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The making of an evangelist

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CHAPTER 8   THE SOBBING HEART OF HUMANITY

There are three things said about Jesus in the passage of Scripture Matthew 9:35–38 and Matthew 10:1–4.

As he travelled around through cities and villages of that area, teaching in the Jewish synagogues and announcing the Kingdom of God, and seeing the great need of people from all walks of life, three major insights into the heart of the Saviour are recorded in the passages above.

In V36–38 There are a number of interesting and disturbing facts portrayed for us:

Jesus saw THE MULTITUDES.

He was moved with COMPASSION.

They FAINTED, were scattered, like sheep without a SHEPHERD.

In V 37–38 Jesus let His heart felt desire be known viz that we should do something about the situation. He said to his disciples:

There is a Plenteous Harvest, but there are Few Labourers. Therefore Pray, The Lord of the Harvest, that he will send Labourers into his Harvest.

In Chapter 10 V 1 Jesus practised what he preached by taking action to relieve the Heartaches of Sobbing Humanity.

In the parable of the Great Supper found in Luke 14:16–24 Jesus again shows His compassionate heart. After those who had been invited to the great supper made excuse (V 16–20) in the following verses 21–24 Jesus says some interesting and disturbing things once again. To sum up the verses:

He desires that His house may be filled.

He is angered by the refusal of those who made excuse.

He says to His servant, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, bring in the poor, the maimed, and the halt and the blind". The servant did what He said, and still there was room.

Then Jesus said in this parable, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel (lit á-á Constrain or entreat) them to come in, that my house may be filled.

We must get our vision of the sad and bad world and what we ought to do in it as christians, by observing the way Jesus acted. For example, in Luke Chapter 4:16–19 in the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus read from Isaiah 61:1–2, and then when he had finished reading He said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears", as He referred to Himself.

The part of Isaiah 61 which he read and concerns us Christians is:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. (That is where we ought to start too)
Because He hath anointed me.
To preach the gospel to the poor.
He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted.
To preach deliverance to the captives.
And recovering of sight to the blind. (especially to spiritually blind)
To set at liberty them that are bruised.
To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

In Isaiah 61 it goes on to say "and the day of vengeance of our God" but Jesus speaking of Himself spoke primarily of Himself as the bearer of 'good things' but in other parts of scripture He made it clear there was a reckoning day coming, when the wrath of God would be revealed in due course. When Jesus read these words in Nazareth he stopped before the words on vengeance, no doubt feeling that would come at a later time.

What are we to make of all this then. In it we can get direction as Christians in attitudes to this "Sobbing Heart of Humanity", as well as action to be taken.

I would like to group them up for our consideration.

The multitudes by and large have lost their way.
They are scattered and faint from the journey.
There is no shepherd to show them the way, from their mode of living.
They are a plenteous, standing, whitened harvest ready to be reaped for God.
Jesus saw the need, had compassion for them and acted on these things.
(To have a vision and to do nothing make us an impractical person. To have compassion, and do nothing, makes us an emotionalist; á-á appealing to emotions, but is action from it. To do something, to go into action, about it is to do what Jesus did).

Spend every effort to reach people in the cities, lanes, highways and byways, streets and hedges and constrain and entreat them to come in.

According to the example set by 'christ' in the synagogue reading at Nazareth we need to read the passage as follows:á-á

The Spirits of the Lord is upon us, to anoint us, to help us preach, to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance, to give spiritual sight
to the blind, to set at liberty those bruised and bound, to preach the acceptable day of the Lord, not forgetting to give warnings as we preach of the wrath to come.

Many Christians feel 'The Heart Sob of Humanity'. They hear the cries of: ? Lostness ? The Fearful
? Loneliness ? Those in Danger
? The Spiritual (Both Moral and/or Hungry Physical)

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In the first great Congress on Evangelism organised on a world wide scale by the Billy Graham Association and 'Christianity Today' with the theme ¡-¡ One Race One Gospel, One Task ¡-¡ and held in The Congress Hall in West Berlin, not far from the Berlin Wall. I was very impressed then and now with a hymn that was sung. It was the World Congress on Evangelism Prize Hymn ¡-¡ Macedonia.

Ú Ñ”Verse 1• speaks of a vision of a dying world ¡-¡ and we feel its heart beat and feeble cries for help in need.

Ú Ñ”Verse 4• tells of the Warning Bell of Judgement Tolling, the Cross ¡-¡ and the prayer O Lord, constrain and move the church, the glad news to impart! And Lord, as thou dost stir the church begin within my heart.

