

“Bringing in the Sheaves” **Dr. J.B. Buffington**

Let's take our Bibles and turn to Psalm 126:5-6: *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

“Dear Father, tonight, please give us open hearts to listen to Thy word this evening. I pray Lord that minds might be alert. Bodies may be tired, but I pray, the Holy Spirit, now may bring refreshing that the message this evening might fall upon good ground, and as a result of this, folks will get saved and Christ might be honored. In Jesus' Name. Amen.”

I've named my message tonight “Bringing in the Sheaves.” I'm just going to preach on half of this verse. The last half is the promise, but I want to talk about the first part. Now, please do not dial me out before you give me a hearing. Sometimes you read verses of Scripture, and people say, “Well, I've heard that before.” And then you go hunting or fishing or do your work or that sort of thing, but you never exhaust the verse of Scripture. When you do that, then you miss something. You say, “I've heard this before.” I don't think you've heard what I'm about to say tonight. You might have. I'm not the first person that ever thought of this. I found it out from somebody else. You know, somebody else reminded me. Listen carefully. Say, “Please, Dear Lord, help me to listen tonight.” And listen carefully, not to parts of it, to all of it. The salvation of souls is that which brings joy in heaven. Luke 15:10: *There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.* Twice that is stated in the book of Luke — Luke 15:7, 10. What sets heaven on joy? Well, heaven is already filled with joy. This must be something, joy unspeakable and full of glory! The purpose of the incarnation — *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Luke 19:10: *For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* That's the purpose for which Christ came to this earth. The highest of values is the soul, Matthew 16:26: *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* The highest value in the world is the soul of a man. The task supreme of the church is the Great Commission — *Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.* The mark of wisdom is a matter of soul winning — *He that winneth souls is wise.* Proverbs 11:30.

There's a man in hell tonight, not just one; but the plea in hell is for a drink of water. But there's a plea in hell, *Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.* Men beneath our feet in the fires of hell cry for somebody to go back to their loved ones and tell them, “Don't come down here.” The cry from Calvary, *Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.* Now, the salvation of souls is that and a whole lot more. Now, you've heard about soul winning ever since you've been saved. Don't dial the message out tonight.

Consider first of all the human initiative in Psalm 126:6: *He that goeth forth.* Now, God took the initiative when man failed. God the Father came in the garden. The Son of God took the initiative when He came to this earth. *For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* The Spirit of God took the initiative when He came from Heaven in answer to the prayer of the Son of God, came and indwelt the disciples on the day of Pentecost and took the initiative of convicting the hearts of sinners that they need to be saved through the preaching of the Word of God. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit are in the matter of initiative in soul winning, and men must be also. Now, folks say, “You know, God does that.” Yes sir, salvation is of the Lord, but God saves souls through human instrumentality. He does it through men. And Christians must take the initiative. Mark 16:15: *Go* — that's simple. Nobody can misunderstand that — *Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.* Mark 16 closes with this: *And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, . . .* Now, God is not going to do our work for us. Now, what? They went forth, the Lord working with them. It's strange, sometimes people say, “Well, there must not be many elect in this city. Nobody is getting saved much.” Yes sir, and folks come along and go to work and all of a sudden a whole lot of folks get saved. I mean, you go to seed on doctrine, and we can make excuses and all that, but still the Lord said, “The harvest is white; the laborers are few.” You cannot refute

