

# THE MAKING OF A SOUL WINNER

BY JOHN R. HIMES

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

This was written and published many years ago. Please note that I do not necessarily endorse all individuals, institutions, books or positions that I did when I originally wrote the book.

## Dedication

Thanks for help, advice, and encouragement to my mother, to Mrs. Libby Handford, and to Paul Hooper. Thanks to the Sword of the Lord Foundation for seeing fit to publish this, my first book. All poems in Chapter IV are my own.

## Introduction

The purpose of this book is twofold: (1) To honor a great man of God, Dr. John R. Rice. (2) To stimulate others to follow his example—to be soul winners. Dr. Rice could easily say what Paul did, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (I Cor. 11:1). He was given the distinctive description of “an authority on soul winning” by church historian George W. Dollar (*A History of Fundamentalism in America*, Bob Jones University Press, 1973; p. 355).

I owe much to Dr. Rice, the first thing being my mother, his second daughter! (That is probably his greatest contribution to my life!) I also owe two thirds of my name to him—John Rice Himes. I owe him much of what I know about the Christian life and winning souls; I owe the challenge received from many sermons; I owe the inspiration received from his life (Dr. Jack Hyles calls him “the best Christian I know”); I owe many hours of pleasure and exhortation received from his books.

It is an unearned honor for me to know Dr. Rice as I do. I would like to share some of my joy with you as you read about—*The Making of a Soul Winner*.

## I

### Memories of a Great Soul Winner

My earliest memory of Dr. John R. Rice is from my childhood in Wheaton, Illinois. I remember sitting on his lap as a boy of three or four. “Grandpa” is what I have always called him, and it was a great privilege to be sitting on Grandpa’s lap.

Grandpa asked, “Johnny, what do you want to be when you grow up?”

I had not yet decided my life’s work, but was wavering between being a cowboy (a profession with obvious advantages for a little boy) and a preacher. Since Dr. Bill Rice, Dr. John Rice’s brother, had already set the precedent, I knew I was safe in saying, “I want to be a cowboy preacher!”

At that age, I had no idea that Grandpa was famous. To me, he was the stern pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Wheaton, and the proprietor of that marvelous and mysterious place called “The Sword of the Lord.” Just what was done there, I was not old enough to be concerned with, but it was tremendously exciting to visit. There were strange machines, a freight elevator which was a great adventure to ride on, and thousands of discarded plates which had names and addresses on them.

On Sundays and Wednesdays, Dr. Rice would stand in the pulpit of Calvary Baptist Church and preach from the Bible. I found out early that church was no place to play—the idea was to sit up straight and act like you were listening. One day as I was folding paper, watching bugs and otherwise doing what boys have done since the Temple at Jerusalem, I heard a familiar voice boom out: “Johnny!” My gaze was arrested by

Grandpa in the pulpit and the order rang out in that great voice, "Sit up and listen!" Needless to say, I did so. Dr. Rice's commands are meant to be obeyed!

Only one other time can I remember when Dr. Rice corrected me. Our family, along with the other Rice sons-in-law and daughters, usually went over to Dr. and Mrs. Rice's house for Sunday dinner. One day, after dinner was over and the adults were talking around the table, I wandered into the living room and began playing-with the wrong things.

The powers-that-be warned me to stop, but I did not listen, knowing my desires to be more important to me than theirs. Suddenly that voice of command rang out: "Johnny, come here!" And the voice was followed by a very effective spanking. I was learning: Grandpa meant business, and he meant to be obeyed!

## BAPTISM

Being in a preacher's family, and being taught early the Scriptures that can make one wise unto salvation, it came as no surprise that I was saved at the tender age of four. Of course, in a Baptist church, baptism is the next step after salvation, the step that proves that you are willing to obey God. So after a year or two, I began to struggle with that great problem: to be baptized or not to be.

After the struggle to understand baptism, and the struggle to conquer my fear of it, the next step was made. My father went with me to the front of the church, and we announced to the people that I was ready for that step of obedience. Grandpa gravely heard my testimony, the church approved, and the time was set for my baptism.

The night came, the service wore on, and finally a nervous little boy went to be baptized. Grandpa's arms were strong, his words were a comfort to that little boy. Years later, I learned to be proud of who had baptized me.