God can stir our hearts and give Ú Ñ”us• the burning zeal and passion to evangelise. So we ought to ask him. Ú Ñ”In the Old Testament in the book of Haggai in Chapter 1:17• it says that the Lord stirred up the leaders (of the people of Israel) so that they came and did work in the house of the Lord of Losts, their God, so that they left behind their lack of vision and apathy, and set to finishing the rebuilding of the 'Temple of God'.

Ú Ñ”To stir the heart too•, it is a good idea to read the biographies of famous soulá–winners to catch their spirit, to see the world through their eyes and to learn how to reach others for Christ. These knights (and ladies) of the Burning Heart can be used by God to warm the Hearts of those who read and ponder.

Too, we can pray a prayer of a chorus whose writer I do not know, but whose message has meant much to me. It goes like this ¡-¡ Lord crucified, give me a love like thine, help me to win the dying souls of men, O keep my heart in closest touch with thee, and give me love, pure calvary love, to bring the lost to thee;
There are a few steps we ought to take in God's programme of evangelism. These thoughts and ideas are meant to be for all the diversity of types of Christians in the church, with all their varying abilities. The suggestions here can be adapted in many sided fields of opportunity in the Christian Church, whether Local, State-wide, Nation Wide, World Wide, and whether those who are called to be evangelists are on a 'full-time' basis, or Pastors who desire to do the work of evangelists, as church members or 'born again' adherents who wish to serve Christ in this way. God can use the dedicated Christian even though 'a new born babe in Christ'. My first evangelistic sermon was preached when I was a Christian only 8 days old (as has been recounted in Part I of this book) and 32 people responded. Actually this was just over 50% of the Congregation. God wants a willing and obedient, prayer empowered heart to work through to His glory and the saving of the lost.

Having given these few introductory thoughts, here are steps applicable for most, if not all those who wish to be Soul Winners.

1. Seek God's direction, and His Spirit's stirring you for the task.
2. Survey the needs of the world.
3. Discover what is hurting the people; try by God's grace to heal it!
4. Do some reading on what the Bible says about soul winning. (use a concordance to trace the relevant scriptures)
5. Read books and booklets on Soul Winners and their methods. Study Part II of this book for ideas, and it helps especially
6. Ask God to place you in His harvest field, in the place of His appointment for your life. e.g. Youths School, Prison work, Religious Instruction in Schools etc!
7. Keep praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in every step of your life, and even after you have found a place of service.
8. See what your Denomination or some of the para-church organisations have in the fields of evangelism, Youth Camps and Conventions. Some of the well known inter-denominational and non-denominational organisations are Scripture Union Beach evangelism. Open Air Campaigners; Ambassadors for Christ; Sonshine Ranch or other Christian Ranches on the National level; Campaigners for Christ. In the phone book or yellow pages you will find addresses for the various denominational and those para-church groups.

9. Ask God to lay some soul upon your heart and then ask Him to assist you to win that Soul to Christ. Keep a prayer list. Note when you asked in prayer first, and keep praying till you fill in the column of 'Prayers Answered', and note the date this happened.
Dr Torrey and others say, 'Let your reliance be wholly in the Spirit of God and in the Word of God. Have no confidence in yourself. Put your trust in God to work through you.'

Now here are some areas for work, and some expansion of the 10 steps outlined above.

Seek God's direction and the stirring of His Spirit. This is crucial in soul winning. It is not what we would like to do, but what the Lord of the Harvest wants us to do for Him. Always remember that as soul winners we are always 'dayá-álabourers' working in 'The Whitened Harvest' in God's field of the world. It is very important to ask His direction and the Stirring of His Spirit in our hearts so that we have a vision and purpose like the Saviour had, as He lives His life within us. This will take time and earnest prayer. Remember God does not give us a work to do, which we are not gifted for, yet He can cause us to develop over a period as He lead us on.

We may feel that we cannot speak for God, as Moses felt, but remember God's question to Moses á-'Who made man's mouth'? To illustrate what I am trying to say. You cannot be a missionary doctor if at the moment you are not a doctor, but if you felt strongly that was God's call to you, then you would have to become a doctor first as part of your training for the field. So sometimes we may feel called of God to evangelise children for example, but we are not much good at doing that at the moment. You can do something about it if that is God's call to you. You can read books on children's work, and how to reach them. Go to seminars, lectures, and also read books on 'How to tell Bible Stories'. If God has stirred your heart to enter a special field, don't let Satan hold you back. Seek to prepare yourself for that field. If you are sure God is saying to your heart á-'DO IT', á-á then make sure you DO IT. Also, remember we cannot build God's kingdom and our own at the same time.

