

Beginning Soul Winner 2 of 8

"He That Goeth Forth"

#0211

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—April 16, 1969

Our first text will be Matthew 4:19. This shows us how Jesus began His work of training men to work with Him in winning souls. There, by the Sea of Galilee, He called Peter and Andrew. Our text says:

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" Matthew 4:19.

Now, they'd been catching fish. That was their business. They knew how to do that. But then Jesus said I want you to catch not fish, but what? Men. In other words, "I want you to win souls." And what was the instruction He gave them? How were they to learn how to do this? "Follow Me," He says. And we can't do any better than that.

If we want to be soul winners, the way to begin is to do what? Follow Jesus. He came where we are that we might eventually go with Him where He is, and we have to do that as we seek to win souls. We have to go where people are. Not merely geographically, not merely to their homes, to their countries, but we have to go out from ourselves into their world, into their situation, into their problems, into their needs.

Turn to Psalm 126:5–6, please. You know, it cost Jesus something to come from Heaven here to earth to win souls, didn't it? And it is going to cost us something if we follow Him:

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him"
Psalm 126:5–6.

Which comes first, the sorrow or the joy? Yes. Which comes first, the sowing or the reaping? The sowing. Which comes first, the going forth or the coming again? The going forth.

Now let us look at that for a moment, this "going forth":

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" Psalm 126:6.

You know, in the days when the Bible was written, men lived in walled cities or in little villages where the houses were grouped together for protection. But if a man was going to do some agriculture, he had to go away from the village and go out where the fields were.

Several years ago, when I was in Mexico at one of our missions there, I noticed the Indians. In the morning they would leave the pueblo, where they all had their huts close together, and they'd go out into the fields and up on the mountainsides where their crops were growing to take care of those crops.

Well, that is the picture here:

“He that goeth forth...” Psalm 126:6.

In other words, dear friends, we will never win souls as long as we are content to just stay in our own little personal world. Now, don't misunderstand me. There are souls that need to be won in our families. But in order to do it, we must be outgoing. We can't be wrapped up in ourselves.

Somebody has said that a man wrapped up in himself makes a very small bundle. And there's nothing pettier than the occupations and the pre-occupations of the selfish soul. But this is what we all are naturally. We're all wrapped up in ourselves. And we tend to look upon everything that happens from the viewpoint of how it's going to affect us and our selfish plans. If it's going to rain today, the selfish soul doesn't think of all the benefits that that will be, unless he happens to be in a work where he wants that rain. The selfish soul may say, “Oh my, I was going to do this or that today, and look, now it is raining and I can't do it.” And so on with many experiences. Ah my friends:

“He that goeth forth—who is willing to get out of himself, out of his desires, his wishes, his plans, his ambitions—he that will go forth with Jesus will win souls.”

Now the question is, how much do you want to win souls? This is a class in beginning soul-winning. How do you begin? As we saw yesterday, we begin by praying. This morning, we see that we begin by going forth. Nobody could sow seed in a house like this. He'd have to go out to the field. The field is where the souls are. Again I say, it might be right in your own house, your own home. It might be in your community. It might be in Africa or India. Wherever the field of God's appointment is, nearby or far away, he that goeth forth is the one that's going to come back with some sheaves. Will you be willing to lay aside your plans, your wishes, your ideas, and go forth with Jesus?

Now, in our opening text Jesus says, do what? “Follow Me.” In other words, He never asks us to do anything that He hasn't already done. The path may be narrow and steep and rough, but as we look, we see the Savior's footprints. And the drops of blood are there where the thorns have pierced His feet. “Follow Me.”

You know when Jesus came to this world, Paul tells us in Philippians 2, that

He emptied Himself. How much did He give up? He gave up everything. And the reason so few people are successful soul winners is that so few are willing to go all the way in self-surrender.

You see, so many times when we begin to get a burden for souls, and Jesus begins His work of emptying us so that we can, we begin to pull away. We begin to argue with Jesus as to whether the thing He asks us to empty ourselves of is good or bad. Now, naturally, if we have been drinking whiskey, Jesus is going to empty us of that. If we have been using tobacco, Jesus is going to clean us up of that. Isn't He? And so with many other things in life. But the soul winner must go far beyond that. He must come to the place where he is willing and anxious not simply to give up everything bad so he can be saved, but give up everything bad and good alike so others can be saved.

This is what Jesus did. Was there anything bad in Heaven that Jesus left to come down here? No, no. And while He was here in this world, was He just thinking of giving up bad things so He could be saved? If our religious experience is largely made up of thinking—"Well, I have given up this bad thing and that bad thing, and the other bad thing and I wonder if there is anything else I ought to give up?"—ah, my dear friends, the test must come much closer than that.