## THE SWORD OF THE LORD

Dr. John R. Rice has been linked from my earliest memories to the Sword of the Lord Foundation. In my boyhood, the Sword was located in a building in downtown Wheaton, an exciting place which I got to visit occasionally.

Gradually, I became more aware of the nature of "the Sword"-a Christian newspaper and publishing house, "Standing for the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible, the Deity of Christ, His Blood Atonement, Salvation by Faith, New Testament Soul Winning and the Premillennial Return of Christ. Opposes Modernism, Worldliness and Formalism." (From the masthead of THE SWORD OF THE LORD.)

My father became the manager of the Sword of the Lord bookroom in Wheaton, and I spent many hours there browsing, learning to love books. My mother was "Aunt Mary" to the readers of "Kid's Korner" in THE SWORD, and I took delight in the fact that other kids had to call her "Aunt Mary" while she was Mother to me (I had an inside track to important people!).

As I grew older, I began to learn of the tremendous influence of THE SWORD OF THE LORD. I learned that the University of Chicago obtained a complete set of THE SWORD on microfilm, since it is the leading Fundamentalist publication in the world; since that time other institutions have done the same. I learned of many who have been saved reading its pages, of preachers all across America who have been inspired and changed by the truths taught in it. I learned of battles fought in its pages for the truths of

God's Word, of unpopular stands for the right that have been taken by its editor. And I learned more about Dr. John R. Rice—"Grandpa" to me and greatness to many others.

## SOUL WINNING

All who speak of John R. Rice, admirers and detractors, must speak of him as one who loves to see sinners come to Christ for salvation. Dr. George Dollar points out his leadership in this area in *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (pp.253, 355). I knew that Grandpa was a soul winner before I knew what a soul winner was!

My father preached on soul winning, my family practiced it, I was often reminded of it, but my first comprehension of what a soul winner really did may have come from my grandfather.

I remember when Dr. Rice was preaching at a church in a nearby town one evening, and as usual, had a table of his books for sale in the lobby. Trying to look important, I 'helped' Grandpa in the sale of his books, and he kindly let me think I really was helping.

One book in particular caught my eye: *The Soul Winner's Fire*, by Dr. John R. Rice, published by Moody Press. That pocket edition had a bright red cover with flames bursting out from it, and was greatly drawn to it. After the service was over, the people left for home, and it was time to put away the books. Dr. Rice graciously offered me choice of all the books on the table. My gaze traveled between *The Soul Winner's Fire* and another attractive book, but I finally chose the first one, which has inspired so many to have the same burden for lost souls as Dr. Rice. I have never forgotten that incident, nor have I regretted my choice. How often have I prayed to have Dr. Rice's' burden for the lost!

As the years since then have passed, I have often seen this generosity of Dr. Rice. He has never taken royalties from his many books, though he would be a rich man if he did. I have heard him say, half jokingly, "Millions of dollars have passed through my fingers, but none of it has stuck, praise the Lord!" Often he has gone to a Christian college to speak, and has given a sixty per cent discount on books to the students, taking any losses on the deal himself.

Even though he is now an older man, Dr. Rice still wins soul to Christ. After graduating from Tennessee Temple College in 1976, I went to work at the Sword of the Lord Foundation while I waited to be accepted as a missionary to Japan under the Baptist World Mission. At the age of 82, Dr. Rice still told of souls that he had personally led to Christ in recent days. Once it was a colored maid in the motel in which he stayed; another time it was a little girl he talked to after the service, but so often he has led people to the Savior he has served for so many years.

After a church service it has always been Dr. Rice's custom to mingle with the people. Often I have seen him ask people if they were saved as he shook hands with them. Only eternity will show how many people will be in Heaven because of the faithful personal witness of this great man of God.

## A SENSE OF HUMOR

Dr. Rice had a serious look on his face as he baited the trap. "I read a word recently that you young people may be able to help me with. Have any of you ever taken a foreign language?"

My two older sisters, my brother and I had gotten to come early to the home of our grandparents in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. It was a joy to us to be able to spend a day or two with them before the rest of the 'Rice Clan' arrived. We were sitting around the table eating Mrs. Rice's delicious breakfast of ham and eggs when Grandpa baited the trap.