Survey the needs of the world. This is a very needy and lost world. It has lost its way home to God, except for those Christians to whom God has shown 'The Light' to light up life's path. To be a soul winner we need to remember the needs of people throughout the world. When I started as a young Christian, I had no idea that God would use me in various parts of the world. God has told us to be 'faithful in the least', so He can trust us 'in much' in a large sphere of service.

To understand the needs of the world get a world wide prayer list, such as put out by The Evangelical Alliance in its publication "The Australian Evangelical" or get an idea of world's needs by contacting your Denominational Missionary Society, and/or some of the other missionary societies around. If you belong to another country and you are reading this section, substitute your own countries information centres of the same types. The Bible Societies often have lists of needy areas. Prayerfully consider what you have learned from these publications or agencies.
The Bureau of Statistics of the Australian Government have a Year Book in which quite a lot of valuable information is found.

In case you have to travel a lot and want to do the Lord's work farther afield, study the geographical problems of the area in which you are interested. Too, it will be necessary to see the economic conditions of countries should you have to pay your own way to go evangelising in them. Are there refugees? Homeless? Are they bound by the National Religion Laws as in some countries, which make it difficult to witness or preach to those who belong to the National Religion (e.g. The Moslem Religion). What I am trying to say to you, is that you should find out all you can about a country, its culture; health problems; religions; its taboos á-á in short the obstacles to you ministering there. Find out too, what are its opportunities which permit the preaching of the Gospel, and christian avenues through which you can work as a base of operation. Always remember too, that God is able to surmount difficulties "as I understand the late Hudson Taylor once said á-á "difficult things" take a little time with God, á-á "impossible things" take a little longer". á-á "Remember: God placed an open door before Paul, and there were many adversaries. However it was a God á-á opened door, so it was meant for Paul to go through, and to meet the difficulties as they came.

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? á-á "Seek to discover what is hurting the people, and try by God's grace to heal it á-á. In Mark 6:34 it reads á-á "And Jesus when he came out, saw many people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things". "He cared about the need of the lost, so ought we christians too".

There are millions of lost people today in market places, towns, villages, in country areas in your community and mine.

Christ cared enough to die for them and the Holy Spirit cares enough to work with christians in order to save them. God was concerned about them because they were headed for an awful ending, if Christ was not their own personal Saviour.

We need to work in harmony with God to see the lost as he saw them, to seek to save the lost through the dying and risen Saviour.

If Jesus were walking the streets of our community today, his attitude of compassion and concern would be the same towards the lost multitudes. None of us who 'have the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9) should have the same spirit that Christ had. á-á "Jesus said á-á "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye, even so, unto them". (Matthew 7:12)

It is essential always in evangelism to find out the things that are hurting the people to whom you wish to minister. For example, do they suffer from the sense of Lostness, and are trying to find their way out by wrong advice. You believe they need the Saviour to help them out, then you will only heal the wounded Spirits by introducing them to the Saving Christ. You see, as most of the major religions of the world are supposed to find life through the teaching of leaders who are dead, and
entombed somewhere in the world, it becomes obvious that their teaching about life is unable to give it, because their death shows they didn't get it themselves. However, Jesus who is the resurrected and living Christ not only promises 'life, but life more abundantly' he has conquered death and his teaching shows the world how to conquer death too. (See also Part I of this book in Chapter 5 á-á "Lost á-á Until He Finds It" á-á The Evangelistic Passion)

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Ú “Do some reading on what the Bible says about Soulwinning•. I have found “the scripture Jesus quoted of Himself•, to be a key text in my work as an evangelist. It is a glorious promise, and shows light on the path of the evangelist. “He said• "Come ye after me, I will make you (to become) fishers of men”. (Mark 1:17) (Matthew 4:19) “It is an invitation to enlist in the Saviours Training School•.

In Psalm 18:34(a) we find part of a Psalm of David, where he says "God teaches my hands to war". I have found great help in that text too, for although David was primarily speaking about earthly warfare as the leader of the armies of Israel, I believe that because of who God is, that he could teach my hands to war in a spiritual warfare, as I have to wrestle 'not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places". (see Ephesians 6:12)

You will probably need to get a good concordance. Some of the older well tried ones are Crudens Concordance, Young's Analytical concordance and Strong's Concordance. No doubt there is a range of later publications too you may care to look at. Go to The Bible Society or some Evangelical Christian Bookstore and ask what they have and recommend. Of course it goes without saying that your Pastor or some mature Christian whose judgment you feel you can trust can give you some ideas too.

“Read books and booklets on Soulá-áWinners and their methods•. Although Part II of this book deals with the far more practical side of evangelism, it will be good for you also, to look at what's available among great Soul Winners, evangelistic preachers, books on evangelistic sermon outlines, which can be adapted to your needs.