that. And so we must take the initiative. He comes in our hearts, the Holy Spirit, to equip us with power to win souls and deliver them. Now, listen carefully to this, I'm not saying, "Let's discontinue this." So don't get bits of my message; you get bits of my message, and you'll come up with what I didn't say. You'll come up with the wrong emphasis. There ought to be multiplied efforts to reach people — revival meetings. When I grew up, I have no remembrance of anybody going soul winning in my community. Folks got saved in revival meetings. I remember people talking about the Lord. We used to have the type of meeting that if you didn't get saved in the summer, you couldn't get saved until the next summer. They had tent meetings, and they preached for weeks and weeks. Well, that's one way of getting souls, but there's more to that - revival meetings. We had tent meetings. I preached in Haines City for four and a half weeks, an hour and fifteen to an hour and forty-five minutes every night, and they begged me to preach another week. Listen, folks got saved. Revival meetings and tent meetings and radio broadcasts — many folks have gotten saved listening to the radio. Charles E. Fuller, Old Fashioned Revival Hour — how many thousands and probably hundreds of thousands got saved as Charles E. Fuller poured his heart out and souls got converted. We have a radio ministry and television and tracts and newspapers and booklets and bumper stickers. I see a man down on Memorial Blvd. and Florida Avenue — I saw him there the other day — standing out there, going toward the shopping center with a sign saying, "You must be born again." He stands there, that one verse of Scripture, and he stands there, and he stands there, and he stands there. Well, I'm not going to say you ought not to do that. He stands there, and everybody who comes by sees that one verse of Scripture — I'm sure of that. All right, so I'll not criticize. "Hey, you ought to do something else." No, there he is. Visitation, and we go knocking on doors. We go visiting the highways and the hedges. You go out and compel them to come in. And they went out — where? In the highways and the hedges. Brother, that door to door, Acts 5:42 *And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.* As house to house, that's daily, the highways and the hedges, the bus visitation, and all of that. Yes sir, do all that. Banquets -- We had Stanley Town who wrote the book God Owns My Business, a film by that and a second film by him. He came here; he's been here twice; we had an evangelistic banquet inviting lost people. And Stanley Town spoke and gave the Gospel and folks got saved. Now, is there anything wrong with that? No, sir, that's a matter of banquets trying to reach people for Christ. In Australia, they have morning breakfast and invite their unsaved folks to come, and folks hear the gospel and get saved. There's tele-evangelism. We used to have a telephone, and our number was in the newspaper. Folks would dial it. They would call in, and they would get a gospel message. And there's cassettes, and the cassettes have gone around the world, and preaching, and all of this is multiplying efforts to reach people with the Gospel. Now, don't stop that. Don't stop that. Are you going to get with me tonight? Don't stop that.

All right, now, but there's a two-fold failure, and these overlap. In Acts 1:8, it says: *Ye shall be witnesses unto me.* Use the word witness and use the word witnessing. One is a person; one is what he is doing. We are full-time witnesses. And the sad thing, we are part-time witnessing. Well, we say, "All right, we're going to go witnessing." And we regulate the visitation program, and we ought to do that. And we go out two hours a week. "Now, this is going to be my witnessing time." Well, that's good, but the Lord didn't say, "Now, 2 hours a week." We're full-time witnesses. Until we get a hold of that — that's twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week — we are full-time witnesses. And every time somebody sees us, whether we know it or not, we are witnessing. Give me your mind tonight; now, don't go fishing. Don't doze on me. This is a message we need to hear. Now, we witness. We witness when we're talking. Paul said, "I'm witnessing both to the small and the great and so forth." But we witness, and this is not the end of it. We witness by the fact of our life. Matthew 5:14: *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.* This is a darkened world. You are to: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* Don't turn the light out. You may be the only person in your place where you live or work that is saved, and you have the light. Now, what? You are to shine there.

We are the salt of the earth. Salt makes people thirsty. Jesus is the Water of Life, and we are to make people thirsty for the Water of Life. They want something that we have, and what happens? That makes them want to know the Lord. But what do we do? We regulate our visitation. We regulate ourselves as part-time witnesses when we are full-time witnesses. When we're on vacation, we're witnesses. Wherever we go, we

are witnesses. Get a hold of that now. Now, I'm not talking about talking right now. We're witnesses. We're witnesses. And we witness everywhere we go, good or bad, everywhere we go.

Now, secondly, not only the failure of part-time witnessing, but secondly, a neglect of daily opportunities and relationships. Most of our life is filled with people. Is that accidental? We say, "I'm going to regulate, and I'm going to go visiting." And we must do that. I'm talking about an area I'm afraid we haven't gotten a hold of. *He that goeth forth . . .* And tomorrow, Christians will go forth. Most of the people are going to go forth tomorrow. You're going to go forth to work, going to go to school, going to go here and there. And where you go are people, and they are people that you know. They are people you rub shoulders with, people that you see every day, five days a week probably. And you see them. You could call them by name. You know who they are. They're friends of yours. They're associates of yours in some area. And hey, *He that goeth forth . . .* And tomorrow morning, when you get up, you're going somewhere and you're going forth into the harvest field; the harvest field is the world.

Now, let's look at some New Testament examples. When I open the Scriptures in the New Testament, I find a great bulk of folks getting saved. They get saved because of friends or relatives, friends or relatives. Let me give you some verses. In Luke 8:39, the Scripture talks about a man that got saved, and Jesus said to him: *Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done for thee.* In Luke 19:9 when Zaccheus got converted, the Scripture said: *This day is salvation come to this house.* Jesus went home to dine with him. In John 4, when the fallen woman got converted, she left her water pot. She went into the city and told the men. She was a fallen woman. She went into the city, the Scripture says, and she told the men: *Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did.* And the Scripture says: *And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word;* Now, here was a prostitute. Here was a fallen woman. By the way, she was living with somebody, unmarried. She got saved. She went back to the men. It didn't say she went back to the people. It said she went back to the men and said, "Come, see a man." What was it? She knew them. Isn't that right? She knew them. Many got converted.