All four of us had some study of foreign languages behind us—Latin, French, Spanish, etc.—so we felt qualified to help out our grandfather. At that time, we had all either graduated from college or were currently attending, and so we took ourselves quite seriously at times. None of us noticed the twinkle in Dr. Rice's eye.

"The word is spelled like this: B-A-C- (pause for effect), K-A- (another pause), C-H-E. How would you pronounce it?" Dr. Rice asked as he waited for us to swallow the bait.

We all struggled with the word, and gave some educated guesses: "Well, in Latin . . ." "I think there is a French word . . ." "A Spanish pronunciation might be . . ." But we had to admit that we were stumped.

Then Grandpa sprung the trap with a grin: "Some people pronounce it like this: 'backache'!" The room rang with the laughter of young and old alike.

Dr. Rice has never been above teasing and joking within the proper limits. He believes Christians ought to be the happiest of any people in the world. It goes without saying, though, that his fun is always clean and honest. I have never heard him joke or have fun in a way that would dishonor the name of the Savior whom he serves. His first desire in life is to please Jesus Christ his Lord, and he never forgets that.

## COLLEGE DAYS

It was when I first went to a Christian college that I became more aware of what the Fundamentalist world thinks of Dr. John R. Rice. Indeed, just before my first year at Bob Jones University, that school gave the first "Bob Jones Memorial Award for the Defense of the Scriptures" to Dr. Rice (commencement exercises, 1970).

In that first year of college, I learned about that breed of upperclassmen known as 'hall monitors,' whose job it was to keep the young men in the dormitory hall in line. Mine was a fellow named Wally.

Wally was told that I was "the grandson of Dr. John R. Rice," a phrase which I was to hear countless times before graduation. Wally expressed disbelief. He came to ask me about this vital matter, and for the first time in my life I had to prove what my 'roots' are. Nothing I said could convince Wally of the truth; I was hard pressed to prove my lineage.

In my room was a beautiful pictorial New Testament given me by my grandparents. In the front was written an inscription: "Congratulations on your 14th birthday...from your Grandad and Grandmother Rice." And it was signed by Dr. and Mrs. John R. Rice! Wally admitted the truth with amazement—he really did have on his hall the grandson of Dr. John R. Rice!

Another incident illustrated to me the influence of my grandfather. On my dresser in the dormitory room was a picture of Dr. Rice. along with a picture of my wonderful parents. One day a young man, a stranger to me, walked into the room. Seeing the picture of Dr. Rice he said with deep feeling, "That man is like a grandfather to me!"

One young student could never forget my title: "Dr. John R. Rice's grandson." As I walked across campus one day, my friend saw me at a distance, and pulled his unsuspecting companion over to me to say, "Joe, this is John R. Rice's grandson. Let me introduce you." We shook hands, and the young fellow was obviously impressed. Joe left with my friend, wiser about my family, but still ignorant of my name!

That same friend of mine greatly embarrassed a campus policeman on another occasion. We were eating at the work shift meal across the table from the policeman, and a theological discussion began. The campus policeman disagreed with Dr. Rice about a matter, and I defended Dr. Rice's view, keeping my background hidden for the sake of the argument. My friend, however, could stand the suspense no longer. He burst out with the words, "Do you know who his grandfather is? It's Dr. John R. Rice!" The policeman turned red, and I went for seconds.

After two years at Bob Jones University, I transferred to Tennessee Temple College in Chattanooga to sit under the tremendous ministry of Dr., Lee Roberson. It was not long before my family tree was uncovered at Temple. Dr. Rice came to speak at Temple, and Dr. Roberson invited the members of the 'Rice Clan' who were present to join him on the platform.

Since I worked in a factory forty hours a week to pay my school bills while I was at Temple, much of the fun involved with being the grandson of a well-known personality was missed. However, I do remember being asked such questions as "What do you call him?" The answer to that is, "What do you call *your* grandfather?" I was also asked this question: "Do you actually get to talk with him?" That question needed no answer!

