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STRIVING TO DO GOD'S WORK, GOD'S WAY, FOR GOD'S GLORY

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The gospel writers reveal to us that our Lord and Savior openly wept on three different occasions. As you remember, the Lord poured out a heavy torrent of tears at the tomb of Lazarus, as He stood 'face to face' with the last enemy of death! Our Savior was groaning, in His Spirit, over the horrific visible consequences that the reign of sin had brought into the human race. Surely, He was also weeping, out of His compassionate love toward those 2 mourning sisters, Mary and Martha. We can be assured that our Lord was deeply touched with the feeling of the infirmities of this family who were so precious to Him. As He watched them grieving over their departed brother, Lazarus, Jesus knew an intimate fellowship with their sufferings and sorrows. After all, the prophet had testified that the Savior would be a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The Lord has commanded us to "weep with those who weep"; and we know that He would never give us a command that He did not perfectly obey! However, I also believe that the Lord Jesus was shedding tears of sorrow for others around Him that day. He was weeping for those who were filled with unbelief. The great "I AM" stood in their midst, but their minds were thoroughly blinded by their own wicked skepticism. His heart must have been broken over their lack of faith in Him. Yet, they were about to witness the truth that 'HE IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE'!

I believe that the Lord's most profound and intense agony of tears occurred in the Garden of Gethsemane! The Lord of Glory gazed into that awful cup, which represented the unmitigated wrath of God; which would be poured out on Him, as our sinless substitute. He was facing the holy fury of God which was determined to be fixed against all, for 'His law that we had shattered'. This fury was about to fall on the sinless lamb of God, on behalf of every sinner who would ever repent and believe the glorious gospel. Jesus, our Great High Priest, offered up tears, mingled with His bloody sweat, as He looked into that cup. His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death, as He willingly accepted to take the judgment that His people deserved, upon Himself!

But there is another passage that portrays a weeping Savior. In Luke 19:41, we find the following words, "When He came to Jerusalem, He beheld the city, and He wept over it." The Lord Jesus looked over this people who had missed their time of visitation. He was reflecting on the masses of humanity, who had resisted His teachings, rejected His invitations, and refused His pleadings. He knew that His just wrath and fierce judgment would shortly fall on this city. In only a few years, the Roman Army, led by General Titus, would march into that place and slaughter over 1 million Jews, under the wrath of the Lamb! As He looked over this lost city, His eyes affected His heart; and then His heart affected His eyes. In the original language, this passage depicts Jesus as 'wailing uncontrollably' over the lostness of Jerusalem! Earlier, in the Gospel of Luke, we are told that Jesus cried out to them saying, "How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings; but you were not willing."

The Lord knew the judgment they would face because of their rejection of Him; still His prophetic eyes were overflowing with the sobbing of tenderness and compassion for them. Through His tears, we clearly see God's earnest desires for the salvation of sinners through the broken heart of God the Son! What a vivid picture of the reality that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but He desires that the wicked would turn from their own way and live. The fact that the 'wailings of the Lord Jesus' overpowered His righteous indignation against their sin, clearly reveals to us the heart of God for lost sinners! Friends, we must not forget that the Good Shepherd rejoices over one sinner that comes to repentance. Yet, it is that same Good Shepherd that is anguishing over these who have gone astray, unto certain condemnation!

This passage is such a powerful challenge for those who are followers of the Lord Jesus. If we are going to be on mission with our Savior, certainly we see that we desperately need to walk in intimacy with Jesus; so that we, at least to some degree, would come to know His sympathetic tenderness and passionate burden for lost souls.

Do you have a burden for lost souls?

How long has it been since the Lord broke your heart over someone
within the sphere of the influence of your life?

If we are walking in an intimate, marriage, relationship with the Man of Sorrows, certainly we should experience some familiarity with this travail of Jesus for lost sinners. Charles Spurgeon once rightly said, "There must be a travail, before there will be spiritual birth. If you want to win in prayer, you must weep in prayer". Friends, if the great ambassador entered into Jerusalem with tears, should we not enter into evangelistic intercession with tears? I am submitting to you that nothing less than a "passion for Jesus himself" will infuse us with a passionate passion for souls! We ought not to look at the desperate condition of our nation, only with some political view point! We ought to look at the desperate condition of our nation, with tears for the vast millions of lost souls who are living on the brink of eternity, without a saving relationship with the Lord Jesus. Our hearts should be broken over the countless numbers of souls around us that are "living without Christ"; and our hearts should be shattered that those same souls are in grave danger of "dying without Christ".