In Acts 10, Cornelius feared God with all of his house, and he wanted to get saved. In Acts 10, when Simon Peter got there, the Scripture says, *And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.* Here's a house full of relatives, a house full of friends. He knew them. He wanted to touch their lives also.

In the book of Acts 18:8, here's a man that was converted. And the Scripture says: *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house;* In the book of Acts, the sixteenth chapter, Lydia got saved. And then she was baptized, and her household. In Acts 16:32, the Philippian jailer, the Scripture says: *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.* It's talking about relatives, talking about friends that you know.

In the first book of Corinthians, chapter one, verse sixteen, Paul said that he baptized the household of Stephen. What? He baptized the whole house. In Mark 2:14-15, Levi the publican got converted. Matthew tells about having a feast in his house; many publicans and sinners came to that feast, and many of them got converted. Here are friends; here are associates; here are business associates.

In John 1, Andrew found his own brother, Simon Peter, and brought him to the Lord Jesus. Philip finds a friend named Nathaniel and brings him to Jesus Christ. Turn to Romans 16. Here's an interesting chapter. In this chapter, you have relationships. And life is made up of relationships. You touch people. And in this chapter, Paul writes and greets people at Rome, but I just pulled out a few, and I want you to see the relationship, verse three. *Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus --* they were husband and wife -- eighteenth chapter of Acts. They were tentmakers; he abode with them. Possibly, he could have led them to Christ. Why? He worked with them; he abode with them; he lived with them. I mean, people of the same occupation. You talk about it. It's a touchstone. It's an open door. It's a line of communication. In the sixteenth chapter, look at verse seven, *Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen,* That's relatives. Not only that, but verse eleven, the latter part, *Salute Herodian my kinsman.* That's another relative. Romans 16:11: *Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.* Here,

tell everybody there, the household. Why? He's been to that house. He knows those people. They're evidently friends of his. They are friends of his, or he wouldn't say greet them. Verse thirteen: *Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord and his mother and mine*. Now, that speaks to me that his mother was a mother to him, and he often possibly ate at the house. *Salute his mother and mine*. Verse fifteen, here the Scripture says in verse fifteen: *Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them*. Now here's a man and his sister. What's that? Friends. And when you begin to go through the New Testament, what happens? My, here are folks, you do have the Philippian jailer and Lydia, those are folks that they knew at sometime or another. Philip went down to the desert and preached to the Ethiopian eunuch. You have those, but a whole bulk of salvation is touching people with whom we are associated. Is that right? All right.

Let's go now and look at the relationships. Here's a natural going forth, and you do that. There are four or five areas where most of us would have picked the category from two, three or maybe more. There is with whom we live, your relations. I'll deal with that separately. I'll just name them to start with. Where we live, that's our location; or where we work, that's our vocation; where we go to school, that's our education; and where we play, that's our recreation. Now, when we think about that, all of us have two or three of these. A man by the name of Bruce W. MacDonald that I got those five points from, listen to what he said, "Not long ago, I asked a group of about fifty Christians to think through these five factors in their lives. I then asked them to tell me how many unsaved friends and acquaintances they had in their relation, their location, their vocation, their education, and their recreation. The stipulation was given that these had to be regular contacts, ones they knew personally, not a student at a university and say hundreds. No, but personally know them. In that group of fifty, there were 787 people that immediately came to their mind." Now, if I asked you how many people you know that are unsaved that are your relatives, how many people that you know that live in your community, you know them; how many people that you work with that you know; how many people where you go to school that you know; how many people in recreation, wherever you go for recreation, whatever it is. If you begin to think about this, I wonder how many lost contacts that we'd have immediately. A church must have contacts. If you go soul winning and you don't have contacts, you go door to door, you go witnessing. I'm simply saying that there is a vast field of contacts that I'm afraid that we're no longer working the field in these areas that we go forth five days a week, six days a week, and in some of these areas, seven days a week. We rub shoulders with them. And they are New Testament examples of reaching people for the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, *he that goeth*, that's initiative.