### WISDOM FOR A YOUNG PREACHER

The following conversation took place in an apartment in the Weigle Music Building at Tennessee Temple Schools. Dr. Rice was to speak in chapel at the school the next day, so my sister Faith and I visited him and Mrs. Rice that evening. After he gave this advice on Christian character and work, I hurried home and wrote it down, knowing its value.

Dr. Rice: "Well, how are you coming in school, John?"

John: "Fine, Sir. I've got all of my bills caught up, and my schoolwork is coming along well. I'm learning to budget my time."

Dr. Rice: "That's good. You know, it is important to get some of these things settled now. It is more important to conquer self than to conquer nations. You'll forgive me for talking about myself for a moment. I remember that people used to say to me, 'You have so much talent, Brother Rice. You sing, you write songs, you publish a newspaper, you write books.' I would say to them, 'No, not really. I have just one talent, and that is the talent of hard work.' You can do just about anything if you put your mind to it and are willing to work hard at it.

"Son, now is the time for you to be learning how to work, and to get the right habits, the times to study settled, and the days planned. You remember that dear Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., used to say, 'The greatest ability is dependability.' You need to get that settled now.

"Many preachers say, 'Oh, I couldn't learn to write; I have no talent in that area.' But the truth is, they are lazy. They are not willing to take the time to practice, to work

hard at learning to write, at developing a style. A famous columnist once said, 'Do you want to learn to get things published? Work at it! Every day, for ten years, write down everything you can think of. Everywhere you go, write. At the end of the ten years, burn it all and then start writing to be published.'

"Remember Dr. H. A. Ironside and Dr. W. B. Riley? You could write down their sermons word for word the way they preached them, and you would have well-written messages. They had practiced on their speaking, and paid attention to their words, so that when they preached it came out clearly and plainly.

"You know how you put in 'and' and 'uh' and stumble around when you talk; then the language you use when you write is full of fancy words and stiff language. You need to learn to bring the two together naturally.

"At one time in my life I thought of going into scholastic circles and becoming recognized as a scholar. (Dr. Rice was a championship debater in college, and later taught college English before beginning his life in the ministry. Despite his easily readable style, he is considered to be one of Christianity's greatest scholars by his prejudiced grandson. As one of my own college professors said, "A scholar is not one who so impresses you with his big words that you don't know what he said. A scholar is one who can teach you a great truth in such a way that it becomes easy to understand.") Instead, I chose to appeal to the common people. I believe that I could have gone either way, but by appealing to the common people I have reached thousands more than I could have by going into scholastic circles (Actually, Dr. Rice's ministry has affected people of all classes, though he has aimed at the ordinary Christian-Author's note].

"You can do anything you work at. Some people say, 'I couldn't write poetry.' Well, they could if they were to sit down and go over the lines, count the lines, write the rhyming down, and' work at it.

"You know, you could really learn to be a good musician if you tried, if you worked at it. Everyone has a little bit of musical talent in him. If they would just learn to use it, they could be good musicians. The same goes for anything else: you can do it if you just learn to work at it."

## HEART ATTACK

On March 8, 1978, Dr. Rice went early to his office at the Sword of the Lord Foundation, as is his usual custom. The starting time for the Sword employees is at 7:00, at which time Dr. Rice came down to give a devotional for his staff on I Corinthians 13, the famous love chapter of the Bible.

After the staff devotions, Dr. Rice asked to be taken to the hospital. He had been suffering from shortness of breath and some pain in his chest. It was obvious that there was a serious problem, since Dr. Rice has always had good health and never has more medical attention than is necessary. (In chapel at Tennessee Temple Schools Dr. Rice once preached his famous message on Peter after being awake and sick all night. Dr. Roberson commented, "That is the best message I have ever heard Dr. Rice preach!")

At Rutherford County Hospital, the problem was diagnosed as a heart attack. Dr. Rice was put in the cardiac care unit, where he was kept for two weeks. As soon as we heard about the problem, my mother and I went to the hospital, where Dr. Rice was being examined in the emergency room. At that time, I was home for a few days from my work as a missionary on deputation, and was able to go.

I shall never forget seeing Dr. Rice wheeled from the elevator on the third floor to his room in the cardiac care section. He had an easy smile on his calm face, and cheerily raised his hand to me—"Hello, Johnny." All around was confusion—the phone was constantly busy while relatives and friends were being informed of the situation—yet Grandpa was as calm and unruffled as he always is.

