

THE CHURCH'S ONLY PRIORITY

Deuteronomy 31:11-13 John 4:35

Introduction: When you visited a shopping mall, did you ever count the number of stores? A mall is just that, a place where there are all sorts of places for people to shop for various items and things of interest. Some malls advertise that there are over a hundred, or more, shopping places, come visit their mall. Today our churches have become like a mall. People go to this church because it has this or that or it offers this or that. Sadly, pastors and church family think that their church must provide all the wants and things that might draw people to attend their church. Contrary to history, tradition and today's current attitudes, the church has but ONE priority, one business and that is to reach the lost for the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other thing so important as this, "going into the world and preaching the Gospel..." God gave His Old Testament prophets instructions about the purpose of God's people, His family:

I. GOD'S PEOPLE WERE TO GATHER ALL THE PEOPLE

1. Everyone needed to hear God's Word.
 - The first step in finding God is to hear His Word.
 - People are to hear the Word read, sung, told, explained, etc.
2. People need to hear that they might learn about God.
 - *"...The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..."*
 - The Holy Spirit takes that which is heard and begins to work in the heart.
 - The Holy Spirit reveals one's standing before God, etc.
3. People need to hear God's Word that they might obey God's Word.
 - Paul did not know about sin until he learned it from God's Word.
 - One cannot know what God wants unless he/she knows God's Word.
4. Who among us would deny that it is vital that everyone know about God? Well, then, we need to move on to the next thought about Gathering the People.

II. GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO CARE ENOUGH TO GATHER THE PEOPLE

1. God cared enough to send His only Son.
2. Jesus cared enough that he died on a cross for all mankind.
3. The disciples cared enough that they gave their lives for the Gospel.
4. Paul cared enough that he was beheaded for the Church and for the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. Others through the centuries have cared enough that they were martyred.
6. However, most Christians have not cared enough. Indifference has taken over.

- Indifference has invaded our Churches of today.
 - Compassionless, complacent, preoccupied with worldly toys, lulled to sleep by promises of material comfort and things, therefore Evangelism has been sidetracked and stored away in "cold-storage" rooms.
7. To not care enough to gather the people is inhuman, unlike Jesus Christ.
- We need to remind ourselves WHY we need to go out to the people
 - The unsaved face the peril of being lost forever.
 - sin separates the lost from God.
 - sin degrades, drags down, debases, defiles, and destroys.
 - We have the cure for all that - THE GOSPEL, the good news.
 - The unsaved face the perils of failures here and now.
 - Abundant life is found only in Jesus.
 - The wages of this life is death and hell.
 - Nothing gained here from this world means a single thing in eternity.
 - The unsaved face the peril of missing heaven and finding hell.
 - Do you really believe this? Do today's Christians, Churches, really believe this?
 - This alone ought to cause us to be out this very moment spreading the good news about the Lord Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION:

1. What happens to those the Churches do not bring to the Lord?
2. Who will be held accountable for those who are within reach but nobody is reaching out to them?
3. It is unlike Jesus to NOT GO. It is harvest time and the Church is God's work crew. The Church is compelled to go out for the Lord Jesus.
4. Therefore, let us GO, reach, win, bring in, teach for the Lord Jesus.
5. The fields around us are ripe, white unto harvest with souls awaiting somebody to tell them about Jesus. Who will go? Who will be obedient to the Lord? Who cares enough for the lost?