

Certainly the problem is faith in many cases. And perhaps many do not believe they will be brought into judgment for their ungodly deeds. We had better think again: 2 Cor. 5:10; Romans 14:12; Eccl. 12:14, etc. Many think they can treat the preacher and his family any way they want to, and no matter how cruel, stand justified before God!

Now to be sure, some have faith in God and His Word, but the problem is with themselves. Many just do not have faith in themselves. They reason, “I can’t do it.” Well it depends on what they are talking about. Sure you can do some of the things I have been talking about in this series. I cannot think of any who can make a legitimate excuse for not inviting others to services. Can you? Beloved, I do not want that on my record when I give account to God. Do you? Everything I have talked about in these articles, I believe most can do them **IF** they would simply make up their minds and prepare themselves.

Let us all encourage one another. The Hebrew writer wrote “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:” (Heb. 10:24). Jesus said “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). Not only will that happen by your good works but you will also encourage others to good works. It can be contagious.

In this short article we have seen those who do the work of God by giving to God properly and by faith doing the work God has given His people to do. We have seen those who have sacrificed much to preach the gospel. We have seen some who are downright wicked in the church. And we have looked at those who have no confidence or faith in themselves thinking they cannot do certain things.

Where are we? Where do we stand, with God or with the devil? Where will we stand in the Judgment? Let us all strive to do better. As Paul said, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58); remembering “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). Let us not be slothful in the Lord’s business (Rom. 12:11; Heb. 6:12), but rather have the attitude of our Savior: “...I must be about my Father’s business” (Luke 12:49). ♥



“Hold fast the form of sound words”



SW

(II Tim. 1:13 cp. Tit. 1:9; Jude 3)

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Evangelism: Converting Self (Part 4)

(It Is Surely A Matter Of Faith And Trust In God)

by Perry Sexton

It has been my belief for many years that **a congregation with the most personal workers in it is a congregation that will grow the most.** By personal worker, I mean those who are evangelistic minded and at least are involved in inviting others to church services; other workers trying to set up studies for the preacher, or someone else who is able to study with the contacts; and yet other workers who are qualified, and will study with prospects.

Many have been brought to Christ by family members, friends, co-workers, etc. Juanita Wilson of Natchez, Mississippi recently told me of her father’s conversion. When he was converted he took his Bible to the saw mill to share the Good News! Brethren, we need to take our Bibles to the “saw mill,” i.e., our work places etc. Much more of this is needed in our day and time. From my observations, it is lacking in many places. Sister Wilson also told of how her mother-in-law would always teach her friends and family. Many have been converted by non-preachers. Consider: “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word” (Acts 8:4). This was the church members at work, not the apostles (see v.1).

Look to the Bible: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are faith builders. The book of Acts is faith in action. Can we not apply this verse taken from James and apply it to evangelization? “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works” (James 2:14). Surely, our works of every kind hinge on our faith. Where is our faith? Where is our love for the lost? Where is our love for God (John 14:15 cp. Mark 16:15)?

While many do not see and understand their call to the kingdom at such a time as this (see last month's article), many do. **And the work goes on by those who understand and have faith – the converted.** Read the book of Acts to see faith in action in biblical times. Consider the restoration preachers of not so long ago. Many sacrificed much. Look to our day and time and you will see other such workers. I have known, and still know, several who live in modest houses and drive average automobiles, who give sacrificially to the Lord, and many good works are able to be carried on by their contributions. It is obvious they are laying up true treasures in Heaven that will never fade away. They have their priorities right! They realize that day by day they are growing closer and closer to their heavenly and eternal inheritance. They press on with the single eye (Matt. 6:22). O Lord, help us all to think soberly and to be certain of our treasures (Matt. 6:19-21). They are fighting and they are winning, not giving in to the cares and riches of this world (2 Peter 2:20-22; Luke 8:14). In many cases they have fought and have overcome the world, and have gone on to their eternal reward. Brethren, what about us? What will be the end of our lives? Where is our treasure – now? Let us always encourage one another in the words of our Lord and that of Paul (Matt. 6:19-21; Col. 3:1-3).

Modern day examples of faith to serve God faithfully: Many have sold their houses and given up good paying jobs in order to prepare themselves to preach the gospel. This was done by faith. Some preachers have lived out of their cars for awhile and others have lived in unfinished basements, etc. Because of finances and other circumstances, one preacher and his family for awhile lived in a house where snails would come up into the shower stall and every time it rained the floor flooded with water.

One preacher was fired for preaching the truth and had to leave a house empty he was buying and had to rent an apartment in another city while preaching for another congregation. Brethren that is equivalent to two house payments and on a preacher's salary! The wife had been working and still had to work, but the only thing available in the new area was a second shift job. Up front she told the employer she would not work on Wednesday nights. Almost unbelievably the employer agreed to this, but after a week changed his mind and told her she would have to start working on Wednesday nights. She agreed to work on Wednesday nights as long as she could take off long enough to go to Bible study, which she did the whole

time she worked there. **This faith was seen in action**, even in the face of two house payments.

Contrast this faith to one brother who never came on Wednesday nights. He said by the time he got home from work and fed the chickens he did not have time to come to services. What did James say by inspiration of God? "... show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works" (James 2:14). What did Jesus say? "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33ff see the rest of the story). Is our trust in God or in riches (1 Tim. 6:17)? In the above brother's case it seemed to be in chickens and his work! God knows. Where do you suppose the trust is of those who have sold houses and possessions to evangelize? Let us all consider: Where is our trust (2 Cor. 13:5)?

Often times I have heard of congregations evilly treating the preacher and his family. Much ungodliness has gone on in this realm! It is as if they were Satan worshippers and not worshippers of God. It is obvious that the congregation and individuals had very serious problems. I know of one preacher who told me that each Sunday when the treasurer would go to pay him, that the treasurer would drop his check on the floor and the preacher would have to stoop down and pick it up.

Another preacher said he was fired for preaching the truth (and I believe him), and the congregation also withheld some money that was rightfully his. To my knowledge, they still have that witness (the money) to damn their souls (cp. James 5:3). Some members were reported saying that they didn't care if his child did starve to death.

Can you believe Christians can do and say such things? No, a Christian does not. A child of Satan will. Comfort is given: 1 Peter 4:16; Matthew 5:10-12; John 15:20; Matt. 10:25, etc. Another example is of a congregation where some of the "sisters" made fun of the preacher's wife because she wore the same outfit all the time. She was with child and only had the one outfit for worship.

One congregation I worked with knew I came without full support, both they and I sent out letters to help raise support. Later I found out in a men's business meeting that the congregation (who all was involved I do not know) did receive a sizable one time check to help in my support. But the money was never passed on to me. When brought to light, none of the men said anything against this ungodly act of thievery so I am certain they all knew of it or at least condoned it when they learned of it. My, my, such ungodliness!