After a day or two, my mother and I went again to visit him in the hospital. We had a good time of fellowship and talk. Dr. Rice mentioned the discomfort of needles in his arm from the heart monitor and one or two other things, then told us about the nurse that had come to take a blood sample.

"I asked her if she wanted to earn a quarter," he said with a smile. "When she asked how, I told her to go stick that needle in the doctor instead of me!" The poor nurse was somewhat taken aback from such joking from such a distinguished patient!

Soon, Dr. Rice asked me to pray, and then we left him in the capable hands of the doctors, who were bossed by the Great Physician.

At this writing, Dr. Rice has largely recovered from the heart attack, and is back in the saddle—preaching, editing *THE SWORD OF THE LORD* and writing books. He is in the process of completing a reference Bible and has three books in some stage of completion. (One little grandson, upon finding out how many books Grandpa had written lately, said, "Only two this year, Grandpa?")

Only God knows how many years His faithful servant has left, so Dr. Rice is leaving that up to the Father and continuing his life of hard work and his fruitful ministry to America and the world, motivated by soul-winning zeal.

## II

### Soul-Winning Memories

Much credit must be given to my father, Rev. Charles A. Himes, as well as my grandfather, for my burden to see lost souls come to Christ. At an early age I realized that the primary objective of my father's ministry is to win people to Christ. I was made aware of the best books on the subject, and by the time I was in high school I had heard Dad preach on soul winning many times, and had heard his tape of the famous lecture on the subject by Dr. Jack Hyles several times.

After I was grown, a college graduate on deputation to be a missionary to Japan, I met a pastor who knew my father when he was an evangelist based in Wheaton, Illinois. At that time, Dad took this pastor, then a teen-ager, out on visitation for the first time, and made an indelible impression on him.

After having a door slammed at them, my father said something to the discouraged teen-ager that he never forgot: "Don't let that bother you. They were not rejecting us; they were rejecting Jesus whom we represent!"

So I write this chapter remembering my father as well as my grandfather, both of whom have represented Jesus all through the years of my memories.



## MY FIRST CONVERT

As a boy of four, I was won to Christ by my mother through the truth of John 3:16. Two years later, I used that same verse to win my first soul to Christ.

It was time for kindergarten to start at Holmes Elementary School in Wheaton, Illinois, but I was not ready to go in. My friend Paul and I had been talking about the way to get to Heaven. When I asked him if he had ever been saved, Paul was not sure what I was talking about. "What does it mean to be saved?" he asked.

There was not much that I knew as a six-year-old boy, but I could quote those precious words, "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." So I quoted John 3:16 to Paul, and told him that he needed to ask Jesus to forgive his sins and save him.

As the other children went into the building for school, Paul and I went down into the bushes by the fence, and he bowed his head and received Christ as his Savior.

After Paul was saved, I was curious about his feelings, and so I asked, "Do you feel good inside now? Do you feel like you just got into a bed with clean sheets?" And Paul agreed that his feelings might be something like that. Now please don't be critical of the theology of two six-year-old boys!

That evening, Paul's mother came to visit my mother, and they talked together in our living room. Being a typical boy, I was quite nervous when I was called into the living room by my mother, and searched my conscience for my latest escapade. What a blessing it was for me to be thanked by Paul's mother for leading her boy to Christ!

Many years later, I went back to Wheaton and visited the Holmes Elementary School, now called the Clifford School. What sweet memories were mine as I looked at the place where I led my first soul to Christ as a boy in kindergarten!

## THE RELUCTANT SOUL WINNER

There were times in my youth that I was backslidden and did not really want to serve God. One time I remember distinctly was when my mother suggested that I go with her to work at the Child Evangelism Fellowship tent which was set up at the county fair. Reluctantly I agreed. Adults must face the fact that those golden days of summer are not when most boys want to do anything constructive. At the fair, I was given the job of personal worker. Some older person would tell a story in the Child Evangelism tent and I would help deal with the children who came forward to be saved.

Fearfully, I dealt with the first child. Then, as the day wore on and children were saved, I gained in boldness. By the end of the day, I was ready to go home with rejoicing: the reluctant soul winner had seen seven come to Christ through a good day's work!

