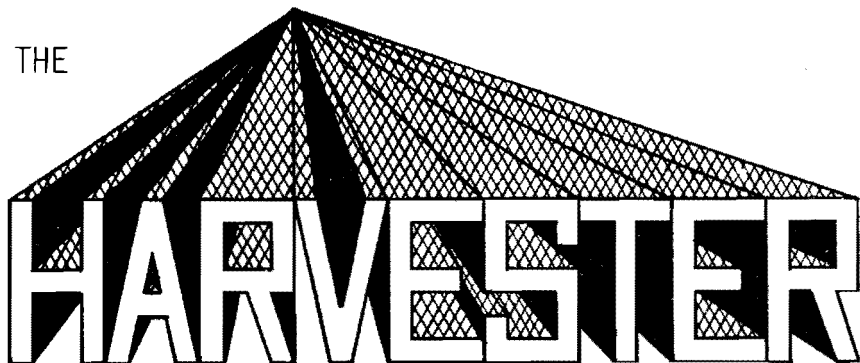


THE



"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

October 1988

No. 034

WHERE IS OUR ZEAL?

Do you ever feel like there isn't any zeal in the Church? Have you ever had the feeling that no one wants to do anything? Even worse than that, does it seem that everyone wants someone else to do it? Do you think that the Church is not working as it did with the spirit and power that it had in the New Testament? If your answer to these questions is yes, I have one more question for you. What can we do about it? The last question asked is an old and run down question. On the other hand, can a question of spiritual capabilities become run down? Can we know so much about a subject that we can not study about it anymore? No, we can not! So my question still stands. The answer to this question is as old and run down as the

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question itself. There are many ways to weave a basket, as the saying goes, so let us take another old approach.

Before we can get any zeal into the church or ourselves, we need to realize how important the church is. Matthew 13:44 says, "*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field*". What small portion of importance can we find in the first part of this verse? "**LIKE UNTO**"! These two words denote an agreement or a comparison of two things. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treasure. There are many ways to explain a treasure. Some people see a treasure as a lot of money. To someone else it may be stocks or bonds. A more practical person may find treasure in love, friendship or kind words. All of these have the characteristics of being very valuable to a person.

During the days of the New Testament, we can assume that the people did not have safety deposit boxes or compound interest savings accounts to put their treasures. By this verse, it would seem that it was a practice to bury treasure. Evidently, the treasure in this instance was forgotten about by the man or family who owned it. So, the man plowing this certain field, upon finding the treasure, sold all that he had so he could purchase the field and own the treasure too. There are a lot of sad thoughts on this verse, mainly to the person who buried this great treasure. We have found that the treasure is paralleled to the kingdom. Brethren, too many people are losing their treasures today! Too many people in THE CHURCH are hiding the KINGDOM! We need to find the kingdom, and do what is most important: get rid of everything that might keep us from it and buy the field that the treasure is in. WE HAVE TO INVEST!!!

We can see how important it is to obtain that treasure by acknowledging the example of the rich young ruler. Matthew 19:21 gives us an account of Jesus saying, *"Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasures in heaven: and come and follow me."* There is a grave lesson to be learned by these two verses. In Matthew 13:44 the man went with JOY to sell all he had so he could obtain this treasure. Evidently the young man in Matt. 19 did not feel the same need for the kingdom, for in verse 22 it says, *"He went away sorrowful."*

In which story do we find zeal? Which story shows someone realizing the great importance of the kingdom? Which man do you think was the happiest? Which example do we follow today? I hope and pray that your answer to all of these questions was Matthew 13:44. If it wasn't ...

WHERE IS OUR ZEAL? GIVE IT SOME THOUGHT!!!

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EXTENDS A WELCOME TO ALL

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FROM THE SCRIPTURES ...

ABOUT MAN'S INSIGNIFICANCE

Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker? Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly: How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?(Job 4:17-19)

What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?(Job 15:14)

Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect? Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgment? Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite?(Job 22:2-5)

How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?(Job 25:4-6)

Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's? For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee? and, What profit shall I have, if I be cleansed from my sin? I will answer thee, and

thy companions with thee. Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds which are higher than thou. If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what giveth thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man. (Job 35:2-8)

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? (Psa. 8:3,4)

Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him! Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away. (Psa. 144:3,4)

AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS

(A Series to Promote Church Attendance)

Let us make some observations on what your absence from church services does.

To God

1. You show improper reverence and respect to God. A service is being conducted in His honor, but you do not come.

2. You robbed God of glory and honor. The service would have been more glorious if you had come.

3. You show that you prefer the presence of others. Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

4. You show a lack of appreciation for your blessings. The Bible teaches that God is the

giver of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17). Here is a service to express our thanks to God. Shall we fail to attend?

To Others

1. You hinder the salvation of sinners. When sinners see you absent yourself from worship they cannot but conclude that worship must not be very important and that the church and the gospel are of little consequence.

2. You make it harder for the preacher to preach. It is hard to preach to empty pews. The preacher is told by your absence that what he has to say is not very important.

3. You discourage other members. Weak members are encouraged to stay away by the fact that you do. Even those who are strong feel a certain discouragement by your absence.

To Yourself

1. You take a step on the downward path. When you miss one service you have made it easier to miss another.

2. You hinder your prayer life. You can't pray for God to help you live a Christian life when you deliberately forsake those services which are designed to strengthen and help you.

3. You hinder your saving others. If you invite a sinner to church services he will look for you the first thing if he comes. Your influence will be nullified when he realizes you didn't care enough to be present.

4. You make it harder to overcome temptation. Worship and study are designed to give us strength and draw us close to the Lord. We are thus better prepared to overcome the world. We need all the help we can get to overcome Satan.

5. You rob yourself of growth. Growth cannot be obtained without the proper diet. To miss any service is to rob ourselves of nourishment and growth.

--- COPIED from a tract
by William F. Walker

THE LORD'S WORK

The Lord had a job for me,
 But I had much to do,
 I asked Him to get someone else,
 Or wait 'till I got through.
 I don't know how the Lord came out,
 But He seemed to get along,
 While I felt "kinda" sneaking like,
 'Cause I knew I'd done Him wrong.

One day I needed the Lord myself,
 And needed Him right away,
 He did not answer me at all,
 But seems I heard Him say,
 Way down in my accusing heart,
 "I've got too much to do,
 You had better get somebody else,
 Or wait 'till I get through."

Now when the Lord gives me a job,
 I never try to shirk,
 I drop whate'er I have on hand,
 And do the good Lord's work;
 My own affairs can run along,
 Or wait 'till I get through--
 Nobody else can do the job
 The Lord lays out for you.

--Copied

Worry never climbed a hill
 Worry never paid a bill
 Worry never dried a tear
 Worry never calmed a fear
 Worry never darned a heel
 Worry never cooked a meal
 Worry never led a horse to water
 Worry never done a thing you'd
 think it oughta.

