

VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples: The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest?" Matt. 9:35-38.

That was the "harvest" or closing period of the Jewish age, and we to-day find ourselves and the work similarly circumstanced in the "harvest" of the Christian age. All who realize the importance of the work, and are following close to the great Chief Reaper, are not only praying that others may be sent, but are themselves laboring and gathering fruit. All who have the compassionate, loving spirit of the Master, are to-day moved with compassion for the multitude of the blind following their blind leaders, as together we see them going toward the ditch of unbelief and infidelity, and passing by the opportunity to make their calling and election sure to the great prize of our high calling.

The preaching and labors of Jesus and the apostles in that typical "harvest," was not often in the synagogues, but generally by private talks to individuals, and from house to house. Many of the deepest sermons of the great Teacher were delivered to congregations of one or two, or a dozen. Jesus sent the twelve and afterwards the seventy, also, "two and two before his face into every city." They were not orators, nor with the exception of Paul, were any of them graduates of Theological schools, else probably they would have been so full of the traditions of their day, that they would have had no "ear to hear," or hearing, would have been too great to utter the simple message of "good tidings," which the Master commissioned. They attempted not

dramatic attitudes, they simulated not a superior dignity and austerity, they used not "feigned words" and tones, but in simplicity like their Master, their lips expressed the overflow of their hearts, as here to an individual, and there to a group at the corner or in the public parks, they sought to inform the people of the Lord's presence and the kingdom which he was to establish, but which few of the Jews were ready to receive (as God had foreseen and announced), and which being withdrawn from them (as a nation), the Gentiles were invited to share; which kingdom is now – even at the door.

The work in this harvest is very similar in respect to its being mainly individual effort, and that of the humble and not too "wise and prudent" according to this world's wisdom. The synagogues of to-day are even more closely guarded than those of the typical harvest, so that rarely indeed is there in any of these any opportunity to deliver the message of the kingdom to the Lord's sheep, who may be bound up and starving therein; hence the work now as then, is more of an individual and private character. Consequently its rewards are not enticing to those who look for rewards popular among men – popularity, money, etc. Those who labor for the wages now offered for this service, must have higher than selfish motives – love for the Lord, his truth and his children. These take willingly (Heb. 10:32,33) the present wages of reproach, etc., and wait for the equally sure and great reward of honor and glory in the future. By this arrangement, the Lord chooses his ministers (servants), thus securing though in all a "little flock," a ministry under whose faithful efforts now and hereafter, his infinite plans will reach a glorious consummation.

In the issue of September last, we mentioned a plan we had in view, by which the humblest could share in the privileges and blessings of the harvest work now, investing so much time and talent as they could command. The responses were more than we had expected. About five hundred eagerly grasped for the opportunity, and in response we sent to each a printed, private letter, explaining the method proposed, and over three hundred are now at work, laboring, enduring

and sacrificing for the truth's sake, and for the sake of him who said, "Feed my sheep" – gathering fruit unto eternal life; and still applications continue to come in from others. Should no more engage in this service, we reckon that these now laboring will succeed during the present year in having the "Food" read by not less than twenty thousand thinking people; possibly fifty thousand. The result of this work in enlightening the minds and renewing consecrated hearts, none can estimate now; and the results we find are even more marked upon the hearts of the "laborers," than of those for whom they labor, the promise that he that watereth others shall himself be watered, being verified to each.

The results of the work of these as thus far prosecuted, reveals the fact that the harvest is truly great, and that many hungry, starving, fainting sheep are famishing for the bread of life. Many of the workers tell us that they are encouraged, and indeed surprised to find some fruit of their labors where they had not expected it. This searching work reveals the fact that there are more truth hungry than we had supposed, who are trying to feed upon the husks of tradition, and who though almost disheartened and blinded by error are still striving and feeling after the true God of justice and love. To search these out and feed and enlighten them is the present great harvest work. In view of the great work to be done, and the privilege of doing it, the thought is suggested, why may not many more be thus engaged? and we have therefore concluded to lay the plan before all our readers in this issue of the TOWER. Why may not five or ten thousand, instead of three hundred be thus laboring for and blessing others? By thus preaching from house to house why not reach half a million or a million, and have that number read of these refreshing "good tidings?"

It is with these thoughts that we now lay before you all the plan already working good results with some. We know of no better method available to most of you for spreading the truth, than to get people to read the pamphlet "Food for Thinking Christians," and to know of the publication of the TOWER. And while bringing them and their topics

to the attention of the people a most favorable opportunity is afforded you for reaching the truth-hungry who have "an ear to hear" by bringing you in contact with such, manifesting them, and thus affording you opportunities to tell the dear story with your own lips, also.

