

Are we doing the work of the Lord?

Feb 14th 2016

Proverbs 10: 5 New American Standard Bible

**He who gathers in summer is a son who acts wisely,
But he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.**

Dwight L. Moody, by his own admission, made a mistake on the eighth of October 1871 -- a mistake he determined never to repeat. He had been preaching in the city of Chicago. That particular night drew his largest audience yet. His message was "What will you do then with Jesus who is called the Christ?" By the end of the service, he was tired. He concluded his message with a presentation of the gospel and a concluding statement: "Now I give you a week to think that over. And when we come together again, you will have opportunity to respond." A soloist began to sing. But before the final note, the music was drowned out by clanging bells and wailing sirens screaming through the streets. The great Chicago Fire was blazing. In the ashen aftermath, hundreds were dead and over a hundred thousand were homeless. Without a doubt, some who heard Moody's message had died in the fire. He reflected remorsefully that he would have given his right arm before he would ever give an audience another week to think over the message of the gospel.

Jesus said ... ***"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."*** Mt 9: 37-38

Jesus said ***"Go; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves."*** Lk 10:3

Jesus also said ***"Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor."*** Jn 4: 35-38

If D L Moody were here in person, He would tell us to look around at our community . The field is ripe to harvest; it is time for the harvest to be gathered, or it will perish. He would tell us to look at the needy people around us, and then tell us to quit saying, "I'll wait until the holidays are over", or "I'll wait till I come back from vacation, and then I'll help." It may then be too late to harvest.

We must learn that today, right now, we are located in the center of a spiritual harvest field where the souls of Men, Women, and Children are threatened with eternal damnation, eternal separation from God unless laborers (that's you and me) get out there and work, sharing the story of God's love and His desire to save.

Our text says that the wise son will work in the time of harvest, but that the unwise son, will sleep during the harvest rather than laboring. And such a sleeping son brings shame and disgrace to his father. Today we all have a heavenly Father, who wants us to work to bring in the harvest. **The question is, "What kind of child of His are you? Are you a wise, working one, or a sleeping one?"**

The harvest must be reaped when it is ripe. We all have a job to do. Listen to this: **when a Russian Baptist preacher was brought before the Soviet secret police, he was asked, "How many preachers do you have in your church?" "Five hundred," he replied. "Five hundred!" exclaimed the interrogator. "How many members do you have, then?" "Five hundred," was the quick reply. "You see, every member of my congregation is a preacher of the Gospel."**

Harvest time will always come. There is a time to prepare, plant, and a time to reap. **To neglect the harvest when it is ready is sinful;** it is a total waste of all the work and effort that has gone before it.

Peaches, apples, grapes, and berries fall off the tree or vine and rot on the ground if they are not harvested. There is also a spiritual law which says that if souls are not harvested when they have been moved on by the Holy Spirit, they will someday spend eternity in hell. Someone must give them the message of God's redeeming love and desire to save.

We must not be guilty of saying "Four months till the harvest." Jn 4:35

There are many, who have perhaps had all the preliminary work done in their lives by someone else, who are just waiting for the right person to work with them; the Lord may want you to harvest them. So encourage them, work with them, and lead them to faith in Christ Jesus.

Jesus, when He was here on earth, urged on both Himself and His disciples the urgency of the present, for He said, ***"As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work."*** Jn 9:4. He never did encourage them to wait until tomorrow.

One day a lady criticized D.L. Moody for his methods of evangelism in attempting to win people to the Lord. Moody's reply was, ***"I agree with you. I don't like the way I do it either. Tell me, how do you do it?"*** The lady replied, ***"I don't do it."*** Moody retorted, ***"Then I like my way of doing it better than your way of not doing it."***

Sleeping during the harvest season brings shame to the heart of our heavenly Father when we spend our days in idleness. So whatever the reasons, we bring shame to God when we refuse to work the Harvest, just because we would rather do something else, or sleep.

How can you know if you are spiritually (or literally) sleeping during the harvest?

1. PEOPLE WHO ARE ASLEEP DO NOT USE THEIR EYES

Have you looked on the harvest field lately, or are your eyes closed in sleep? Have you forgotten the great love Christ has for all Men, Women, and Children. Are you being blind or asleep to the fact he wants to use you to spread the message of salvation to the lost world? Are you still aware that they need this message more than they need anything else in the world? If so, since you are certainly not using your eyes, you may be asleep.

2. PEOPLE WHO ARE ASLEEP DO NOT USE THEIR EARS

Now it is true that a sharp noise, or an unrecognized sound will wake some people from sleep, but others are not affected by anything, for their ears are not alert; they have adjusted themselves to the sounds around them. Are you deaf, or so asleep that you can no longer hear the cries of distress, the calls for help from the lost, wounded, and hurting around you? Are you so deadened with sleep spiritually that you cannot even hear the voice of the Lord as the Spirit tries to speak to you? If so, then perhaps you are asleep at your post of duty.

If you are in this condition, Paul wrote a message to you. **Eph 5: 14-16** ***"Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." Be very careful, then, how you live-- not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.***

Missionary Susie Hobert tells the story about her son Ryan when he was 10 years old. Ryan was driving imaginary race cars with his friends. Several minutes later he came bounding into the house and yelled, ***"Mom, you've got to come quick. Isabelle wants to accept Jesus into her heart."***

Skeptical of the child's sudden interest in spiritual things, Susie asked, "Ryan, I thought you were playing race cars?" "We were, Mom, but our cars wrecked. The accident was real bad so I asked Isabelle if she would go to heaven if she died. She said she didn't know. I told her how she could know and she wants to ask Jesus into her heart."

God can use anyone when the field is ripe for harvest, when the moment is right.

There is never a time to quit, never a time to slumber, **until we reach the end of our lives.**

George Whitefield, a British evangelist who lived about 200 years ago, exhibited great devotion to Christ. After preaching several times one day, he went to his room and prepared for bed. Then someone came and asked him to speak one more time because a crowd had gathered outside.

Although very tired, he picked up a candle and said he would preach until it burned out. An hour later the flame flickered and died, and Whitefield closed in prayer and went inside. The next morning he was found on his knees beside his bed -- the flame of his earthly existence had glimmered and died.

Dr George W. Truett, Pastor 1st Baptist Church Dallas, from 1897 until his death 1944, would sit next to a window in a coffee house not far from the church, and would latterly weep for the lost souls who would pass by the window...

Are we doing the work of the Lord? **Are we asleep with our eyes?** ***Are you still aware that they need this message more than they need anything else in the world?*** **Are you asleep with our ears?** ***Are you deaf, or so asleep that you can no longer hear the cries of distress, the calls for help from the lost, wounded, and hurting around you?***