

## THE REQUISITES FOR SOUL-WINNING

Pointing lost souls to Christ is the highest and holiest task on earth. To win a soul to Christ is a supernatural assignment which demands supernatural equipment. Without it, the task is impossible. Our Lord said, "Apart from Me ye can do nothing." If any Christian is to be an effective and successful soul-winner, it is important that he or she possess certain cardinal qualifications.

1. An experience of redeeming grace.

A soul-winner must have had an experience with Christ which can be stated in terms of the first person, singular number and possessive case. "The Lord is my shepherd." "My Lord and my God." "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine." Without this experience one's efforts at soul-winning are doomed to failure. Spurgeon said, "God will not use dead tools for working living miracles." The blind cannot lead blind people successfully. We must know the way over which we are to lead others. D. L. Moody once said, "To introduce two persons successfully one must know them both."

2. A consistent Christian life.

When one tells others what Christ can do for them, it is certain that they will be watching to see what He has done for that person. How much success would a bald-headed man have in selling a hair restorer? Many Christians are impotent as soul-winners because their lives are such poor advertisements of the Christ whom they tell about. Verbal presentation falls flat unless supplemented by the demonstration of a changed life. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean." II Corinthians 6:17. "God does not demand a beautiful vessel for His work, but He does demand a clean one." If one is not clean and consistent in his life, the more he keeps his mouth shut about Christ the better it is for the cause of Christ. You must live close to the Lord if you are ever to lead souls to know Him as their Saviour.

3. A genuine prayer life.

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Matthew 6:6. "In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Philippians 4:6.

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16. Intercessory prayer works wonders. The surest way to spiritual power and the shortest way to a sinner's heart is by way of the throne of God. Therefore, pray! Lay hold of God, in faith believing, in prayer receiving.

4. A conviction of the need of sinners.

A soul-winner must believe that men are lost and need a Saviour. Christ Jesus was moved to come "out of the ivory palaces into a world of woe" by a vivid apprehension of the danger, doom and destiny of man as a lost sinner. The realization that, apart from Christ, men are hopelessly and eternally lost was a powerful motivation in the lives of all the great soul-winners of history. Do you have a vivid realization of how unspeakably terrible it is for those around you to be hopelessly lost in sin? If so, you will speed to the rescue of those who are without Christ and urge His claims upon them. Everyone needs Christ. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3:18. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36.

5. A realization that Christ is the only and adequate Saviour. Christ and Him crucified is God's only remedy. He is fully adequate to the needs of any and every sinner on earth. Christ alone is sufficient to meet the deepest needs and highest yearnings of the human soul, both in this world and in the next.

6. A passion for the lost.

A passion for souls is an intense desire for the salvation of the lost. It is a great longing to see them accept Christ as their Saviour and enthrone Him as their Lord. Our blessed Saviour had an unspeakable longing for the salvation of the unsaved. With a burning heart of love He "beheld the city and wept over it." Peter urged that "above all things be fervent in love." To be on fire with the fire of heaven is our great need, but such a state is not ours to manufacture. It comes only through contact with the Divine Heart.

7. A working knowledge of the Scriptures.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Timothy 3:16-17.

Dr. R. A. Torrey said: "There are four reasons why every worker should know his Bible:

- (1) To show men their need of a Saviour.
- (2) To show them that Jesus is the Saviour they need.
- (3) To show them how to make this Saviour their Saviour.
- (4) To deal with specific difficulties which stand in the way of their accepting Christ."

8. A tactful approach.

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Matthew 10:16. Tact simply means sanctified common sense. It is the ability to say the right word at the right time to the right person in the right way. Be courteous and kind to all.

9. A complete dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Years ago a vessel sank in the Hudson River. It was imperative that it be lifted and towed away. Several engineers attempted to raise it but failed. One day a man said, "I am not an engineer but I believe that I can move the sunken ship." He assembled a number of barges and, at low tide, lowered powerful chains under the hulk on the bottom of the river. When the tide began to rise, the sunken vessel was lifted and towed away. This man succeeded because he harnessed up the mighty power of the ocean. Knowing that our strength is infinitesimal and utterly inadequate, our Lord stressed the imperative necessity of being harnessed to the power of the Holy Spirit, if we are to be effective in the sublime enterprise of pointing sin's captives to the dear Son of God and the merits of His redemption. "Ye shall receive power upon the coming of the Holy Spirit upon you." The anointing of the Holy Spirit is that which makes the difference between impotence and power in witnessing to the lost.

The Holy Spirit is the soul-winner's source of guidance also. He knows where the worker's efforts will yield results. He knows when a human heart is ready, how the needy soul can best be approached, and who can most effectively witness to him. Thus He guided Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch and instructed him how to make Isaiah 53 the basis of a convincing evangelistic message. The Holy Spirit knew the very chariot in which a man was riding who was ready to be instructed and to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour. The Spirit said, "Join thyself to this chariot."

There will not be any power in your testimony if the Holy Spirit does not direct, bless and use it. But, if you will turn over to Him all the keys of your being, He will equip you for the glorious business of soul-winning by giving you His unction, His cleansing, His power, His guidance and His presence.

10. A persistent effort.

No work requires more patience and perseverance than soul-winning. Refuse to give up

in the event of failure at your first attempt. Show others their need of Christ, teach them the way of salvation, and continue to work with and pray for them until they accept Him.