To this end, as an aid to such laborers we have prepared a large quantity of large printed envelopes, each containing a sample copy of the TOWER and a copy of "Food." These can be distributed from house to house and called for and collected a few days later, at which time you could take subscriptions, or sell the sample packets, or have conversations, etc., as you may find possible and expedient.

We need scarcely say to you that ZION'S WATCH TOWER is not a money-making enterprise. (Your own experience [R825 : page 2] probably proves this.) It has never yet repaid the cost of paper and printing any year since it was started. Nevertheless, if you are dependent for your living on your daily labor, you must needs have some income, or you could not give your time in the manner suggested. To such we would say that the following provision is made for this contingency: – You may retain ONE-HALF of all the receipts obtained as described from NEW readers to go towards your support, your traveling expenses, and the support of any one dependent on you, returning to the Tract Fund any surplus you may be able to spare.

Those who find themselves possessed of the gift of teaching (1 Cor. 12:8,11,18,22,29; 13; and 14:1,3,9,15,22,24) – ability to make clear to others, the plan of our Father from his Word of truth, will thus be provided a grand opportunity for holding public meetings in school-houses, halls, churches, court-houses, market places, parks, and vacant lots, to which the public might be invited; or private gatherings for the help of those found truth-hungry during the canvass, might be held where and when possible.

As you go, let it not be for strife or vain glory, but that the spirit of the truth filling you may overflow upon others. Speak the truth in love, love for the truth, and love for those you would assist. Be not

ashamed of the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God; handle it with confidence, but not boastfully, it is not thine, but God's. In speaking of the plans of the great Jehovah, let it be with reverence, as well as love. Do not for a moment forget the responsibility and humble dignity of your mission as an ambassador and herald of the Lord of life and glory. Go forth each day from your closet, from private reflection upon the glorious message you bear, forewarned and fore-armed also, to meet the reception you may expect from many who know us not; that being thus shod with the preparation needful, you may not so much feel the sharpness and ruggedness of the way. Even so it was with our Master also. Consider this lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. (Eph. 6:15; Heb. 12:13). Prepare **[R825 : page 2]** from the first to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. This is your ministry. Make full proof of your ministry. Keep the object well in view, and look unto Jesus for an example of how to endure, as well as for grace to help you. You may not *see* much of the fruit of your labors, yet the Lord may show you some, for your encouragement by the way. The fruits will be better seen by and by.

"Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10:16.) We suggest the following method of leaving the sample "packets":

Do your scattering of the packets and your after canvassing in a systematic manner so that you will know just where you have been and where you have not been, and generally finish one street and town or city before beginning in another.

Remember the OBJECT before you; that it is not the selling of the packets, nor the taking of subscriptions, but the spread of the truth, by getting people to read. Endeavor as far as possible to forget the money feature of the work. It might be possible to take a subscription from a party who would never get much good of it, nor read it, or it might be possible to get a party to read by wise and fitly spoken words at the time of leaving the packet, who, after reading, would not subscribe, nor yet purchase the packet, but the latter would probably in the end yield

most fruit to the Lord's glory; for the thoughts implanted while reading would probably never die if the heart-soil was good, and in the future might bud, blossom and bear good fruit. We must not measure success entirely by the present results. We would not, however, have any one think that the taking of subscriptions even from those but slightly interested, is valueless; far from it. Some have had the TOWER in their hands repeatedly without having their attention riveted and their interest fully awakened, who, by and by were wonderfully aroused and blessed. Of such was our Brother Zech, mentioned in the Dec. '85 "View." So then take all the subscriptions you can, and sell all the packets you can, while bearing in mind that your OBJECT is, above all, to attract attention to the beauty and harmony of THE TRUTH concerning the teachings of the Bible.

"Be wise." – To secure attention to your mission and packet of reading matter, you must be neat and respectable in appearance; kind, interesting and dignified in your language and manner, leaving no doubt in the minds of those you meet that your service is from your heart, and rendered to the Lord, and that not their money, but their hearts you seek specially. Take advantage of all the *circumstances* to so deeply interest, by conversation, those upon whom you call, and with whom you leave the "Packets," that they CANNOT HELP READING to satisfy interest or curiosity. Do not attempt to tell them *all* about the plan of God; the reading will do that better. Tell them just enough to make them desire to know more. Take advantage of their present religious views, as the Apostles did (2 Cor. 12:16). If they are Presbyterians, Baptists, or Methodists, call their attention to the fact that "Food for Thinking Christians" harmonizes the hitherto supposedly contradictory doctrines, Election and Free Grace, and makes them both clear and beautiful, aiding greatly in the study of the Bible, and stimulating both heart and mind to Bible study. To one who is skeptical, point out the fact that this treats religious matters from a reasonable standpoint; and make clear to him that the creeds of the sects, and not the Bible, are unreasonable and contradictory. Many Infidels and skeptics have been led to the Lord through reading "Food";

and hundreds write that they sat up all night to finish reading it the first time, only to read it over more carefully several times after. When, after leaving the packets several days, according to circumstances and appointment, you call to collect or take subscriptions, do all the preaching you can. The Lord has promised, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist." (Luke 21:15.) And you will find this true to the letter. You will find that none, even those professing to be teachers and ministers of the gospel, will be able to withstand the "Sword of the Spirit" with which the knowledge of the truth arms you.