A list of evangelistic books, authors and publishers is included in Chapter 32 in Part II of this book. Of course there are many more on the market which you will find around if you look, or ask someone who you know is very interested in the subject of evangelism.
In the Moody Pocket Book series, there is a book called "Great Personal Workers", written by Faris Daniel Whitesell and copyrighted by Moody Bible Institute of Chicago in 1956. It is published by Moody Press, Chicago. The book has 13 Chapters on the lives and methods used in Soulwinning, and gives both inspiration and information. (If it is not in print now, see if Moody Press has anything else like it). It is simple and very readable, and well worth getting, if at all possible.

Some small books on Christian doctrine seem to be a necessity, in the 'what to preach' side of soulwinning.

There are two books put out by ÚConvention Press• of ÚThe Southern Baptist Convention•, which are helpful.

The first of these is called "Winning Others To Christ" by Dr Roland O Leavell and as the title suggests is on 'how to do it'. The second of these books is also put out by Convention Press, and is entitled "Soul-winning" Doctrines by Dr J Clyde Turner. This book is on 'what to preach' in order to have sound doctrine. It has 9 Chapters on Basic Doctrines of The Church and is in a simple readable form, written especially as a Church Study Course or for a Home Study. Of course there are other books along this line too. You can see that to be a soul-winner you need to have a small library to help you to prepare well in the sight of God.

ÚConvention Press•There are two scriptures written by the Spirit of God through the Apostle Paul, which should be an inspiration to study to prepare ourselves for service in evangelism•.

In 2 Timothy 2:15 Paul is writing to his 'son in the faith' Timothy. He says "Study To Show Thyself Approved Unto God, Rightly Dividing (lit straightly cutting or to cut ....... to rule want) The Word of Truth". 'Study' literally means áTo us Diligence, Make Speed (Youngs Concordance) ÚAgain in 2 Timothy 4:13 Paul shows the importance of Study• ".... when you come bring with you áthe books, but especially the parchments". The word 'Parchment' literally means "a thin skin of parchment including the inspired writings of the Scriptures. (In Part II of this book in Chapters 6 and 7 á`Will The Real Evangelist Please Stand Up!' (The True Evangelist) and `The Proclaiming and The Power' (The Evangelistic Passion)

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? ÚConvention Press•Ask God to place you in His harvest field, in the place of His appointment for your life•. ÚIn Ephesians 2:10 we read•, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good words, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them". ÚSidlow Baxter, the popular English writer, makes two comments on this passage•: They are (i) That God has a plan for our lives as christians áis a preordained plan and (ii) That he desires us to come to Him in prayer in order to receive His Counsel day by day, so that we can work in His plan.

This of course shows how essential it is to pray and read the Word of God, no matter what is our place of Christian service. These writings of
mine have sought to show how God deals with a soul on the local level in the local church. Then in my case it went on to a District level, a State level, a National level and finally an International level. Not everyone will have the same steps to follow through, but we need to serve God faithfully leaving the steps of His Personal plan for our lives to develop as He sees fit. It is always important in these matters, to make sure that we are in the centre of His will.

He usually makes this known by that inner conviction which we feel we must obey. Advice given to those who feel called to be Pastors of the Christian church, and are not sure whether God is calling them, are told "not to go into the ministry, unless you cannot possible stay out". It is that kind of inner compulsion which is deeper than just a light feeling or whim, which helps us know where God wants us to serve. We would be conscience smitten if we disobeyed the conviction of the heart. This of course may be in the Sunday School as a teacher or in some Youth group or other group. We can only find out Gods will on our knees in a prayerful study of Gods word. Sometimes God may guide us to confide in some mature and trusted christian, and his or her advice needs praying over so that we may know God's will.

ÚÚ“The first stage in guidance, wrote the late George Mueller of Bristol, is "to have no will of your own in any given matter", you are praying about. Something like 90% of problem lies here. So the steps would seem to be:

1. Have ÚÚ“no will of your own• in any given matter.
2. ÚÚ“Ask God• to show you His will.
3. ÚÚ“Know that• He will not lead you into anything beyond your (and His) ability.

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God has taken men and women who were shy, nervous, some who were stammerers and people who felt they couldn't do the job He was asking them to do. They trusted Him `and God in their lives' made all the difference. He has said in the scripture ÚÚ“Is anything too hard for the Lord?” (See ÚÚ“Genesis• 18:14 and ÚÚ“Jeremiah• 32:17,27)

ÚÚ“In the second passage in a prayer of Jeremiah he says• ".... and there is nothing too hard for Thee (V17) and V27 of the passage is the answer by ÚÚ“God• to Jeremiah's prayer á-á "Behold I am the Lord, the God of all Flesh; is there anything too Hard for Me?"