Number two, a sincere concern. The lady sang awhile ago, "Give me a burden for souls." *He that goeth forth and weepeth* . . . Okay, I'll just stay here until I start to reap. No, you're badly mistaken. You go, and going will make you reap. You don't get a burden in your house. You don't get a burden for soul winning and prayer meeting and praying and praying and praying. You don't get a burden. You get a burden for souls by going and seeing people where they are. And when you see where they are, then what happens? You get a concern to do something about it. And we've prayed, and we've mistaken this, "Oh, God, give me a burden for souls." Get out into the harvest field. This is why I require deacons and teachers and so forth to visit. Why? If you don't visit, you will not know the needs of the people. You will not know the heart. You will not feel their pulse. And hey, we minister as professionals. You can teach an excellent Sunday school lesson. You can have it, but God does not bless the teacher that does not get out among the people that they teach. Why? That teacher does not know the heartaches and the problems of the class and has to teach academically and does not know personally the needs. And brother, when you stand in the pulpit or the classroom and you've been in the homes, you know the needs, and you pour your heart out and you're burdened to help that person with their needs. Mike and I were out the other night. We went to a home to make a visit. Visitation met at 7:00 Thursday night. We probably got away from here 7:15 or 7:20, got in the house probably 7:45. We got home; we drove up here to the church; it was after 11:00, about 11:15. What was it? We couldn't leave the house. Here were people with problems, and man, I never know the problems. And when I preach, brother, message comes out of the needs of people. And to preach with no consciousness of anybody out there with needs, and you know those needs. It's like fishing in a pond, and you don't know whether there are any fish in there or not. Brother, listen, that's the reason. We don't visit because of the fact that it's church standards. We

visit because it's New Testament command and New Testament compassion. *He that goeth forth and weepeth* . . . And a lot of folks are praying, "Give me a burden; give me a burden." Get up off your knees and get out in the highways and hedges, and you'll get a burden. Turn to Matthew 9, and let's see if it works that way.

Ellis Jenkins got saved and didn't do anything for two years. Then one day, Tommy Douglas took him on his bus route, and it ruined him. It ruined him. Why? He went on a bus route one day, and he saw little boys and girls in that type of home environment. What happened? Man, God got a hold of his heart. And what happened? He got into the bus ministry, worked, went off to school, and then came back to work in the bus ministry. And hey, a bus worker who doesn't visit the route loses a concern for the people also. A teacher that doesn't visit loses a concern, loses the ability. A deacon that does not visit, hey what happens? We lose touch with the people. My, I'll tell you. I know what I'm talking about. I get tied up counseling with people; and a lot of it, I believe, is of the Devil. I believe that the Devil creates so many problems among the saints of God to keep the man of God. Listen, he must study; he must study; he must study; he must study. He must counsel. The Devil knows how to get people messed up. They don't listen to preaching. You try to help them, and you try to help them. And then you don't have any time to go out soul winning, and then when you haven't been out, I'll guarantee you when you stand behind the pulpit here and you haven't been out, it feels different. And if you're a teacher and an officer like that, and you don't get out, well, I'll guarantee you, it's different when you go, and it's different when you don't go. If you don't know that, there's something wrong. It's different. Now look in Matthew 9:36. Jesus came to the world because He had a burden, a concern. But watch, *When he saw the multitudes*, — *when he saw the multitudes*, What happened? It didn't say He had compassion and He went out and looked. No, it says: *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.* Here's the Son of God. He has infinite compassion. He's full of compassion, but the Scripture says it in that order. *He that goeth forth and weepeth*. — *But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion* . . . Why? He saw them as sheep that were fainted and scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. He saw men and women with a desperate need, and how did He get it? He got it by looking. A burden for souls comes through the eye gate. It comes through the eye gate.

Turn to another passage. Turn to the book of Acts 17. Paul was a missionary. He comes to Athens, and he is waiting on Timothy, verse sixteen. *Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.* When was he stirred? When he saw. You get out into the homes, and you see the plight of the home and the wreckage of a home. And you see all of this, man alive, if you're human being, there's something inside you that wants to rise up and meet the need. The old family doctor was on call twenty-four hours a day. And he'd get in a horse and buggy, and he'd come to you at any hour of the night. Do you know what drove him out in the hours of night and everything? That man was committed to the matter of meeting people's needs. And he had compassion, and he went out in the middle of the night, and he saw their needs. And he stuck by them, and he would sit by them during the night. He saw a need. You get a sincere concern by looking outward. Jesus said, *Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.* Proverbs 29:18: *Where there is no vision the people perish.* Why do people perish? There is no vision. Now, turn to Revelation 3. Our eyes are turned inward. Revelation 3 — this is a picture of Christianity today — materialism, concern for myself. I read in Revelation 3:17: *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;* Oh my, I suppose the most dangerous place to be is to have no sense of need. If you come to church with no sense of need, you won't get anything. *...have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:* And what was it? Their eyes were turned inward to all of the possessions and *me* and *my* and *I*. Turn the eyes outward, and it brings a vision of a world. And in bringing a vision of the world, what does it do? It brings a desire to do something about it. That is compassion.