## A FRIEND GAINED

Don was my chess friend. Through our high school days, we played "the game of kings" often, sometimes every day. He didn't become my friend through chess, though, but because I cared for his soul.

There was a revival meeting at our church in Racine, Wisconsin. Dr. Bud Lyles was the evangelist, a strong preacher and a man of God. God burdened my heart for Don, and I invited him to come to the meeting, feeling my own lack of soul-winning knowledge.

Don went forward in the service when I offered to go to the front with him at the invitation time, and he was saved in just a few minutes. How humbled I was later when Don told a Christian friend of ours that he might have ended in Hell, and that friend had not cared enough to witness to him. You see, I had known Don for several months, but it was not until those special services that I had been concerned about Don's eternal soul. Now I pray often for God to burden me about sinners.

### THE BURDEN GROWS

In my first years of college, I won very few to Christ. Sometimes my heart would become burdened about the matter, and once again I would look for opportunities to witness.

What joy filled my soul when I led two boys to Christ at the AWANA Boys' Club where I did my extension work. Coming back to the dormitory, I shared my joy with my room-mate, but even his lack of enthusiasm did not dampen my soul-winner's joy. For a man who has gone through a desert without a drink of water, it is a wonderful thing when he can drink that vital liquid again. And for a college boy who had gone months without winning anyone to Christ, it was a balm to the soul to have that joy again!

### THE LAUNDROMAT

Near Tennessee Temple Schools is a laundromat where many students go to wash their clothes. Occasionally an unsuspecting sinner new to the area walks into that hangout of Christian students, and it is very likely that he won't walk out without a handful of tracts, an earful of the Gospel message, and a bewildered face or a saved soul!

One day I had the opportunity to witness to such a man, who left the laundromat with a profession of Christ on his lips and my money in his pocket. This man actually asked me how to be saved! He saw me reading my New Testament and asked about the way to Heaven. After I showed him what the Bible says about the matter, he bowed his head and asked Christ to save him.

Then came the catch—he revealed to me that he was stranded in Chattanooga, and needed a bus ticket to get home. Since I was brought up to be helpful, I reached into my pocket for my wallet and gave him the price of a bus ticket. Encouraged, he revealed other needs, and so I emptied my wallet into his. I added my New Testament to his loot with my address in it, telling him that he could pay me back when he got ready.

I know what you are thinking, reader: Boy, he sure was a soft touch! Well, you may be right. I never heard from the man again. As a matter of fact, I wondered the same thing you are wondering, so I prayed that the man would feel terrible conviction of sin if he really had been lying to me, and that he would read the New Testament I had given him and really get saved!

Whatever you may think, my foolish generosity was not in vain. You see, God has promised that if we give, it will be given back to us (Luke 6:38). When I graduated from college, I owed no bills! It pays to be a witness for Christ, and it pays to give of your time and money to others.

How about you? How are your debts coming?

## BE A FAITHFUL WITNESS

Barbara, a black woman, was my assistant on a welding machine called a “panel welder,” which spot-welded a set of wires into a rectangular shape. Barbara’s job was to lay the wires in the right arrangement in a ‘jig,’ which I then pushed through the machine while pressing a foot pedal to operate it. All through my years at Tennessee Temple College I did this type of work to pay my bills.

We got along well for several months. Barbara spoke often of her little girl, who loved to go to Sunday school and asked Mommy to go with her. Barbara would not go to church, but often watched Dr. Jerry Falwell’s program on television. I spoke to her of my Savior, and prayed that she would accept Him.

One day Barbara came to work in a strange mood. She liked to talk (as most women do!) but that day she was unusually silent. Finally, she blurted out, “Is it wrong to have bad feelings in your heart about someone?”

It was a perfect opportunity to tell her of the peace that comes when you trust Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, and of how you can love even your enemies when Christ rules your heart. I quoted to Barbara the wonderful words of Jesus, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).

After awhile Russell, the “lead man” in the department (next under the foreman), came to me and said, “John, come help me work on this machine.” We went to another welding machine and began to work on it. As we worked, the plant superintendent and the foreman went over to Barbara, and left with her after a moment of conversation. Then Russell told me the startling news.

