

CAN YOU RECOMMEND YOUR RELIGION?

"One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." John 1:40-41.

Any person who has been saved can and should recommend the One Who has saved him in such a way as to lead another to receive Christ as his Saviour and give himself in the service of Christ in and through the fellowship of the church.

It is characteristic of human beings to recommend that which they have found to be helpful, dependable and profitable. People do not remain silent about anybody or anything that means very much to them. Many millions of dollars are spent annually to advertise products which some have found to be satisfactory. Advertising slogans are used to keep such products before the eyes and on the minds of people. Among them are the following:

1. "Best in the Long Run."

The makers of Goodrich Tires say that their tires are the best in the long run. Believing that, they try their best to get people to buy their product. They do it on the assumption that people are interested in what is best in the long run. However, multitudes are interested only in the short run or what is the cheapest. In a track meet there are two types of races, the dashes and the distant runs. One requires speed, the other endurance. Very seldom can one excel in both. Some families think only in terms of the present. They wear last year's clothes, ride in this year's car and spend next year's income. Others think that the education of their children is of more value than mere things. They think it is more important to live as they should rather than try to keep up with their neighbors. Young people illustrate these two points of view. Some are near-sighted; they do not see beyond the next thrill or the next meal. They quit school to earn money to have a good time. Did you ever hear a grown man or woman, with average intelligence, say that he or she was glad that he or she had quit school? Rather, they always recognize it as a handicap. Other young people see that it is best in the long run to deny themselves now in order that they may have it later. Sometimes temptation comes. Some say, "Others are doing it, what's the difference?" Compromise is always short--sighted. Clean, godly living may cost some so-called good times, but it is the best in the long run. Christian ideals have stood the test of time and are best in the long run.

2. "There's a Reason."

The makers of Postum assumed that most people are rational thinkers. They may have learned better by this time, but at the time they adopted their advertising slogan they must have believed it. Wanting to recommend their product, which they hoped to sell in great quantities, they assumed that when people are convinced they would act intelligently. "There's a reason," they say, "experiment and find it."

3. "Eventually, why not now?"

This advertising slogan is based on a major and a minor premise and a conclusion. The major premise is this: Everybody wants the best. The minor premise is this: Gold Medal flour is the best. The conclusion is: "Eventually, why not now?"

By means of television, radio and newspaper numerous companies recommend the products or the services which they have to offer to the general public. They do not exercise any timidity or modesty in publicizing the fact that they have something in which they believe there is quality and value. They boldly and unashamedly recommend it to others.

Isn't it strange that many of the people who pay hard-earned dollars to recommend their products or their services day after day, and who claim to be Christians and are members of a church, have never recommended their religion to anybody. Of course, people who are not Christians know that if any church member had that which is satisfying, enriching and valuable, he could not and would not keep silent about it, but would be recommending it to others.

I. A Recommendation Of Religion Is Right.

This is a fundamental part of the business of being a Christian. The task of witnessing personally to the unsaved and recommending Christ as the only Saviour has been given to everyone who is a child of God. "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). Have you done it? Are you doing it? Do you have anything worth recommending to the unsaved? If so, you will not keep silent about it. This is a responsibility which no Christian can escape.

John the Baptist was the great voice and religious leader of his day. He was preaching near and baptizing people in the Jordan River. Andrew and John went out to hear him and became his disciples. On the second day after the baptism of our Lord, these three men were talking when Christ passed by. To Andrew and John, John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" What emotions must have stirred his soul as he thus bore testimony to the person and work of Christ! Andrew was one of the very first to attach himself to Christ. When he experienced for himself the joy and blessedness of personal fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, Andrew did not sit down in complacency but immediately became concerned that his brother, Simon Peter, enter into a similar experience and relationship. Andrew could not remain silent and withhold the glorious news that the Lord had saved him and filled his soul with joyous thanksgiving. He had to tell someone what had happened to him.

Just as soon as Andrew came to know Christ as his Saviour he was greatly concerned that somebody else might be saved. Just as soon as he enlisted in the service of Christ, Andrew began his recruiting work for Him. He set us a worthy example. How like Christ it is to talk with others about the salvation of their souls! How unlike the Master to live without doing it!

Having found Christ to be the answer to his spiritual hopes and desires, Andrew went straight home to find his brother and to get in his first work for his Saviour. He was not afraid to speak to his own brother about Christ and recommend the Saviour to him. He had received a peace, a satisfaction

and a joy from Christ which meant something to him. Because of what he had received, he could not rest until his brother became a partaker of the same peace, satisfaction and joy. Andrew found Peter and told him his Christian experience, invited him to come to Christ and introduced him to the Saviour. The Bible says, "And he brought him to Jesus." How simple! A man recommending his religion to another and he was saved as a result of it!