Turn please to Matthew 19:16. There was a young man that met this test. Sorry to say, he didn't *pass* the test. He failed in this examination. This young man was a ruler of the Jews. And as he watched Jesus and His work and listened to His wonderful words, and as he saw Him blessing the children, there came in his heart a longing that he too might receive that blessing. And so, he came and talked to Jesus about it.

And as Jesus looked at that man, and as Mark tells the story, beholding him He loved him. And love for Jesus was awakening in that young man's heart. Christ saw in him a young man that He could use in His work. Oh friends, that young man could have had many stars in his crown. But first, he must go forth. And so Jesus tried to get him to be outgoing, to go forth. When the young man pressed the question of what he must do, what did Jesus finally tell him?

"If thou wilt be perfect go..." Matthew 19:21.

Go forth! Get out of yourself and your narrow little circle. Break through that crust of selfishness:

"...If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" Matthew 19:21.

There is the echo of those words given to Peter and Andrew by the Sea of Galilee, "Follow Me." And as Mark puts it, Jesus said:

"...come, take up the cross, and follow me" Mark 10:21.

There's no other way to follow Jesus except to take the cross.

Well, what did he do?

“...when he heard that saying, he went away sorrowful:
for he had great possessions” Matthew 19:22.

Ah friends, what a pity. He could have come with all his riches, all his possessions, all his talents of mind and money. But no. Because he had so much, he felt it was too much to give. But think of how little he had compared with what Jesus had given for him, and for all other souls.

But here is the test. Did this young man ever become a soul winner? No. He went away, how? Sorrowful, yes. He went away sorrowful. He felt that the price was too great, the cost too much, the sacrifice unreasonable. And really, as men would look at it, it did sound unreasonable. After all, here was this itinerant preacher with a few fishermen following Him, and he was a learned, rich man, a ruler of the Jews. Why should he give all that up just to work with Jesus? Why indeed? And He didn't do it. But he went away how? Sorrowful. Everyone who goes away from Jesus will go away sorrowful, my friends.

Oh, as I think what people are selling their souls for, it seems to me, friends, no matter how much the world offers, it is so cheap. As we noted yesterday, they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the what? Stars. Why, to win even one soul is the greatest joy of life. But you and I, if we are willing, can turn many to righteousness. Oh, how wonderful it is, friends, to be a soul-winner.

But, what did our text in Psalm says we must do? He that what? Goeth forth:

“He that goeth forth...” Psalm 126:6.

You know the colporteur, every Monday morning, he has to fight this battle over again. Will he go forth or will he stay at home? And are there things that can come to mind that need to be done or that might be done to keep us out of the field? Oh, yes. We must settle this in our souls. It is he that goeth forth.

And again let me stress, the going forth may be right where you live. It may be right in the house where you sleep. It may be right in the institution where you are employed. But if you are wrapped up in yourself, you can miss the precious opportunities. If your main thought is how to take care of you, and get your plans carried out, you will miss it. Like the rich young ruler, you will miss the golden opportunity.

But, thank God, Peter and John and Andrew and James and Thomas and Matthew, they decided that what they were doing was not half as important as what Jesus wanted them to do. And so they left all and rose up and followed Him. That's

what we are to do:

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,
shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his
sheaves with him” Psalm 126:6.

I wonder if that young man enjoyed his beautiful home and his nice furniture and his wonderful chariot, and all the rest of the things he had after that? Well, he doubtless lived it up, as we say. But oh, there must have always been in his heart that hunger, sometimes sensed, sometimes unconscious, that gnawing hunger, that thirst for something he didn't have. Did he lack something? Did he realize it on this occasion? Did he still lack it after he went away? He never got it. Fellowship with Christ in soul-winning would have supplied that lack.

Do you know why so many young people are just panting after the things of this world, and they try this pleasure and that activity and run with this person and then that one? I will tell you why, friends. They have this same hidden hunger that this rich young man had. There's only one thing that can satisfy it, and that is soul-winning.

And every person, a parent, a teacher, a minister, a young people's worker, everyone who has on his heart the burden of trying to help young people to find joy in the Christian life must remember this and must understand that the only way anybody can be truly satisfied is to go forth with Jesus in soul-winning.

This is not for a few people like ministers and Bible workers. This is for everybody, *everybody*. All who sow in tears shall reap in joy. And while much of the joy is in the future life when we see those for whom we have labored there in the kingdom of God, even in this life, in this world, we get a foretaste of that as those for whom we labor surrender to Jesus and give their hearts to Him, and unite with us and with Him in winning still others.

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,
shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his
sheaves with him” Psalm 126:6.

