

## Evangelism (Part 7)

A blessed and happy Sabbath to all. Last week in our review and examination of the book Evangelism by Ellen White, we covered three relatively short sub-sections of the chapter, “The Metropolitan Masses.” Those were: “The Call for A Speedy Work,” “Special Opportunities for Evangelism,” and “Surveying The Needs of Large Cities.”

The section following this is called “Problems Peculiar to Metropolitan Evangelism,” which, as the name indicates, involves the specific problems of evangelizing large cities. Since that section is not particularly applicable to us at this moment, I am going to skip over some of that; however, the final two portions of that section caught my attention, and I will begin by sharing those:

[quote]

In our large cities a decided effort should be made to work in unity. In the spirit and fear of God the laborers should unite as one man, working with strength and with earnest zeal. There should be no sensational efforts, no strife. Let there be seen practical repentance, true sympathy, hearty co-operation, and decided emulation of one another in the grand, earnest effort to learn lessons of self-denial and self-sacrifice by saving perishing souls from death.—Manuscript 128, 1901.

Let us thank the Lord that there are a few laborers doing everything possible to raise up some memorials for God in our neglected cities. Let us remember that it is our duty to give these workers encouragement. God is displeased with the lack of appreciation and support shown our faithful workers in our large cities.—Manuscript 154, 1902.

[/quote]

The principle here, of the need for unity, is one that is general to every aspect of Yah’s work. And it must be unity of a particular kind, that of “the spirit and fear of God.” The workers for the Gospel must be as one in their desire to see, as their greatest accomplishment, the understanding of the Good News taking hold in human hearts and minds. They must labor knowing both the mercy and judgment of our Father, mercy that motivates us to share the blessings of the born-again life, and judgment that gives urgency to our efforts.

Many Churches motivate their workers with a “fear of God” that is fear indeed, teaching that He is a hard Judge, waiting to strike those who are not fortunate enough to enter His service. Our understanding is different; while we are overwhelmed by the holiness of our Father, which allows no sin to draw near, the “fear” involved is really for those who will be lost if the enemy’s deceptions are not cast off, and the true healing is not allowed to take place. We teach that the judgment of the living has begun; Yah’s wrath IS prepared for those who reject Him – but we must also be able to explain what this means, that it involves the natural results of a life of unbelief, and that sin is really a rejection of the everlasting life that our Father fervently desires all mankind to possess.

Those involved in the work must understand this aspect of the “wrath” of Yah, so that while we present the judgment as a spiritual event that demands a response with no delay, we also present the character of our Father in its proper light. That is, as one that would draw believers closer, rather than compel them through force. The only way to develop this understanding is to fully experience it ourselves, and to

portray it to the world and one another. As the quote states, this involves “practical repentance, true sympathy, hearty co-operation, and decided emulation of one another,” which means teaching and learning from one another the true principles of the Faith of Yahshua.

The second quotation there is very much of the same spirit as my statement last week, that we must take every opportunity to support our workers with prayers as well as any practical means we can. When we have a moment, the prayers that we spend the time to offer have a very important place in the grand design, and will ease the work of the angels, who must perform great miracles in this generation to see our work to its predicted end.

Here is the second quote from that section that caught my eye:

[quote]

In efforts made in large cities one half of the labor is lost because they [the laborers] close up the work too soon and go to a new field. Paul labored long in his fields, continuing his work for one year in one place and one year and a half in another place. The haste to close up an effort has frequently resulted in a great loss.—Letter 48, 1886.

[/quote]

This is an interesting statement, and it’s come up before me more than once. While we have not had a lot of experiences in opening up places of worship and then abandoning them, I suppose what it does do is encourage us in our labors in places such as Africa, where the work is difficult, and where the spiritual fruit has not been as bountiful as we would like. We may be blessed by seeing that even Paul, one of the most prominent early evangelists, often had to work at a location along the order of years in order to get a stable congregation going. We continue, therefore, to see further and yet further benefits from our efforts in the various parts of the world. We have certainly heard reports from Sis. Barb about interest in matters like religious liberty, and we have obtained from them many signatures for our petition, and that is encouraging.

The next section, the final one with regard to the Metropolitan Masses, is not very long, and so we will cover all of it here. It is called “The Promise of An Abundant Harvest,” and so of course it will apply to every age, and every aspect, of the Evangelical work.

The first quote consists of several small paragraphs, and I will post it here:

[quote]

In the visions of the night a very impressive scene passed before me. I saw an immense ball of fire fall among some beautiful mansions, causing their instant destruction. I heard someone say, “We knew that the judgments of God were coming upon the earth, but we did not know that they would come so soon.” Others, with agonized voices, said, “You knew!” Why then did you not tell us? We did not know.” On every side I heard similar words of reproach spoken.

In great distress I awoke. I went to sleep again, and I seemed to be in a large gathering. One of authority was addressing the company, before whom was spread out a map of the world. He said that the map pictured God’s vineyard, which must be cultivated. As light from heaven shone upon any one, that one

was to reflect the light to others. Lights were to be kindled in many places, and from these lights still other lights were to be kindled....