“Barbara has a .32 pistol in her purse. She was planning to shoot a man today!” A man in that factory had made wicked advances toward Barbara, and when refused, had spread ugly stories about her. In revenge, Barbara planned to shoot her tormentor!

To this day, I do not know whether or not Barbara ever accepted Christ. I never saw her again, nor did I hear what happened to her except that she was fired from the job. But how sobered I was when I found out what was in her heart that day. What if I had not told her of the peace of Jesus Christ when the opportunity came?

The responsibility of the Christian is great. We are the light of the world. Lives may hang in the balance sometimes if we don’t witness, and eternal souls always.

## ALL THE WAY FROM CANADA

“Dear Lord, please help me to win someone to you today.” I had prayed that prayer early in the morning, and was beginning to think that it wouldn’t be answered. Much of my day had been spent with the bus director, ‘Mr. Tim,’ visiting one of the Sunday school bus routes, and I had still not led anyone to Christ. Now we were on our way home and it looked like my chances were gone.

The bus director had led two little boys to the Lord that day, and how sweet it was to see the littlest one point to Heaven to say that he was going there now. Perhaps I can count those boys as the answer to my prayer, I thought. How foolish we are sometimes, thinking we have to help God answer prayer!

All these things were going through my mind as we drove towards home. Suddenly my partner began to slow down. As he stopped by the side of the highway, a

hitchhiker gladly ran to catch up with us. As the long-haired young man came up to the car, 'Mr. Tim' grinned and handed me his New Testament (mine had been given to one of the little boys).

The young man got into the car, and we started off down the road. I turned around in my seat to be able to make conversation, and found out that our rider lived in the wilds of Canada, and had come all the way to the Nashville area to visit some friends.

When I began to witness to the woodsman, it became obvious that God had prepared his heart. In just a few minutes he bowed his head and gladly accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. The joy that I have seen in so many new converts was evident on his face, and the angels in Heaven were rejoicing!

After we had arrived at our hitchhiker's destination, we sat and finished our conversation. When we had given him a New Testament and some good literature, the young man went on his way.

Once more God had answered prayer in an amazing way. This young woodsman was only in the area for a few days, and was about to go back into the wilderness of Canada to a place so desolate that he could not even receive mail. God had led us to just the right place at just the right time to win him to Christ!

### FROM INFIDEL TO CHRISTIAN IN TWENTY MINUTES!

"Well, I really don't know if there is a God or not. There might be, but I just don't know," the Middle Tennessee State University student answered. I had asked him about his belief in God, and was shocked by his answer.

My visitation partner and I were following up on some visits made by two young ladies in our church. They had met this college student and given to him the plan of salvation. Though he did not seem to be greatly interested, the ladies kept his name for future visits.

After we had made friends with him, the first question I asked was, "If you died today, do you know that you would go to Heaven?" When the young man said to me that he didn't know that there was a Heaven, I felt led of the Holy Spirit to ask if he believed there was a God. The student's answer told me that he was an agnostic, one who is not sure that God even exists.

I said, "How do you approach the matter of sin?"

He seemed uncertain. "What do you mean?"

"Well, what about the incident of the Israeli athletes that were killed at the Olympic games by the Egyptian terrorists? How can you reconcile the fact that there is such obvious wrongdoing on earth with our ideas of morality?"

He had no answer. I continued along the same line. "What about those terrorists in Washington, D. C., who locked themselves in the building with a crowd of people and killed a newspaper reporter? How do you reconcile such obvious sin with our human picture of a holy God?"

He answered, "Well, I really don't know." I could see that he was becoming more and more puzzled.

"You see," I said, "to have a correct picture of the world we live in, you must find a way to take care of sin. Man sins, and there must be an answer for that sin, a cure for evil."

Then I told once again the old, sweet story of how a holy God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to die for the sins of mankind. I told how it is only through the blood of Jesus Christ that man can have his sins washed away. Heaven is a perfect place, and sin cannot enter there, so God had to provide a way for man to enter Heaven without his sin. That way is Jesus: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (II Cor. 5:21).

A look of wonder came into his eyes as I told the Gospel story. When I came to the end, and was about to ask him to accept Christ as his Savior, he broke into the conversation: “Then all I have to do is believe!” he said with joy! In just a few minutes he had bowed his head and received Christ.

