

Christ for the World

Ponder: Can we evangelize our world? Will we?

Scripture: “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15 NKJV).

Jesus said to take His gospel to the entire world. Not everyone will respond positively; in fact, the majority will reject the Lord (Matthew 7:13, 14). Our task remains: give everyone an opportunity. The hymn, “Christ for the World,” points out three things in as many verses that will help us fulfill this divine mandate:

First, we need “loving zeal.” Aside from Jesus Himself, did anyone exemplify loving zeal better than Paul? “The love of Christ constrains us” (2 Corinthians 5:14). Christ’s love and Paul’s Christ-like love for the world moved the apostle to travel far and wide preaching the gospel. His appreciation for God’s grace motivated him to labor “more abundantly” than others (1 Corinthians 15:10). Will Christ’s love for you and your love for the lost motivate you?

Second, we need “fervent prayer.” Paul comes to mind again: “My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved” (Romans 10:1). He urged the Colossians to pray for a door of opportunity to preach the gospel (Colossians 4:3). Jesus said, “the harvest is truly great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Luke 10:2). Will you pray that prayer today?

Finally, we need unity (the song says, “one accord”). Jesus prayed that His followers might be one, based on the word of the apostles (John 17:20). He prayed they would be one even as He and the Father are one (17:21a). Why was He so concerned about unity? Let Him answer: “that the world may believe . . .” (17:21b). The early church demonstrated unity. They “continued daily with one accord” (Acts 2:46). As a result, the church increased in number daily (2:47). What can you do today to promote unity within the body of Christ?

Loving zeal, fervent prayer, and one accord – these things will go a long way toward enabling us to fulfill the directive of the Lord Jesus. Let us not merely sing these words, but strive to incorporate them into our lives individually and into the life of the church.