Now, a sincere concern— *He that goeth forth and weepeth*. Department Superintendent, I guarantee you God won't bless if you don't get out of the department and you don't get out into the homes and get face to face with people. God will not bless. Now, I mean, neighbor, that's deacons and musicians. Hey, did you know singers that don't get in touch with the people, my, when you sing, you have a song; you have a message; you want to sing to meet people's needs. You don't sing for show. You don't play the organ or

piano for show; you play to give a message. Our whole ministry is meeting the needs of others. Whether it is the pastor, associates, deacons, or musicians, you are to give a message. And, oh my, it is different when you know somebody and their needs and they are sitting out there. And you say, "Oh God, give me something to give to them." And I know personally — oh, I know every time I stand there are needs. But messages, I prepare messages for people's needs, not crowd needs, but people's needs. And where I preach a message and I may have one individual in my heart, is the service worth just getting one person right with God? You had better believe it is worth it. If it is your son or your daughter or your husband or your wife, you would say, "Yes sir, it is worth it." And when you touch one, you never preach a message that is just for one person. Man, it burdens your heart and you try to reach that one person; but while you are ringing the bell trying to reach that one person, God is dealing with other hearts and lives. Now, *He that goeth forth and weepeth* — that is concern. And we want to cry; yes sir, I would like to cry. I had cried more in private than I had in public. I read a book by Dr. Hyles. There was something I couldn't quite understand. I said, "Why in the world?" I could cry in the preparation, and then when I got in the pulpit, I couldn't cry. Listen, we won't always have tears — no, no, no. Brother, if you have a concern, you may not be a person that cries; but a concern is meeting the needs; that is tears.

He that goeth forth and weepeth is a human initiative, a sincere command. Now, look at a sincere concern. Here are these five areas I mentioned. Let's just taxi around a little bit on those.

First of all, among relatives. I read a few weeks ago in a work of Charles Hadyon Spurgeon; it said, "When God starts a work in a family and saves an individual, then God is interested in that whole family." And sometimes the Christian, if he is the only Christian in the family, will get a persecution complex. Wait a minute; wait a minute. Get off your pity party! God put you in that family; the whole family is lost; you have a mission field; go after them. We take that verse, *A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.* (Matthew 13:57) You are no prophet. You say, "They're harder to win." I don't believe that. Jesus sent them back to the household. *Go home. Go home. Go home.* Our Christianity begins at home. If it doesn't work at home, he that careth not for his own *is worse than an infidel.* (1 Timothy 5:8) *Go home.* If your Christianity doesn't work at home, it is a phoney. *Go home.* Now, let's talk about the place to shine — brothers and sisters; place to shine — dad and mom; place to shine — your brother-in-law, your sister-in-law, your son-in-law, your daughter-in-law, your nieces, your nephews, your cousins, your grandchildren... When you begin then and add that up, I guarantee you, you have a long, long, long list of folks that you are related to. And hey, listen, I am afraid that people don't try to win their loved ones — I am not saying everybody — but, they don't try to win their loved ones because they're not reflecting Christ at home. And, if you are not living for God at home, brother, your mouth is shut. Your mouth is shut. Now, you ought to have a testimony. You ought to have a testimony with your family. You may not win them now, but you ought to have a testimony with your dad and your mom. They may not like it, but you ought to have a testimony. You ought to have a testimony with dad and mom. You ought to have a testimony with brothers and sisters. You ought to have a testimony with your brother-in laws and your sister-in-laws. You ought to have a testimony with your nieces and your nephews. You ought to have a testimony with your aunts and your uncles. You ought to have a testimony like that. Well, why can't you? Is that impossible? No, it's not impossible. And I tell you tonight, among the relatives — have any of your relatives been saved because of you? The Scripture is full of references where you ought to reach your loved ones. Are any of your relatives saved because of you? How many relatives do you have that are lost? How many of you are witnessing? I'm afraid to make statements because you'll think I'm bragging. Brother, nobody can brag about the souls they've won in light of all the people that come across their pathway. Nobody can brag; but listen tonight, how is it?