(4) ÚÚ“Pray, Pray and Pray again and Study what the Bible says•. ÚÚ“Matthew 7:7 says• á-á "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. (See also Luke 11:9)

(5) ÚÚ“Seek the advice of• a Mature and Trusted Christian Friend, and God can lead in marvellous ways.

(6) ÚÚ“Finally, Pray, Pray, Pray Again•, and ask the Holy Spirit to bring God's word to your remembrance.
If after you have done these things, and feel at peace then go ahead with what has been revealed to you. Remember, God will never guide you into anything that is Contrary To His Word.

? \( \text{Ú ë"} \) Keep Praying for Guidance every step of your life, especially after you have found a place of service for God•.

\( \text{Ú ë"} \) In Psalm 32:8• there is a very practical and interesting statement. 
\( \text{Ú ë"} \) It goes like this•, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye". If you trust God to do what is said here you will find the best pathway for your life, and God will watch over the progress you are making.

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? \( \text{Ú ë"} \) See what your Denominations and some of the evangelistic groups have to offer you as a place of service•, then pray over the matter of serving God there. He will guide you to the place of His appointment.

Some of these are listed under No 8 a few pages back. A scripture which could be of help in finding the guidance of God too, is \( \text{Ú ë"} \) John 5:14á-á15• "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have desired of him".

\( \text{Ú ë"} \) Of course, to find God's plan for our life, is something he wants us to do, so read the two texts above and then trust Him to do it•.

? \( \text{Ú ë"} \) Don't forget to ask God to lay some soul upon your heart and then ask Him to win that soul through you•.

It is a good idea to keep a prayer list with columns for the Date Request Made; the Request Made, the Date the Request Answered; the Type of Answer, á-á `Yes', `No', `Wait a While'; Remarks for Anything Outstanding in the Answer.

Also, if you work out a careful plan guided by God, of what is the best way to go about winning that soul, and it is a good idea for you to work out a 'chain reference' of suitable scriptures to use. Put your key verse in the back of your Bible e.g. \( \text{Ú ë"} \) Salvation• á-á Revelation 3:20 and alongside Revelation 3:20, in the margin of your Bible say you put 1 John 5:11á-á12, and then in the margin there perhaps only one or two more verses. Don't give too many at the start. In the Back Page Index of your Bible also put a chain on \( \text{Ú ë"} \) Assurance, Reá-áDedication• and the
like. (In Part II of this book Chapter 15 'The God Shaped Emptiness' Personal and Group Evangelism)

? Ú Ó"In Soulwinning á-á Let your reliance be wholly on the Holy spirit and on the word of God. How no confidence in yourself to work a Spiritual Work. Put your trust in God to work through you•. Remember it says in Ú Ó"Philippians 2:13• "For it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure".

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The work of the Holy Spirit is to Convict, Draw, Convert, Regenerate, To Set Apart, To Indwell, To Gift and to Work through the Christian. This is to name but a few of the works wrought in a human being.

God prepares people's hearts, and He prepares the ground for us to give the seed of the word, and it is He who gives the increase. Ú Ó"This is outlined in Paul's letter to the Corinthian Church in the passage 1 Corinthians 3:6á-á7• á-á "I have planted, apollos watered; but Ú Ó"God gave• the increase". V7 says. "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Verse 8 is also very interesting and would be good for you to look up in your bible. (In Part II of this book Lecture 16 (Help Give Me A Hand) (Special Aids in Evangelism) you will find help)

To sum up briefly what this chapter is trying to say:á-á

1.Ú Ó"See• the need.
2.Ú Ó"Seek• God's moving in our hearts to meet that need.
3.Ú Ó"Seek• to heal the hurt(s) of sobbing humanity (especially spiritually).
4.Ú Ó"Don't• do this in your own strength or cleverness, but do it in God's strength and wisdom. (Remember, it is not what you do Ú Ó"for• God, so much as what God does Ú Ó"through• you).

Ú Ó"Remember• this marvellous scripture which says (1 Corinthians 1:29á-á31)

V29 "That no flesh should glory in his presence"
V30 "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption."
V31"That, according as it is written, he that Glorieth, let him Glory in the Lord".

In other words those scriptures Remind us that in Jesus Christ we have everything we need, and that our glory should never be in Ú Ó"our• accomplishments, but we should glory in what the magnificent Lord has done through us.

Ú Ó"This is a great secret of true service for God•.