

THE CHRISTIAN'S BUSINESS

(This sermon is not in outline form as such, but still very "preach-able." Use your own outline style if desired.)

1 Corinthians 9:19-22

Introduction: If I were to ask you what the duty of a Christian is, I would probably hear answers such as: attend church regularly, tithe, be willing to teach a class, and so on. But the only true thing that a Christian is to do is TO WIN SOULS.

About every Church member thinks that that is the Pastor's job and that two revivals at the most per year will take care of the lost. BUT THEY ARE WRONG. The commission Jesus gave is to and for ALL Christians. (*Matthew 28:19-20*). The average pastor doesn't have time to win every one in the community and the lost people will naturally back away from the preacher when they are more receptive to the average Church member. They see the preacher coming and they put up their defenses.

There are actually very few lost people reached from the pulpit. Only one out of five are won from the pulpit and that is Convention wide figures. Let me ask you this - how many lost people will deliberately get up early on Sunday morning, dress and drive to Church, willingly expose themselves to the Gospel, which Satan hates and tries to destroy. How many will deliberately give up a drive to the hills, to the lake, a day of fishing, visiting a relative, going to the Mall, catching up on house work, mowing the yard, and so on, in order to come to Church and get their conscience and soul pricked by the Holy Spirit? VERY FEW - IF ANY.

Of all the religious groups in our country, very few, if any have a program to reach those who do not come to Church who are not members.

We have been going at this backwards. We have been trying to get the lost to come to Church (but not very hard), so, now, let's try to get the lost to Christ, THEN , they will come to Church.

We are proud of our attendance most of the time, but did you ever stop to think of that great host who are not in Church? The LOST! It is very humbling.

Where is everyone on Sunday morning? They are everywhere EXCEPT in Church. Most are still in bed or lying about the house reading the morning paper, the kids are watching cartoons or playing with their video games. Many are mowing their yards, some are washing the car, others are on the way to grandma's house, some are pulling a boat to the lake for a day of fishing or water skiing, or some or just taking a Sunday drive. People are everywhere EXCEPT in Church.

Every Sunday and only on Sunday, we try to evangelize the world- by evangelizing the Church building - we evangelize every class room and every pew. The Church building is the most evangelized place in town on Sundays. The way our Churches operate today, one would think that the great commission tells us to go and bring everyone to Church to be saved.

Are we asking too much of the lost people to come to Church? You say, "NO! They need to come anyhow. I was saved in a Church, so they can e too. The Church is here, if they want to be saved, it's up to them..." Well now, let's turn it around. Don't YOU find it hard to get to Church sometimes yourself? Don't you want to just stay at

home sometime? Getting the children ready, getting breakfast over, getting the noon meal on, getting to Sunday School on time, don't you lose your desire sometime? WELL, just imagine how the lost feel. They HAVE NO REASON to come to Church at all! Why hurry? Why get in a bother? It's a day of leisure. WHY SHOULD WE EXPECT THE LOST PEOPLE TO DO WHAT WE OURSELVES DISLIKE SOMETIMES?

It seems that Jesus asked too much when He told us to "GO and TELL" instead of "Go bring them to hear the preacher.."

It has proven, from past experience of many pastors, that it is easier to get the lost to go to Church than it has been to get the Christian to go visit the lost and try to win them to Christ there in their homes, fulfilling the great commission correctly. THE LOST ARE SIMPLY MORE COOPERATIVE than God's own people most of the time.

At least 80% of those without Christ will not, under any circumstances, go to Church. Jesus never, never, never said to BRING THE LOST TO CHURCH. He said to GO to them.

How did the early Churches go about soul-winning? Within the whole book of Acts, there are only TWO accounts of any "revival" meetings. All soul-winning was done by individuals, door to door, on the job, walking along the roads together, etc.

The Bible says that *"...there was added DAILY those who would be saved..."* DAILY!!!! Not twice a year, not once a month or even once on a Sunday, BUT DAILY...Can you imagine how many that would be in a year? At least 365!

It has been said in comparing the difference of soul-winning in the North and in the South, that in the South, they talk a lot about soul-winning but don't do anything about it, while in the North, they don't even talk about it.

Did you know that 95% of the Southern Baptist Christians have NEVER won a soul to Christ? That figure will in all probability fit OUR/THIS Church too. Did Christ intend for Christians to act like this? Is this how the Gospel swept across the world in the early centuries? NOWHERE can you show me in the Bible where the Christian is supposed to sit down and let the lost die without Christ. YET, that is exactly what is happening!

If there ever was a time in which our country needed God, IT IS NOW! For the past several hundred years, our method of soul-winning has failed. NOW, before it's too late, let's do as the early Churches did - GO OUT AND SEEK THE LOST, lead them to Christ, then, THEN, bring them into the Church.

There was a Church in South Florida that had dwindled down to seven (7) regular members and their building would seat 1,000 people. In four weeks the attendance swelled from 50 to over 220. What happened? The houses were the same, the people were the same, there was no scheduled revival. The SAME SEVEN people started going out and winning the community to Christ, then the new Christians started coming to Church. THAT COULD BE OUR STORY, TOO.....that is, if you CARE for the lost.

There was a rural church that boasted 75 average attendance in Sunday School. There were about 400 people who lived in the community and there were only six people that every knew who were lost. In two years, Sunday School attendance jumped from 75 to 350. WHY? WHAT HAPPENED? Those 75 began to visit, knock on doors, and win those to Christ who everyone had forgotten about.

From associational statistics across our Convention, a simple mathematics job will show that on an average, considering Church membership and total baptisms, it takes 29 Church members to win one person to Christ. But only the Lord knows how many of those Church members are really CHURCH members. Then there are some Churches that have no baptisms at all during the year.

What does all this tell us? That we are mighty poor when we stand before God. That we have failed miserably. That we are not worthy to be called the Children of God. That we would be fired in a minute if anyone but God was our Father/Boss.

So, now that we have been exposed, what are we going to do about it?

(Bring your own conclusion)