Let me give you an illustration of somebody else. I led a man to the Lord. He got gloriously converted. He said, "Preacher, when you come to my house, and I have a lot of company, they're my relatives. Please witness to them." I went to his house one Sunday afternoon, I think, and his house was filled with people. He took a lady by the hand, and he said, "Come here, I want you to meet the pastor." And he introduced her to me, and he said, "This is my niece, and she's lost. Preacher, would you talk to her?" Well, I went over to a table, and I pulled out a chair for her to sit down in, and this fellow hit his knees on the floor at the end of the table, and I opened my Bible like that. And this woman started squalling. She didn't squall because of me.

She squalled because this man got converted and was concerned about her and heard his witness in his own household. All I had to do was say, "Would you trust Christ as your personal Savior?" That was about all I had to do. I mean it took just a little bit for her to get converted. Now, what happened? That man got saved, and he had a burden for his relatives and his nephews and aunts and uncles and nieces. You ought to have that. Young people, you get saved, and you think — now your mom and dad are lost — you can go home and sass and talk to your mama. Your mom and dad will die and go to hell, and you think, "Boy, I lived for Christ." No, you didn't. You get saved and you want to reach your mom and dad. You go home and be courteous to them. You go home and obey them. You go out of your way to be an obedient child, or you will never reach your loved ones. A man that gets saved and abuses his wife will never reach his wife. Or wives that get saved and rebel against their husbands will never reach their husbands. And if a brother or sister gets saved and stalks around the household, self-righteous — "I'm converted, and you're a bunch of heathen" and preaches to them all of the time — you'll never reach your brothers and sisters. You never will. Now, in the morning, you're going to get up, and what are you going to do? Relatives and kinfolks are going to come across your pathway. They know you. An opportunity to witness by your life is yours day after day after day after day after day, and God placed you in that home. Listen, God let you be born in that home. God chose your parents. You say, "How in the world did He do that?" You couldn't have been who you are today if it weren't for your genealogy. If you would've had any other mom or dad, it wouldn't have been you, and there wouldn't be anybody called you. And your genealogy, where you were born, and how your parents are, listen, brother, God made Adam and Eve, and God is a sovereign God, and He put you there. And you would never exist if it weren't for the parents that you had and their genealogy.

I buried a man one time; the man had a heart attack and died. And his son was named Neil. Neil is a deacon of a church that I used to pastor now. He was a teenager then. When his daddy had died of a heart attack, they rushed to the hospital to try to talk to Buddy one more time. It was too late to talk to Buddy. Buddy was dead, and his son said, "Preacher, it's my fault. My daddy has gone to hell, and it's my fault." Let me ask you, how many lost do you have? Wait a minute, you're a missionary in your family. Did you hear me? Did you hear me? Lot didn't have any testimony with his son-in-laws, and they perished. Oh, man, wouldn't it have been something if Lot had a testimony with his son-in-laws? The son-in-laws might not have understood, but hey, they would have took his word for it. They would've said, "Hey, Dad said that the Lord said to get out of here, and we'll get out of here." Why? Because of the fact they had confidence in him. They didn't have any. And so, the first area here — you go forth.

Secondly, among neighbors, where you live. What are your next-door neighbor's names? Did you pray, "Oh God, I want to buy a house; I want to buy a piece of property." God gave you a piece of property. God gave you a place to live in answer to prayer. Do you think He just gave you a place to live because it would be convenient to the shopping center and convenient place, you know, close to the church and all that convenience? No sir, He might have done that to bless you, but hey, there's more than that. He put you in a community, and in a community, what? You're to live for the Lord Jesus Christ in the community in which you live. And hey, there are a lot of folks that say, "I want to live in a Christian community, where everyone around me is saved." That would be wonderful if they were lost and you got them saved, but that's not God's will for you to live in a Christian community with everyone around you converted. That would be wonderful, but He didn't do it that way. In the community where you live, do you know you can try reaching your next door neighbors? Do you try to touch them? Do you try to help them? Do you look for opportunities to minister to them? Do you witness to them? You just don't do it by life; it is life and lip. That's witnessing and being a witness. Do you watch them when they're sick and in the hospital? Do you befriend them? Do you try to say, "Welcome to the community?" Do you walk over next door when somebody new moves into the community and say, "Welcome to the community. Hey, my name is So and So. I'm your neighbor down the street." Welcome to the community. And what happens? You're establishing a relationship and a relationship to minister. And you go in and out of that community, in and out of that community, in and out of that community. It's easier to go across town, you know, and talk to somebody way on the other side of town than it is to talk to someone in that community. Because in that community, they watch you, and your life must be above reproach. And your life must be right. And it's easier to witness to a stranger than to somebody who

knows us unless their lives are consistent. We can tell a stranger what wonderful things the Lord has done for us, but hey, man, our family knows if the Lord has done wonderful things for us. The neighbors know whether the Lord has done wonderful things for us as they watch us. What are we doing? We're reaching people. Amen. We must keep doing that. But where? In avenues and relationships that we go forth, go forth daily, or several days a week. We go forth. And there's a place to show concern.

