

THE

HARVESTER

"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)

February 1989

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A CALL FOR LABORERS

A little over three years ago I was searching for a name to title this present publication. I wanted a name that would promote Christianity among all brethren and also be a reminder of our most neglected duty today--to bring lost souls to our Saviour. When I came upon the scripture in Luke 10:2, I finally found what I had been looking for. *"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."*

Indeed, this is a call for laborers to harvest the Lord's field. To "harvest" means to get something as the result of an action or effort.

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In this case, our labor is needed to help bring sinners to Christ. *"For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard."*(Matt. 20:1) First there must be laborers available to put forth the needed action.

Every Christian should be a laborer in the Lord's vineyard. Like the apostle Paul, we are a *"chosen vessel"* to carry God's word before the world (Acts 9:15). Peter also adds: *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people"*(1 Pet. 2:9). Unfortunately, not every member of the Lord's church has become a laborer. **THE LABORERS ARE FEW!** It seems that only a few in each congregation are actually doing the Lord's work. What are the rest of us doing?

Look around. This is the field that is already ripe for harvesting: our neighborhood, our city, our state, our country, the **WHOLE WORLD**. **THE HARVEST TRULY IS GREAT!** Considering the size of the harvest then, it is no wonder that many more laborers are desperately needed. This is not a time to procrastinate or to delay our work because once the harvest is over, it will be too late! *"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."*(John 4:35) The time for harvesting is **NOW!**

To harvest this huge "field" will require true labor. Therefore, the Lord does not want any benchwarmers: those who are content to sit on their hands. He does not want any criticizers: those who do nothing but always have something to say about those who do everything. The Lord does not want any complainers: those who are never satisfied and then, let you know about

it. The Lord does not want any directors: those who direct and tell everybody to do the things they would not. He does not want any semi-workers: those who will do half a job only half-heartedly. Neither does the Lord want lazy, undedicated, excuse-making workers.

Our Lord is calling for LABORERS! He wants those who will really work. It might require a lot of sweat and a lot of physical work. It might require extra Bible study and greater persecutions. But for our undying efforts the reward in the end will definitely be worthwhile. *"And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal"*(John 4:36).

Last month I received a couple of letters from Bro. M. E. Busby. Perhaps he summed up the need for laborers better than I have. He wrote:

"Bro. Ray, we are looking for a man to do personal work, house to house teaching as they did in the long ago, building up weak congregations and setting in order the work of the church.

We are looking for an humble man, who will not seek to build up himself, but a man who will convert sinners to Christ and will build up the church, by both his examples and teachings and preaching the Word of God, a man who is willing to work for the church, and not to seek his own Glory. I know it will be hard to find a man like that, but we have had too much experience with men building up themselves instead of the church and sometimes the church is left in worse shape than to begin with.

We are also looking for a man willing to spend and be spent for the cause of Christ. We are not looking for a high salaried preacher, but one who is willing to be dedicated to the work.

THE HARVESTER is a monthly publication mailed free of charge to anyone who wishes to receive it. Please submit name, address, and all correspondence to:

Ray McManus
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Ph. (205) 675-5258

If you or any one that you know is interested in this kind of work, please contact me immediately. Bro. Ray, we are not talking about a "Lord over God's heritage man", but one that would work with the church, both preaching in the church and house to house, setting forth the right example, being humble and submissive to God's will.

Now, Bro. McManus, since I am unable to do the work myself (I am 95% blind and four score years old) it grieves me to see the church going down in number and sound teaching. I know that it is going to take sacrifice for a man to do that kind of work and also sacrifice for the man that will support this kind of work, but I would like to see it going on before I die. I would appreciate your printing my request for a man doing personal work in the Lord's vineyard with my name and address and comments from you. Maybe God will direct someone to answer the plea.

signed,
M.E. Busby
126 "N" St. N.W.
Thomaston, GA 30286

Bro. Busby's letter really touched me when I read it. It beautifully illustrates the need for more workers among Christians today. If anyone is interested in answering Bro. Busby's request, please let him know. To be a laborer in God's kingdom means to labor WITH God. *"For we are laborers together with God"* (1 Cor. 3:9).