Amy Carmichael, missionary to India, who served for 55 years without a furlough, said it in this way,

Oh, for a passionate passion for souls
Oh, for a pity that yearns
Oh, for a love that loves unto death
Oh, for a heart that burns!



Oh Lord God, would you not baptize us with a passionate passion for souls? The Bible tells us that the judgment of sinners will be a reality, for God's justice demands it. Yet still, we see the mercy of the Son of God wailing profusely for those who are under His wrath! Oh, that this truth might encourage us that "God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the sinner should turn from his ways and live". May it also encourage us with the truth, that God desires that all sinners would come to a "saving knowledge" of the truth. May this truth inspire us "never to think of the judgment of blatant rebels without also having a holy anguish for their souls". May this reality cause us to know a sorrow and a grief in our hearts, for those perishing around us. May we be compelled to be involved in the evangelistic intercession for their souls!

OUTREACH CRUSADE WITH A WEEPING THEOLOGIAN!

The Lord recently blessed me with one of the most precious weekends of my life, at Heritage Baptist Church in Shreveport, La. I was invited to preach a series of evangelistic messages from Friday through Sunday, by their Pastor Earl Blackburn. The weekend crusade was entitled, "The Life's Answers Conference". Heritage Church is located in the middle of an area called 'The Highland'. Like so many other cities, this section of town was once a nice, quiet, middle class area. It has now become a "low income, high crime area", which is absolutely infested with every type of illegal and immoral activity. It's the other side of the tracks; the rough part of town; the hang out for gangs, drug dealers, pimps, prostitutes, and many street people! The house next door to the church had a literal "mountain-heap" of beer cans in the front yard. While I was there one of the neighbors died of AIDS. Oh, but friends, our Good Shepherd has graced Heritage Baptist Church with a pastor, who is not only a tremendous theologian and preacher; he is also a man with a flaming passion for the glory of God and the salvation of the lost souls of this "highland area"! Rarely, have I met a man, who is so intoxicated with both "light and heat"! (Light – which is the sound doctrine of the whole counsel of God; accompanied by "Heat" – which is a passionate passion for lost and needy souls.) It was one of the most precious privileges of my Christian life, to go door to door with Pastor Blackburn and plant the truths of the gospel into the souls of what he called, "old, crusty sinners"! -We must never forget that we were old, crusty sinners ourselves, in need of the same gospel message. I walked with a man that demonstrates an authentic love and burden for their lost souls. I will never forget his free-flowing tears as he cried out to the Lord asking, "Is not some of your bride here in this area, O Lamb of God?" It is amazing to see how the Lord is bringing a growing group of young adults alongside of the leadership at Heritage, who share the same burning passion for the glory of God and the salvation of sinners. Friends, it was an absolute joy to serve among a local body that has a genuine burden for souls, which is energizing them to passionate prayer and personal proclamation of the gospel!

My most recent evangelistic outreach crusade meeting took place at Trinity Baptist Church in Oakdale, La. Pastor Brian Johnston and I shared the truths of the Gospel with a number of men, as we visited in their homes, during that week of meetings. As I write this letter, I still see the faces of each man. I continue to pray for the salvation of their souls. I particularly envision the face of one, who was in the iron grip of drug addiction. My heart was broken for him, as he openly admitted to the lost condition of his soul and he was shattered over it. It was a great joy to see "everyone of the men we visited" attend the services to hear the Word of God. That week, young men and old men testified that the Lord had done a converting work in their souls! I continue to intercede, asking the Lord to bring forth "fruit that remains" for His glory.