Thirdly, we go forth among our work associates. That's at your job. Sinners are sinners. You start expecting a whole lot out of sinners, and you're going to be disappointed. Sinners are capable of doing anything. Right? They're sinners. They're sinners by birth and sinners by choice, and sinners sin. And sinners ought to respect you where you work. Witness by your life to your work associates. Many times Christians give a testimony that they're saved, and you don't witness to them. Don't forget though, when you witness and you try to get them saved, they start watching you and watching you and watching you. The moment you witness with your lips and tell them about Christ, immediately their eyes are focused on you, and they'll watch you. And they'll watch me. And they'll watch and they'll watch and watch. But our lip and life better agree at work. This is the day of shabbiness. Good enough will do. You are a Christian, and you won't work. You talk about the Lord, and a man that works will despise you. Years ago, we were building a church in north Chattanooga Valley. I borrowed a caterpillar. I operated a pan for a few months years ago in airports, and I borrowed a caterpillar from a lady's husband, who she was a member of the church, and he was a lost man. Their whole family, their name was Black and Rass and Booger and Red, I mean all these names. And Booger was a booger too, I'm telling you. And I borrowed the bulldozer, on a cold day, I borrowed the bulldozer from Red. Red said to his wife, I found out later, he said, "I'm going down to the church and find out if the preacher is lazy." I'm glad he didn't find me lazy. When you don't work, and you turn out shabby jobs, and you hop here and there, you have no testimony for Jesus Christ at all. And hey, man alive, at work, if you're a mechanic, you ought to work on that automobile like you were fixing it for the Lord Jesus Christ. It ought to be first class. It ought to be a number one job. If you're a salesman, you remember you represent the Lord Jesus Christ. If you're a carpenter, you ought to build like you're building it for the Lord. And there's so much sappiness, and a man wants to hire somebody. And he'll say this, "You can't find anybody who has got their heart in the work. They're looking for a paycheck." And if you're looking for a paycheck, listen, you don't have a testimony for God. Oh, you mean that's a testimony? Yes, sir. How you do your work and if you're a quitter and you can't be depended upon, you don't have any testimony. You mean that's witnessing? You had just better believe it is. I've been in the business world. Where you work, your relationships better be right. You're going forth tomorrow among associates. How do you work? Do you work when the boss is there, and when he's not there, do you quit working? The piece of work you do is shabbily done. You reluctantly do it. You are not a witness. That's a place that God placed you, and God put you in a job, and at that job, you stay put in what you work with there. And oh, you work there, and you give a testimony, "Hey, I'm dependable. You can count on me." That's good preaching, isn't it? Well, some of you think so. Some of you are guilty. One man who travels all over the nation said, "I think of two churches, yours and a church way out yonder; the grounds are immaculate. The buildings," he said, "I didn't see bubble gum. I picked up two pieces of paper in the time that I was here." Hey, that's a testimony. People talk about that church, "The yard is so beautiful out there." That's a testimony. Jerry keeps my yard. Folks go down Robson Street, and I tell them my name. And they say, "Oh, you live on Robson Street, that place, that beautiful yard." Oh, is that a testimony? Yes, it's a testimony. And we think a testimony is talking to somebody about the Lord. Yes sir, but hey, if your life shuts their ears, and you never talk to them about the Lord, they despise you and do not respect you. Now, work associates, let me read this please. Here's an article, an interview conducted by Michael Cramarty of C.S. Lewis Institute. He's interviewing an Englishman by the name of Dr. Hoss Guinness. Dr. Guinness wrote two books, The Dust of Death, The Grave Digger Files, and he wrote a book on the manner of the expertise in secularization. Now, would you listen carefully to this? "Secularization means technically the way the central sectors of society in the modern world technology, science, much of politics, most of business, and so on have been neutralized as regards religious influence." So, you may have millions of Christians then, but their faith is a private thing. When they go to the central sectors of society, it's a different world with different ways. Their faith is not what influences their

thinking and action. When the President of McDonalds fast food service restaurant chain was interviewed by the New York Times and asked what he believed in, he said, 'I believe in God, the family, and McDonald's hamburgers. And when I get to the office, I reverse the order.' I believe in what then? I believe in McDonald hamburgers, the family, and God last. Now, he says, presumably he was being facetious; but without realizing it, he described brilliantly what millions of American Christians do daily. And so the damning comment has been made of Christianity that it is 'privately engaging but socially irrelevant.' The theological significance is obvious that in one stroke, the Lordship of Christ has been cut out of essential areas of life, and our Christianity is not a private thing." Now, working, working. Quickly, I'm trying to be quick; and I don't have that gift.

