

Caring for Others

As soon as the people there recognized it was Jesus, they sent to the surrounding places and brought all the sick to Him, but only asked Jesus to allow them to touch the hem of the garment, and whoever touched it, all is well. (Matt. 14:35-36)

For a Christian to lead a victorious life, he must constantly and systematically seek to share the love of Jesus with those who do not know Him. But this would only happen when he has a sincere concern and a burden of salvation for the multitude who are lost (Luke 19:10), who are condemned (John 3:18), and those who are under the wrath of God (John 3:36). Do you have a little concern for the lost? Do you love the souls? Do you have a burden for the ones you love, your friends and the millions of unsaved people? How long does it take for us to tell our fellow colleagues working in the same company about our wonderful Savior? Or are we simply indifferent? Can our unconverted loved ones and friends say Psalm 142:4 with us?

Pay attention to what is said in Matt 14:35-36.

1. Let us describe the many people around us who need deep concern for their salvation

If we ask, what are the real needs of those who are lost? This passage tells us three things about three things about the people of that time, and these still apply to the people of today.

- a. They are sick (vs. 35)

Many people today may be devout, respected and leading a morally upright life, but every unsaved soul is ruled by the disease of sin. Unless they are healed, their future is in jeopardy. (Rom 6:23) The greatest human need is to be made whole by believing in the Lord. Many are living and dying in a diseased condition, without God and without hope. (Eph 2:12)

- b. They are at a distance (vs. 36)

The words "the people there...sent to..." means that the people are at a distance. Geographically they are at a distance from the Lord, which is true. But spiritually they are all the same. To a large extent, the generation today and especially the young people have grown up without any knowledge of God the Gospel of grace, and their ignorance of the Bible and the Gospel is astounding. What a great concern we should have for the need of these people! Look up Matt 9:36.

- c. They are handicapped (vs. 35)

They are brought before the Lord. Every sinner is indeed crippled by sin (Rom 5:6), but many of these crippled are covered by a cloak of decency, but in fact underneath are full of falsehood, alcoholism, lust, drugs and evil, etc. For these people we need to feel and express our deep concern.

2. When do we really begin to care for the souls of other?

Verse 35 gives us the answer: "As soon as the people recognized it was Jesus, they sent to the surrounding places..." It is easy to see what has happened. These people have found Jesus themselves, and they immediately are concerned that others would find Him too. "Knowing" and "going" often go hand in hand. When we really know Him, we will go for His sake, and the degree that we know Him determines the degree that we go for Him. (see John 14:9 and Phil 3:10, and cf Ps 126:6 and Dan 11:32). The qualification and incentive of those who seek for the lost is to know the Lord individually and deeply. (cf John 1:41, 49)

3. When does this concern express itself?

What should we do if really love souls and care about their salvation? Verses 35 and 36 tell us that "as soon as the people there recognized it was Jesus", they do three things:

a. They seek (vs. 35)

They go around looking for those who need the touch, healing and deliverance of Lord Jesus Christ. They travel all around for those poor in spirit. This is the great commission of the Lord (Mark 16:15) C. T. Studd gives such an advice to the missionaries in Central Africa, "Preach this simple Gospel, bring it into your entire vast area, and make sure that every soul knows the way of salvation and have the same opportunity to be saved."

b. They bring (vs. 35)

The word "bring" is the most important key word in this lesson. If we want to succeed in winning people for Christ, we must keep this word in mind. It is important to go to those in need, but the work of salvation is more than going to the lost. Souls must be brought to Christ. A fisherman would not be content just with the act of fishing, but in catching fish. You and I must not be content with just telling people about the love of the Savior, but we must seek His grace to bring people to Him.

c. They ask (vs. 36)

They ask Him to heal those they brought. In other words, they pray. True love for souls will

soon be expressed in persisting prayer for their salvation. In prayer God will show us those whom He wants us to seek out and gain for Him. In prayer we will be the conduits for the Holy Spirit to do His work of winning people.

4. Where to begin practicing this concern?

Verse 35 again provides the answer. It tells us, “the people there...sent to the surrounding places.” They have become the ambassadors of the Gospel for their own people. When we love the souls, we would begin to feel the burden and concern of salvation for those who live with and around us. We should begin “in Jerusalem.” (Acts 1:8)