

WHY WE ARE FAILING TO WIN THE LOST

Mark 9:14-29

Introduction: Most of our churches are winning fewer souls now than at any other time. Not just Baptists but all our denominations are losing ground in bringing lost people to the Lord. This has been going on for some time now and the effects are really beginning to be seen. Churches are losing influence in their communities, Christians can't be recognized as being any different from anybody else, and our nation is removing "God" from everything that is "public" in fear of "offending" someone.

Ask yourself this question: "When was the last time I led someone to the Lord?" Now ask this question of your Church: "Why aren't we having those "old time revivals" anymore?"

The trouble cannot be with God. The trouble cannot be with the Gospel. The trouble is not because the unsaved are hard-hearted for they have always been that way. Therefore the trouble must be with the Church and it's members - Christians. Face it! We have become powerless witnesses of the Gospel and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. THE LAD BROUGHT TO JESUS IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF OUR WORLD TODAY

1. The lad was a captive of Satan.
 - He was demented and helpless
2. The world is Satan's and it's people are Satan's captives.
 - Heartaches, tragedies, troubles, debauchery, drunkenness, desecration, drug and sex addiction.
3. The Devil/Satan is walking about this earth as he pleases, seeking to devour whomever he may and with very little opposition or resistance from the Church and Christians.

II. THE DISCIPLES FAILED TO HEAL THE LAD

1. The disciples were with Jesus, learning from Jesus, and were to be reflectors of Jesus' powers.
 - They should have been able to heal the lad.
 - They had seen Jesus do such things, knew how to do such things, yet they had no power.
2. Their example is a perfect picture of the Churches of today.
 - We have failed to reflect the light and power of Jesus just as the disciples did with the lad.
 - People are being born much faster than they are being led to Jesus.
 - The world is becoming more lost faster than it is becoming Christian.
 - Millions are being born each year but a very tiny percentage of those millions are being led to the Lord Jesus.
 - Millions go to Hell each year who never were even approached by a Christian.
 - Satan is out in the open now, he doesn't have to hide as in times past, just look at television, movies, magazines, books, computer programs, newspapers, the language and lust is more foul and vulgar than ever before and is getting worse each year.

3. What happened to the fervor of the early Churches?
 - Where are the bright lights of the first Christians? There are no lights today in this dark world. We have become apathetic, indifferent, worldly and lukewarm.
 - In 1850 the estimate was that it took 5 Christians to win one soul.
 - In 1900 it took 14 to win 1 soul. In 1919 it took 21 and today around 40 and that is not a sure number because many on the church rolls are still lost.
 - Today it is estimated that only 2% of the world's population are Christians.

III. WHY HAVE WE ALSO FAILED?

1. The disciples asked Jesus why they couldn't heal the lad. (At least they wondered why.)
2. The disciples lacked four things, the same four that we lack today:
 - A lack of cleaning:
 - **Matthew 17:16-17** - We cannot win the lost when God's power is blocked in our lives by our own worldliness and sin.
 - God does not demand a mighty, nor beautiful vessel, but He does demand a CLEAN one for His work.
 - If we want power with men, with God, then we must confess and forsake our sins.
 - We cannot have Christian influence as long as others see sin in our own lives.
 - We have to put feet to what we say we believe.
 - A lack of claiming:
 - **Mark 9:19** - We can claim the power of Jesus by faith and by prayer.
 - It is clear that the disciples could have helped the lad IF they had had faith.
 - We, like the disciples, have no hope of great results for we lack faith also.
 - Why shouldn't we expect great things from God?
 - God is all powerful - God's promises - God's record/past performances.
 - There is nothing God cannot do.
 - It is impossible for God to lie, He keeps His promises.
 - God does not change. What He has done in the past, He will still do today.
 - A lack of prayer:
 - **Mark 9:29** - Only by prayer can we ever be useful to God.
 - We try every method except prayer and still fail to have great revivals and win souls.
 - Knowing every verse of the Bible does not win souls.
 - Knowing every method and program used in soul winning does not win souls.
 - Knowing how to "win friends and influence enemies" does not win souls.
 - Nothing will take the place of PRAYER. We fail to win the lost because we do not claim the power of Jesus Christ through faith and prayer/
 - A lack of concern:
 - Too few of God's people (Christians) have the kind of concern that would cause them to lose their desire for food or the desire to have fun or watch television in order to win people to the Lord.
 - The reason we don't win more souls is because we don't care enough whether the lost go to Hell or not.

- The greatest need of our day is for our hearts to be broken over the lost around us.
We are too light-hearted over the fact that souls are going to Hell.
- If a neighbor's house were on fire and we were called over to help extinguish it but we were too busy watching television or had something else to do, how could we say that we cared for our neighbor? Yet that is exactly what we are doing concerning the lost around us. People we know are going to Hell and we don't care.
- Church members stay at home and expect the Pastor and staff and perhaps a few loyal church members do all the visiting and soul winning for the entire Church.
- Our lack of concern explains the tearlessness, carelessness, prayerlessness and our powerlessness concerning the lost. We just don't care!

CONCLUSION:

1. What would you be willing to do to see somebody you loved be saved?
2. What are you willing to do to become available to God to be a soul-winner for Him?
3. Have you EVER told anybody how they could be saved?
4. If every Christian were exactly like you, what condition would the Church be in?
5. What can be more important to you than helping the Lord Jesus bring somebody else into God's Family?
6. Right now, commit yourself to do whatever you have to do to become who Jesus wants you to be for Him.
7. Lost one, NOW is the time for you to put aside all your "reasons" and excuses for not putting yourself into the hands of Jesus. Trust Him now, put your faith in Him and let Him give to you eternal life.