

Can the angels tell whether you and I believe what we have just been studying? Ah, dear ones, what a wonderful opportunity we have to transfer our investment into the bank of heaven.

“But this I say, He which sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully” 2 Corinthians 9:6.

What would you think of a farmer who was so stingy that in a field that needed a bushel of seed he would only take out a teacup of seed and scatter it over the ground. He would be defeating his own purpose, wouldn't he?

I heard of a man who was so stingy that he wouldn't buy enough feed for his cows. The cows responded to that, and the results were that he didn't have a big cream check. But he was so short-sighted that he couldn't part with the money to buy feed for his cows. What he did buy the cows used to just keep breathing.

He which sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully. And:

“Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” ” 2 Corinthians 9:7-8.

If you will keep the channels open, God will keep them supplied. If you keep giving, God will see to it that you will keep receiving. I will read that to you:

“The one purpose above all others for which God's gifts should be used is the sustaining of workers in the great harvest field. And if men, and women as well, will become channels of blessing to other souls, the Lord will keep the channels supplied. It is not returning to God His own that makes men poor; it is withholding that tends to poverty. *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, page 449.

So you and I can give and Dr. Yates can keep working for the lepers over in New Guinea. You and I can give and Dr. Peal can keep on his wonderful work down in South America. You and I can give and those mission launches along the Amazon will keep going up and down that river reaching thousands with ministry of healing. You and I can give and the work for the lepers in Africa can go on, and you and I can tell others of that wonderful work. We can bring to them the mission appeal in the ingathering, and show them what is going on in the homeland and in the foreign fields, and invite them to have a part. It is the greatest investment we can engage in or offer to others.

If you and I will keep the channels open God will keep them supplied. What does that mean? Do you think that widow that gave all she had at the temple went home and starved to death? I don't think so. Did that widow that made a cake for Elijah out of the last meal and oil she had starve to death? Did her little boy starve to death? No. Instead of meaning his death, it meant his life. Yes, he was brought back to God by Elijah who she had fed in the hour of extremity.

I hardly think that we can get poor giving to God. After all, if it was somebody who owed you something, and they overpaid you, what would you do? Wouldn't you see that they got it back? If you overpaid God, what do you think God would do? Don't you think He would see that you got it back? He said that if we would bring not only the tithe but offerings, and prove Him, He will pour out a blessing such as we have not room to receive.

What does a cup do when it hasn't room to receive? It overflows. It doesn't run sides up the cup. But some people, when they get blessings, see to it that they have more room.

There was a man in Luke that had an experience like that. God blessed his farm so much that the barns couldn't hold it. He pulled down the barns and built greater storehouses so he could have room for all those wonderful crops.

Was that what God intended? No. God intended him to share. So we see the folly of trying to add and hoard. And we see the great blessing of sharing and giving.

And remember that the purpose of God is not that He is poor. He could have accomplished His work long ago by sending His angels to all the millions of needy people. But He wants you and me to get the joy of giving and sharing. He wants to accomplish in our hearts that unselfish love, which is the hallmark of heaven's loyalty. He wants us to prepare to live in a world of unselfish love.

And it is only as we enter into it that we can have that experience.

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W.D. Frazee Sermons
PO Box 102, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org