CHRIST-CENTERED EVANGELISM CONFERENCES

Founders Baptist Church in Spring, Tx. (a suburb of Houston) has, as their mission statement, "Advancing God's Truth For God's Glory"! I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the personal blessing that God gave me, to preach the truths of "Christ-Centered Evangelism" for their 9th annual "C.H. Spurgeon Bible Conference". It was such a personal pleasure to serve among a pastor and congregation who are practically and powerfully 'living out' their mission statement. The Lord had already used the expository preaching ministry of Pastor Richard Caldwell to impact my life through a Bible conference in which we had ministered together over a year ago. We are so "like-minded" both doctrinally and practically, that I felt like I was preaching to the choir that week! Throughout the week, over 450 people faithfully attended the 10 sessions of the conference. During the first session on Monday night, I focused on the reality that ONE of the things that we "can and must do", in the conversion of sinners; which is to be involved in passionate and persistent evangelistic intercession, for the people within the sphere of the influence of our lives. It was manifestly evident that the Holy Spirit was applying His truth to many of the hearts and lives of the believers who were present. Upon the conclusion of the conference, many believers

testified to me, how the Lord had mightily impacted their lives through the truths that they had received! Glory to HIS NAME! I am so grateful for the personal refreshment that I received in my own soul, from being in the midst of a local body of Christ that is “advancing the truth of God for the glory of God”!

Also, I enjoyed my 2nd opportunity to serve among the people at First Baptist Greenwood, La. Pastor Ken Fryer, who has become a dear friend to my life and ministry, invited me to teach this same study on evangelism. A good percentage of their people attended throughout the 10 sessions. A number of believers testified on the final evening, about different truths that the Lord particularly burned in their hearts and lives.

We rejoice over every opportunity the Lord has given to teach this series on Christ-Centered Evangelism. Even as I write this newsletter, 3 Kenyan pastors, are traveling to Uganda, for the purpose of jointly teaching “Christ-Centered Evangelism” in a local church in Kampala, Uganda. What a joy to see these vital truths being multiplied in Africa, Cuba, Nicaragua and other nations! I am scheduled to teach this conference in Entebbe, Uganda this August to over 600 pastors from many different denominations. Also, in July, I will be returning to Nicaragua, to teach this study to a new group of pastors from many denominations. Please pray for these awesome opportunities.

Most recently, I had a wonderful opportunity to teach at a men’s retreat at Grace Church in Lake City, Fl. The Lord has brought a wonderful group of young men to this church. It is exciting to minister among young men who have a flaming passion for the Lord and an insatiable appetite for His truth!

THANK YOU

Our hearts are filled to overflowing in gratitude and love for all the things the Lord is doing. He continues to open doors to share the glorious gospel all over the world. People from all over the world are downloading the sermons found on our website, as well as on Sermonaudio.com. We stand in awe of how the Lord is getting His Word out to hungry souls. We just want to thank you for your love, your prayers and your financial support. Thank you for your cooperation and partnership with us in this great commission. Even this month, the Lord has used your gifts to enable 3 Kenyan pastors to hold a Christ-Centered Evangelism Conference in Uganda; to help build needed space on an Ugandan pastor’s home; to help supply cement to lay a floor in a church in Kenya; support 18 church planters in Cuba; support Christian rehab centers in Russia; help with an orphanage in Kenya; support of pastors in Africa, purchase Bibles for a group of needy senior citizens, and help a Spanish Mission work. Also, we were able to give away hundreds of tracts, workbooks and sermon CD’s here in the south. These are just a few ways you have been involved in recent weeks. We hope you will be encouraged to know that your labor, your prayers and your gifts have not been in vain. The Lord is using you greatly, not only to encourage our hearts, but also as a vessel; helping us carry out the work He has called us to do. Dear friend, our desire is that this newsletter will not only encourage you, but also challenge you, to know Him more in your intimate walk with the Lord; as the Lord continues to challenge us in this way. May we increasingly become passionately passionate, even with tears, for the souls of men. Then one day those who sow in Tears, will reap in Joy.

II Cor. 4:5

Ed & Dianne Lacy

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

May 2-5First Baptist, Cross City, FL	June 21-25.....Reform Youth Camp,
May 16-19First Baptist Bull Shoals, AR	Bethany, LA
June 9 & 12.....Brookleigh Baptist, Gastonia, NC	July 11—14.....Elton Road Baptist, Athens, AL
June 10-12.....Industrial Electroplating Plant Evangelistic Outreach– NC	July 25-31.....Nicaragua