Fourthly, education among your classmates. Some adults may be going to college. Some of our young people are in school. And our children are to be witnesses at school and college. Our Christian school, this is not time to be bitter; but our Christian school movement by in large has not produced effective witnesses. A great percentage has produced hardened folks who burn out, and they've heard it all and they know it all. But their lives do not back it up. Now, I'm telling you what preachers are talking about across the country. Christian school, it doesn't change the character. Wait a minute, wait a minute, young people, you are to be a witness in a Christian school. There are some lost people there. And in the Christian school if you cannot live for the Lord, you cannot live for the Lord out there in the world. Why? If the Christian school peer pressure gets you there, then hey, peer pressure will get you in the world. And if you cannot live for the Lord in school among folks that know you and you go to church and you go to school with, you will never open your mouth for God when you get outside of that classroom. You won't stand up and give a testimony before your classmates because classmates know you. Education, you go five days a week, young people. Some of you go to night school, adults, and so forth. That's the school you deal with. Yes, sir. You can be a witness by giving the Gospel out, but you are to be a witness with your life and with your lip, a testimony. Do you know how you can be a good witness at school? Study. Do you know how you can be a good witness at school? Pay attention — that's not hard. Do your homework. Do you know how you can be a good witness at school? Be respectful to the teacher. Do you know how you can be a good witness at school? Make good grades, if that is possible for you. Everybody can't make the same grades. All don't have the same IQ. I'm not talking about that, but make the best grades that are possible for you. Is that a testimony? Yes, sir.

Lastly, *He that goeth forth and weepeth . . .* He goes forth among playmates or recreation. You be a witness where you have recreation, the bowling alley. I told you about the eighty-six year old woman that I played golf with. Oh, I hope the Lord sees fit that I don't do that again; but you know, I witnessed to her. She told the starter, "I got matched up with the wrong person. He preached to me the whole way." I preached to her the whole way. I wouldn't have preached to her the whole way, but I preached to her because she was witnessing to me the whole way, and I was witnessing back. I mean everything in the world, she knew all of the answers. Everybody was bad, and all of the doctors were wicked and everyone else in the world and so forth. I would witness to her and went on playing golf with her, but I mean she kept on witnessing, and so I said, "When she's going to witness the whole way, I'm going to witness back to her the Word." And so, she heard it all the way along. I witnessed to a fellow on the third whole one day, and he said, "I came out here to play golf." And I mean, he didn't play too well the rest of the time. But I mean it, that's all I said. I didn't the rest of the way, but it shocked the daylights out of him. He wasn't expecting it. Then, I played golf. My game didn't give a good witness, now. I'm not talking about how I played it, but I'm talking about the score. Playmates, recreation. I'll just quit on this. I'll read an illustration about a group of young people, could be adults, could be ladies, could be men; but it just happened to be a high school meeting, something like you all had yesterday in this high school. A teenager was giving a Bible study, and there were lost people there. And he was giving his testimony in the Bible study, and he gave a good Bible study. And then they played basketball. And in the basketball game, all of the sudden, he lost his temper, he stormed off of the court, picked up his Bible, and went outside, and threw his Bible at the car. Boy, you get so involved in a basketball or football game and all of that! Hey, do you have a witness? You better have a witness there also. Is that right? You better have a witness. Let me read the text. *He that goeth forth . . .* that's a human initiative. All the other things I mentioned at the first, yes sir, keep on. But wait a minute, go forth daily, five days a week.

You go forth with your relatives. You go forth in your community. You go forth in your education. You go forth in the matter of your recreation. You go forth at work. But hey, you go forth. *He that goeth forth . . .*, and you do it every day, five days, seven days. Is that supposed to be an effective place for evangelism? Yes sir, it sure is. It's not where you stop, but it's something that you spend more hours in that field than in any other field that you ever will be in in all of your life, hours and hours and hours and hours and hours and hours, weekly. Are you to get out of that field? Yes sir, yes sir. I'm not saying, "Forget the rest." No, I'm saying, "Hey, this is an area I think we've failed to cultivate and realize the daily places that the Lord has put us in that we go forth." *He that goeth forth . . .* — the human initiative — *and weepeth . . .* — that's genuine concern!