The best point to make prominent in these brief conversations is *the ransom*, its completeness and efficacy (Rom. 5:17-19), as far-reaching in its influence for good, as the curse for sin was far-reaching in evil effects – "a ransom for ALL to be testified in due time" to all; and made available to them. Study these your sermons and points and texts; be thoroughly familiar with "FOOD" and its references. Refer them to it, and its arguments, and its Scripture citations. STUDY with all your heart to show yourself approved unto God, and to be used more and more of him to his glory; and study his Word with all the helps he has provided you, that you may "be ready to give an answer to him that asketh you – A REASON FOR THE HOPE that is in you, *with meekness and fear.*" Meek and humble in your deportment, remember that you are sent with this balm, not to curse, but to bless; not to smite and wound, and drive the sheep, but to heal and help and draw them nearer to the true Shepherd, and his green pastures. Fear, lest you should let a precious moment or opportunity be wasted, wherein you might honor the Master or bless a brother. Fear, lest you yourself should through pride or vain glory, or unfaithfulness, fail to attain the glorious, heavenly prize of which you teach others.

One Sister of this city reported as many as ten subscribers obtained in one day and many very interesting conversations with some evidently truth-hungry. There are more, many more of the Lord's children – our brethren and sisters – who are starving spiritually, and

each faithful servant, each steward of the manifold grace of God should remember his commission to preach (Isa. 61:1 and Matt. 5:16 and Mark 16:15). "Let your light shine," and Go ye into all the world and preach the "good tidings" to every creature. Sound forth the glad song of *full* redemption by a mighty God and Saviour. Flash forth the truth into every nook and corner where dark creeds and black theories have so long lain. The harvest is ripe, let every servant thrust in the sickle. The Lord is with us; in his name alone and by his word alone we conquer.

Do not be discouraged; you will daily learn better how to awaken and interest the sheep; at first you may frighten the sheep only and have little success, but "Study to show thyself approved unto God," pray for help and let the Master's voice speak more and more in all your words and looks and deeds, and soon you will be used to bless and feed some. Spare not the steps nor the time; sow beside all waters and in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not.

Send for the Sample Packets as you need them, but don't let any be idle, re-distribute them over and over again, except where you make sale, or take a subscription, or give to one who is *much* interested, but too poor to purchase.

So surely as you are of the "body of Christ," so surely you will have a strong desire to "Preach the gospel to the meek." You have often sighed perhaps that you had but little money you could give to spread the message, and that you had neither the ability nor opportunity to publicly proclaim, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." Now God opens up this method whereby the humblest may, if they will, do effective preaching, much after the manner of the Master and the Apostles. **[R826 : page 2]**

Of course those whose hearts are not absorbed in the "good tidings" and a desire to obey the injunction, "Feed my sheep," can go, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise or household affairs and find no time to be thus co-workers with the Master; and of course those whose

hearts are full, will find some way to render service. They will find opportunities in which self-denial (self-sacrifice) will enable them to do what they can, and the warmer the interest the more time can and will they spend in this or some form of service appreciated by the Master.

One Sister can only find time as she goes and comes from market and shows her will in the matter, by using that. Another commenced by giving one half-day each week, and is now deeply interested and giving nearly four days of each week in this preaching. One Brother writes that he uses the evenings after his day's labor; another, that he finds the Lord's Day especially favorable to the work, and much more profitable than anything else to himself as well as to those whom he endeavors to interest, and whose minds and bodies are more at rest and who are more easily interested then, than upon other days. Next to meeting fellow saints for Bible study, no work could be better adapted or more suitable to the day which memorializes the resurrection of our Lord after having given himself a ransom for all; witnessing as it did, to the perfectness of that ransom which is the foundation of all the glad tidings of forgiveness of sins and full release of all, from sin's penalty. Be not in too great haste; wherever you find a hearing ear give it plenty of time and call back repeatedly to assist. Be instant in season and out of season – when convenient and when not convenient *to you*. Take along a note book; keep a note of those specially interested, of those you failed to see, and where you began and left off distributing on a street, etc.

Let us know whether you are ready to try – When? – How many samples you will likely need, and whether you expect to canvass adjoining towns, etc., etc. God bless you. God speed the truth.

N.B. – In answering this state yourself clearly, and give your full address very plainly. Should you send in any lists of subscribers, six months and yearly subscribers should always be on sheets of paper separate from your letter.

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