"... a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted ..." (Eccl. 3:2) That time is NOW! Will you agree to be a worker for the Lord? It is not yet too late to volunteer your services to Christ. Even at the "eleventh hour" our Lord will hire "willing laborers" (Matt. 20:7).

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!

- 1.. Who inspected the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings?
2. How many times did Balaam beat his talking donkey?
3. Did the owners of the donkey taken for the triumphal entry ask why it was being taken?
4. What does Job declare cannot be rebuilt?
5. In the book of Esther, what happened to the ten sons of Haman?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH ...

and remember last month's questions?

1. How old was Mephibosheth when he was dropped by his nurse and crippled? FIVE (2 Sam. 4:4)
2. What event caused Jesus to become well known in Capernaum? CASTING OUT AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT IN THE SYNAGOGUE (Mark 1:21-28)
3. What time of day was Paul converted as he traveled to Damascus? ABOUT NOON (Acts 22:6)
4. In what book of the Bible does the phrase, "Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself," first appear? LEVITICUS (Lev. 19:18)
5. What one thing kept Esau from killing Jacob immediately after the deception? THE PROSPECT OF ISAAC'S DEATH (Gen. 27:41)

AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS

(A Series to Promote Church Attendance)

When David was fleeing from King Saul, he bade farewell to his friend, Jonathan. In parting, Jonathan told David, "*Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty*" (1 Sam. 20:18).

Those words can be meaningful to us in many ways today--when a child leaves the nest to begin his own family, when a loved one dies, or when a friend moves away. But I also think of this verse when I look out at the audience at night worship services and see so many members absent. We usually have good attendance on Sunday morning, but with increasing frequency, the night services are very poorly attended. There are those who have valid reasons such as health, out of town, occasional job demands, can't drive at night. But what about the rest?

First, it's not so much a question of attendance as it is affection. Jesus said, "*For where your treasure (or affection) is, there will your heart be also*" (Matt. 6:21). Let's face it--if being present at worship services is your first priority, you will be there if at all possible. If it means moving some work activity from Wednesday night to Thursday night if possible, you will do it. If it means eating sandwiches instead of having a larger meal because you don't get home in time, you will do it. If it means giving up playing tennis on Wednesday night you will do it.

Secondly, it is not just a matter of you being present, but also the matter of Christ's presence. It is a well-worn cliché but true, that if you knew Christ would be the speaker, you would be there early and stay late. Even if you don't care for yourself, what about your children or your wife? They need to be there!

Third, worship is not a matter of going through an exercise, but rather exercising our spirit and soul in worship. Worship will be no better than we make it. If we come expecting not to be edified or to enjoy the singing, we won't. Some people use the excuse, "I don't really want to go to church so it won't do any good to go." Worshipping in the spirit is as important as worshipping in truth, but staying home because we "don't feel right about the service" isn't going to solve any problems. Sometimes we are not very hungry at meal time, but we know we need to eat something to keep up our strength. We need spiritual strength that comes from worshipping God in the fellowship of those of similar goals and aspirations.

But lastly, if you are not there, you will be missed. Your brethren and sisters need you. Have you ever thought about that? The strength of the whole is greater than the sum of our individual strengths. We need each other--and that includes you and me.

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(copied from THE LIGHT
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CAN WE RESTORE THAT CHURCH TODAY?

If disciples of Christ today "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers", we would reenact the lives of early saints, and be well pleasing to God! If we observed the same items of work and worship as they, we would then have the same church! For if the very same gospel preached on Pentecost were proclaimed today, it would have the same effect! For the Seed is the Word of God (Luke 8:11), and the seed will bring forth a constant result! That which saved men in the first century will save them now! All we need is to have the same obedience, wear the same name, hold to the same inspired truths, and render the same obedience to the same Lord, and the Lord will add "to the church daily such as should be saved"! And then, to what church would the Lord add those obedient souls? You can be sure He would add them to His own church! Isn't it simple and plain when we forget present-day sectarianism with its multitude of denominations, church doctrines and dogmas, and human creeds, and just go back to the Bible only? Friends, we are not divided over what God's Word says! Believers in Christ are divided and torn apart by what MEN have declared! Why not take the Bible as your only rule of faith and practice? It's all we ask!

-- Selected --

(Submitted by J.O. Holmes)

Christians are forgiven, forgiving and
for giving.