

THE HEART OF JESUS

by Kim Josephson

When Jesus Christ called the apostles, He gave them one promise. He said, “*Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.*” (Mark 1:17) He did not promise them silver or gold, prestige, health, miracle working power or anything else. He called them to become fishers of men and they responded by leaving their nets and following Him. As they walked with Jesus they learned to heal the sick, to cast out devils, to use their faith and go on with God, but more than anything else they learned the **heart of Jesus**.

The heart of Jesus was to do the will of the Father. Over and over Jesus told the disciples that what He saw the Father do, that He did and what He heard the Father say, that He said. His Father had sent Him to redeem man. Where the first Adam had sold us into the slavery of sin and death, Jesus - the last Adam was sent to redeem us (buy us back) from this curse and to destroy the works of the devil (I Jn.3:8).

Everything Jesus did demonstrated the will of God. After years of confusion about what God was really like, Jesus showed us the Father (Jn. 14:9). Every time He healed the sick He showed us the Father's compassion for those suffering and in need of help. Every time He cast out a devil, He declared God's will for our deliverance. When He fed the multitudes He taught us how God wanted to bless us and provide for our daily needs. What a good God we serve! What a loving Father!!

But Jesus, in spite of all His wonders, in spite of all the joy of opening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, and even raising the dead, marched on to Calvary. It was God's will for Him to suffer and die that the price for everyman's soul would be paid in full. Though He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows (Heb. 1:9), this is what made Jesus the man of sorrows. THE CROSS! The disciples could not understand this. They were excited by the power they possessed, they were thrilled with the idea of reigning with Jesus - they were ready and willing for anything but the cross! They even rebuked Jesus for talking about it, but this was the will of God.

Jesus had come to seek and to save those who were lost and the only way to do this was by the cross. Jesus Christ is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. His death, even the wicked Roman crucifixion was prophesied thousands of years before it existed (Zech. 12:10; Ps. 22). Again, what a mighty God we serve.

So Jesus came, lived, died, and rose again conquering death, hell and the grave, all to accomplish the will of God. And then what did He do? He came to the disciples and He gave them a command. He said “*Go ye therefore into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned.*” (Mk. 16:15) **It's not a suggestion it's a command!** But Jesus didn't stop there, He said “*And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they*

shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” (Mk 16:17-18). Jesus Christ did not change. Before the cross His purpose was the redemption of man and now at His ascension it was the same. He commanded that the Gospel should be carried into all the world, and then praise God, the disciples obeyed. They waited till they were endued with power from on high and then “they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following” (Mark 16:20)

Why? Because they learned the heart of Jesus. They began to love like He loved. They were moved with compassion like He was moved with compassion. They were zealous to do the will of the Father. **They understood now that the souls of men were the only thing of value to God.** It had cost God the ultimate sacrifice and they honored the blood of Jesus by sharing the Good News.

They went everywhere preaching the gospel. They weren't detoured by petty differences in doctrine. They weren't detoured by Caesar and his laws. They heard the command of their King and were determined to obey.

One tiny group of men against the military might of Rome - against the intellectualism of the Greeks - against the religious system of the Jews. But these men were baptized with the Holy Ghost. They were firebrands in the hands of God. They could not be silenced. Miraculously they multiplied. Thousands were saved on the day of Pentecost and then God added to the Church daily.

The authorities imprisoned them, beat them, stoned them to death, did every wicked thing against them but the Church marched on! She thrived under persecution. And what did God do? Why, He did what He said He'd do! He went where they went. He sent earthquakes and shook them out of prison. He sent angelic escorts to walk them out of jail. He confirmed the Word with signs following. He healed the sick. He cast out devils and caused them to conquer in the name of Jesus.

If only we would become “fishers of men”. If only this could again become the priority of the Church. In the early days of the Church, if one wanted to see the Church in action they looked in the street or in the homes of Christians. Today however, 99% of Christian activity is spent inside a sanctuary somewhere. Whether we want to admit it or not, 90% of the sinners will not come to any church no matter how beautiful the facilities or the program. If they will ever be reached, they will be reached

where they live and work. So, what holds us back from the will of God? What is it that shuts our mouths and causes us to be silent to the world around us? What has blinded us to the desperate peril of the lost? What has caused our carelessness for men souls? Is it cowardice or preoccupation? **It appears that what law and persecution and even death could not do in the first century has been accomplished by comfort, criticism and controversy in the twentyfirst! God have mercy on us!**

T.L. Osborn says, “The Church today sits comfortably within her sanctuary walls, pretending to care about sinners by praying for them and by inviting them to come into the church to be saved, while actually remaining out of contact with the lost.” This must not be. We must repent. **While we're enjoying church, the rest of the world is rushing into hell.** How can we pretend to be doing the will of God when 90% of the Christians never speak to anyone about their soul. Are we ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth? (II Tim. 3:7) Are we so busy with the programs in our church, that we don't have time for God's program for evangelizing the lost?

Some tell me that they are not called to evangelize but **God commands us all to evangelize.** The job is simply reaching the lost with the gospel. It's not the job of some special task force of ministers. It is the responsibility of every believer to carry the gospel

into his or her world. Your world is where you are commanded to witness. It may be in the halls of your school. It may be in a machine shop - the office where you work or even an oil field. Blessed be God, it's wherever He's put you. Open your mouth for Jesus Christ. If all you can say is “Jesus is Lord come and worship Him with me,” then say it and say it and say it. I believe if you'll dare to take that first step of faith, God will meet you wherever you are and help you. He loves you so much. He has blessed you more than you can tell but just tell it! Tell how one day you were lost but Jesus spoke to your heart and saved your soul. Praise God you'll find people hungry to hear about Jesus. You might be the only Christian in their lives.

And finally, when you begin to speak the Word and to proclaim the gospel, know that God will confirm the Word with signs following. Today is a day of miracles. God is looking to and fro across the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward Him (II Chron. 16:9) **Honor the blood of Jesus!** Honor the Love of God. Obey God and share Jesus with someone today.

**The souls of men
are the only thing
of value to God!**