It is interesting to note how people act upon this principle in other spheres and ignore it altogether in the church. They will approach people and talk to them about joining civic, business, professional and social organizations, in which they enjoy membership, but never recommend Christ. Is it any wonder that unsaved conclude that Christ means nothing to them?

II. A Recommendation Of Religion Is Reasonable.

Every child of God has so many favorable opportunities to introduce his or her friends to Christ. When a person knows another, is close to him, is acquainted with his needs and can speak his language recommends Christ as a Saviour, it has a wholesome influence. Why not use the privilege of friendship as a means of introducing your friends to the greatest and best Friend? One lady spoke of a couple in this fashion: "They are friends of ours and they have often talked to us about their religion and suggested that we try it." This business of recommending Christ because of what He has done for you is the greatest obligation and opportunity which you have. Do you recommend Him?

How noble it was in Andrew that he showed such a great interest in the salvation of Peter! They had spent years together. They had talked about many different things. So it was quite fitting that Andrew should talk with him about the most important subject under heaven. He did the greatest thing for his brother that anyone can do for another. He told him what he knew about Christ. He did not argue with him, but simply talked with him. There was no lack of conviction or doubt on his part. As a result of his earnest and loving witnessing to Peter, Andrew would deserve the gratitude of Christians through all the ages. The greatest deed in many a life is just this, to introduce one soul to Christ.

Nobody ever credited Andrew with the possession of extraordinary gifts. There was nothing showy about him. One of the most remarkable things about him was his exemplary life. The fact that Christ smiled upon him and blessed his efforts was enough for him. He did his work without seeking applause. He did not care about being in the limelight because he put Christ first.

One day a little boy in Scotland trusted Christ as his Saviour and united with a church. He was the only person who made a profession of faith in that church during the whole year. When the annual report was made to the church dealing with the number who had been saved, it was said: "None except Wee Bobbie, and he's so sma' he's not worth the countin'." The official board of that church felt that the minister had failed. They said, "You have had only one person to confess Christ, and that one was only a boy."

After the service on the next Sunday morning, the pastor had tarried in the church, wondering what he should do. He was startled when a small hand touched his. "Robert, what are you doing here?" said the minister. The boy replied, "I wanted to ask you if you thought I could be a minister,

or a missionary if I should work hard." With joy in his heart the pastor encouraged the boy. After a while "Wee Bobbie," as the critics called him, grew to manhood, became a missionary to South Africa, won hundreds of the natives to Christ, and blazed the trail for the great David Livingstone, his son-in-law. He was Robert Moffatt, known and honored as one of the great missionaries of all time. Never despise the day when a child is introduced to Christ.

III. A Recommendation Of Religion Is Rewarding.

The requirement is that you have something to recommend. When people find something in other fields, they do not hesitate to recommend it, regardless of what the product may be. Does your religion have anything in it that you can recommend? If not, then you have cheated yourself. If it is worth recommending to someone else, then as you tell another what it means to you it becomes more valuable and precious to you. The more often you recommend it, the more worth recommending it will become. The reason that insurance men regard so highly the policies they have to sell is that they have told so many people about them and their merits. Go to some unsaved person and tell him or her what your Christianity means to you and it will mean more to you.

Telling others what Christ has done for you and what He means to you will save you from falling into sinful conduct. If Christ is your Saviour, your recommendation of Him to others will increase your faith in Him, your love for Him and your gratitude to Him.

Another reward that comes from recommending Christ to others and influencing them to receive Him as their Saviour is the satisfaction of knowing that you have done that person the greatest favor that can be done for him or her. You also have the joy of knowing that what you have been able to do for that person will mean much to the other members of that person's family and friends.

It is rewarding just to know that when a Christian knows and loves Christ enough to recommend Him to somebody that he has brought joy to the Lord. Christ said, "Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). It is truly wonderful to have the privilege of doing something that will result in increasing the amount of joy in heaven.

To love Christ enough to recommend him to a lost person and influence that person to receive Him as his or her Saviour is the most rewarding experience on this earth. I only wish that each of you might have that joy. We never know how far-reaching may be the results of winning just one soul to Christ. It is a glorious accomplishment when anyone is brought to Christ, but how much more wonderful it is when that person is young for then a life can be saved for the service of the Lord.

Andrew had one specialty. He was an expert in the gentle art of bringing others to Christ. The significant thing about him was that every time he was mentioned in the Bible he was recommending the Christ Who had saved him and was introducing somebody to Him.

Your supreme task as a Christian is to recommend Christ to others and to introduce them to Him. Have you ever done that? Have you ever brought anybody to Christ? If not, how will it look for you to go alone into

heaven when you might have taken others with you? If you do not recommend Christ to someone, you will miss much joy in this life and fail to get a star in your crown in the life hereafter.

When did you recommend your religion to anybody? When did you talk to any person about his or her spiritual condition and welfare? Did you ever really try to introduce anybody to Christ? We are not responsible for results, but we are responsible for our testimony and efforts.