In the book *Messages to Young People*:

“The work above all work,—the business above all others which should draw and engage the energies of the soul,—is the work of saving souls for whom Christ has died. Make this the main, the important work of your life. Make it your special life work” *Messages to Young People*, page 227.

Oh, this is it. What is my work? To be a soul-winner.

William Carey, who finally was used to open great areas for God in the

mission field was a cobbler. And there in Great Britain where He lived, he had on the wall of his shop a great map of the world. And as people would come in, they wondered what he was doing with that map of the world there in his shoe shop.

He said, "My business is to win souls. I cobble shoes to pay expenses."

Always on his heart, as he was working over his last, was that thought of those needy millions in the fields afar. And finally, God put him in India to open that great sub-continent to the Gospel of Christ.

Oh friends, what is your business? To win souls. In other words, soul-winning is not something that you can be successful in using it as a hobby. Now, you may have a hobby of stamp collecting or shell collecting or butterfly collecting. That's all right. But if soul-winning is just a hobby with you, you will never collect very many. Soul-winning to be successful must be the main, the important work of your life, your special life-work. And isn't it worth it, friends? Isn't it? Ah yes:

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,
shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his
sheaves with him" Psalm 126:6.

Oh, the joy of the ingathering, the coming with the sheaves, the golden grain, souls, men and women, and boys and girls, giving their hearts to Jesus as we work with them and as we plead with them.

All right, now, let us in our thinking go back to that scene again by the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is talking to those fishermen that have used nets and hook and line, and whatever method they've used, they have been working to catch fish, and they've done it. Now Jesus says to them, do what?

"...Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"
Matthew 4:19.

Who will make us fishers of men? Christ will. We can't make ourselves fishers of men. We'll never do it without Him. But now, in order that He may make us fishers of men, we must do what? Follow Him.

Again on this page 227 of *Messages to Young People*, a very important sentence:

"The secret of winning souls can be learned only from the
great Teacher" *Messages to Young People*, page 227.

Do you know what kind of a letter that "T" is that begins teacher? That is a capital. Who is it? Jesus.

"...Follow me and I will make you fishers of men"
Matthew 4:19.

“The secret of winning souls can be learned only from the great Teacher” *Messages to Young People*, page 227.

Will you say it with me?

“The secret of winning souls can be learned only from the great Teacher” *Ibid*.

Is it a secret? Well then you can't learn it, can you? Oh, yes! Can you get in on a secret? Yes, if the one who knows the secret will tell you. But if you don't press up to Him, you'll never know it.

My dear friends, may I tell you very simply, I can't make a soul winner out of you. Oh, there are some folks I'd love to make soul winners out of, but they won't let me. But if everybody would be willing for me to make them soul winners, I can't do it. All I can do is get their arms linked with Jesus and their hearts linked with Jesus because He is the successful soul winner. And He says:

“...Follow me and I will make you fishers of men”
Matthew 4:19.

Do you believe it? Then if you do, and you are willing to go forth from your plans, your ideas, your ambitions, your desires, and link with Him, then keep close to Him. Because the only way you can learn from somebody is to observe what they do and you have to be close, whether it is repairing watches, cooking a meal, giving a treatment, making a garden, whatever. “Follow Me.” In other words, we learn to win souls by the apprenticeship method, and we are to be apprenticed to Jesus. “Follow Me.”

Now, what does this mean in a practical way? It brings us right back to where we closed in our lesson yesterday morning, and this is where it should. We need to study and contemplate the life of Christ on our knees, beholding in our imagination the scenes of His life and death.

Down on our knees in prayer, we are not just to recite a list of names for whom we are burdened. We are to behold how Jesus lived and died. We're to listen as He talks with Nicodemus and wins that rich man. We're to watch as by the well of Sychar He talks with that poor woman of Samaria, and wins her soul for eternity. In Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, we're to study, on our knees, how He worked with this one and that one and the other one, the different keys that he used to fit different locks. And as on our knees, we follow Him, He will make us fishers of men.

Again and again, we will admire His tact, His courtesy, His strategy. We will see how He labored to win the hearts of men to Himself. And as sure as we do that, we will be impressed by Him how to apply what we see in Him to the souls for whom we are praying as we talk with Him there in the secret place of prayer.

Lord, lay some soul upon my heart,
And love that soul through me;
And may I humbly do my part
To win that soul for Thee.

Let us sing it:

Lord, lay some soul upon my heart,
And love that soul through me;
And may I humbly do my part
To win that soul for Thee.

To win that soul for Thee,
To win that soul for Thee,
And may I humbly do my part
To win that soul for Thee.

Now let's take this lesson into the laboratory of the closet, and the laboratory of the field. And tomorrow morning we will have another lesson. God bless you all.

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