I saw jets of light shining from cities and villages, and from the high places and the low places of the earth. God's word was obeyed, and as a result there were memorials for Him in every city and village. His truth was proclaimed throughout the world.—Testimonies For The Church 9:28, 29. (1909)

[/quote]

This quote contains both a warning and a promise. The warning is one that should already be familiar to readers of the Bible, and other writings in the Spirit of Prophecy. The Bible verse I am thinking of is one that we have examined a while back in a previous study, but it is worth considering here, in the context of evangelical work. We read, "And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of Yahweh came unto me, saying, 'Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

"When I say unto the wicked, 'Thou shalt surely die,' and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

"Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die. Because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.'" (Ezek 3:16-21)

This is a very important passage, and it is witnessed by another, similar passage in Ezekiel (33:7-8). It points out to us the "duty" aspect of the evangelical work. And yet, our understanding of duty can never be separated from our understanding of divine love. It is not that Yah will hold a "grudge" against those who refuse to speak. Rather, if we – who know the truth – allow any carnal factor, any fear, any neutrality, refuse to warn the wicked of their destructive ways, we reveal that we have not the love or spirit of Yahshua, whose entire work, even still, is that with regard to sinners "He ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb 7:25)

Only those who are "like unto Him" are the inheritors of everlasting life, and one's actions (or lack of actions, as the case may be) would reveal a very important difference between the nominal Christian, and the truly born again believer. The "work" of the Gospel is more about who we are than what we do – for what we do is only valuable if it is a direct consequence of our true nature, the divine nature of which Yahshua has made us part-takers.

This next quote is a passage from The Great Controversy that should be well known to members of the CSDA Church:

[quote]

Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of Spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power,— all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven.—The Great Controversy, 606, 607. (1888)

[/quote]

I think I saw this posted on at least one computer monitor at the Church house. It is certainly a very fitting description of the work of the true reformers in the last days. They will be men of faith and prayer, fulfilling, joyfully, all the advice and instructions with regard to these principles in the Scriptures. They will be revealers of unpleasant and unpopular truths, for Babylon defends itself by any means necessary. They will be opposed by both civil and spiritual forces, working in concert, as they certainly have been working against us since this movement began.

It is encouraging to read that “all will be unmasked.” These things, which greed and pride have tried to keep hidden, will be brought to light. It is said that solemn warnings will be given, and that people will be stirred in amazement at words that they had never heard before. The last generation of saints will give a startling, unexpected message with regard to apostasy in high places.

The question may well be asked... Who, that is the least bit familiar with the Seventh-day Adventist message on ANY level, would be “amazed” at the idea that we teach the Sunday keeping churches are Babylon? Who, that knows anything about Adventist Protestantism, would be startled to hear that we teach a National Sunday Law that will test the faith of the saints?

It should be clear that, because of the apostasy of the mainstream SDA Church, the time at which this prophecy could be fulfilled as it is currently taught in nominal SDA congregations has come and gone. Because they did not fulfill the commission as they ought, Nineveh, the world, has been spared for a season – but not because it has become more faithful. It is because the appointed messengers have become less faithful that the cleansing glory of Yah’s love has not yet appeared upon the earth.

And realize, because the world can no longer be startled by what mainstream SDAs think is the “last message” about the Mark of The Beast, that message can no longer identify the true Christian from the false. Nobody will be startled, no one will “awaken” from spiritual slumber by the apostate SDA message.

Now some might protest, “But we make hundreds of converts every day.” It is true that there are a great many baptisms, most certainly... but are these conversions, according to the Bible’s description of this event? Consider the difference in your own experiences, before and after coming to understand the undiluted power of the Gospel. Are those who are newly introduced to the Adventist covenant “really ceasing to sin?” Have they been “critically examined” to be sure that they can say “I hate sin with a perfect hatred?”

I do not think even the most zealous defender of the General Conference’s organization can say with honesty that this is the case. The sins of Babylon must be unmasked. The corruption that ensnares those

who are truly awakening to Yah's love, and Yah's law, must be revealed. And we are the ones who are called to do that.

It is by the revelation of Yahshua's true character that hearts will be stirred. Whether that character is manifest by teaching the Gospel, healing the sick, or protesting spiritual wickedness, it is His character that touches the sin-sick heart. It is by an understanding of the truth that those who truly awaken will be able to see, with amazement, that "the Church" they thought was an angel of light was truly just a transformation, a disguise of the enemy of souls. We must pray that those who are among that number will come to see the truth of their position before Heaven, and we must pray that they will receive the courage to do something about it. And, WE must be the representatives of Yahshua's character that facilitates that process.

The final quote from this section is as follows, an inspiring passage revealing just that idea:

[quote]

Through the grace of Christ, God's ministers are made messengers of light and blessing. As by earnest, persevering prayer they obtain the endowment of the Holy Spirit and go forth weighted with the burden of soulsaving, their hearts filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross, they will see fruit of their labors. Resolutely refusing to display human wisdom or to exalt self, they will accomplish a work that will withstand the assaults of Satan. Many souls will be turned from darkness to light, and many churches will be established. Men will be converted, not to the human instrumentality, but to Christ.—The Acts of the Apostles, 278. (1911)

[/quote]

The call tonight, the call from Heaven with regard to what you have learned tonight, is this: See yourself in that quote above. See yourself as a messenger of light and blessing. See yourself as one who offers persevering prayer, and receiving the Holy Spirit that leads you to go forth with an urgent burden for the saving of souls. I do not say, "Pray that you become these things." I do not say, "We should be these things." I say, "See yourself as these things, in fulfillment with the promises that we have already made, and give thanks that it is indeed so."

See the truth of Yah's blessing in your life, of a heart filled with zeal, and then you will truly see, in every sense, the fruit of our labors. And with this zeal must come humility, and a reliance upon Yah's ways, and Yah's wisdom, so that "self" will not be exalted, for this has been the temptation upon many who have been successful evangelists in the past. But Yah will protect us, if we are humble before Him, from those snares of Satan so subtle that, if it were possible, would deceive even the very elect. So let us claim this election of faith, and let us see the fulfillment of Yah's will in this generation through the instrument of our mouths, and our hands.

Are there any questions or comments before we close?