What a perfect illustration this student was of the power of the Gospel: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16).

### A SPECIAL SOUL WINNER!

On a brisk January day I was paired with Larry to go on bus visitation. One thing makes Larry different from others whom I have been visiting with—Larry is blind. On that chilly day God blessed our efforts, and a boy named Rodney was saved. But how touched my heart was by Larry, who wanted so much to win souls.

Let me explain what it is like to go visiting with a blind man. He must take your arm and be led by your eyes, for he cannot know where to go without help. When you walk up steps, he can feel you step up, and so he knows where to step also.

Unintentionally, I played a trick on Larry. We came to a sidewalk that was covered with water, and so I stepped up onto a low wall by the sidewalk to escape the water. Larry wondered where I had gone, and was left trying to find the steps he thought I was walking up. We both laughed after he found out that he had been lifting his foot to find steps that weren't there!

How much is the soul winner like a blind man! Our efforts are worthless without the Holy Spirit to guide our stumbling feet. We would fall time and time again without His power. When we are left powerless because of sin in our lives, soul winning becomes a hopeless cause, doomed to the sad mockery of failure.

Later in the day, Larry and I talked to the city judge of Smyrna, Tennessee. Larry, in his eagerness to give the Gospel, pulled a New Testament from his pocket and said to the judge, “Here, open this to where the marker is and read what it says, and you will find out how to be saved!” And I took Larry's Testament to show to the judge while Larry spoke of eternal life.

If only all Christians were like Larry! We must give God's Word to the sinner and let the Holy Spirit drive it into his heart, convicting of sin and bringing salvation to hungry souls.

### SOUL WINNER'S SOCKS

Bright and early Saturday morning, my friend Paul and I prepared for a full day of work. I was to speak at his home church on the following day, and we had planned a day of visitation together, hoping to win many to our Lord.

Now, my grandmother has occasionally given to me some unneeded clothes of Dr. Rice, and on that particular day I planned to wear a pair of socks that had belonged to

him. As I pulled the socks on, I casually mentioned who the previous owner of them had been. Paul gazed at the socks with awe. You see, Dr. Rice was the human source of my friend's burden for winning souls!

Seeing the way Paul looked at those socks, I knew there was only one thing to do. I said, "Here, Paul, would you like to have the socks?" He took them and carefully put them on.

My partner was such a zealous witness that day that I had a hard time getting any preaching done myself! In one day, he led seven souls to Christ! The whole day I won only one soul to the Lord, though I praised God much for those my friend had won.

That one young man I won to Christ I had to talk to while Paul was involved with someone else. We had stopped at a house trailer, and it was my friend's turn to do the talking. He began the conversation, and soon found out that the man of the home was already a Christian. We were invited inside the trailer and, as Paul talked to the Christian man, I noticed a young soldier from Fort Campbell sitting on the couch with his leg in a cast. I slipped over to the couch and struck up a conversation with the soldier, whose name was Joe.

After I had made friends with Joe and sympathized with him about his leg, I began to discuss spiritual matters. Joe was a Catholic, but listened carefully to the old and wonderful story of salvation through Jesus Christ. It wasn't long until he bowed his head and received Christ as his Savior. I literally won a soul to Christ behind my zealous friend's back!

### "HAVE YOU EVER BEEN SAVED?"

I remember that trailer park in Illinois very well. That was where I preached to an atheist for fifteen minutes while he held his huge Doberman Pinscher back! But my best memory of that afternoon is Ronny.

I had already seen young Ronny once that day when I visited his father's trailer. But here he came again, riding up on his bicycle. Ronny was friendly and wanted to talk, so we struck up a conversation. He had been riding a mini-bike in motocross races, though he was only twelve, and I listened to his stories with interest.

As we talked, I looked for an opportunity to witness to Ronny. Now, I usually use the approach advocated by Dr. Jack Hyles and many others: "If you died today, do you know for sure that you would go to Heaven?" But this time, for some reason, I simply asked, "Ronny, have you ever been saved?"

He answered without hesitation, "Yes, I have."

I replied, "Really? Would you like to tell me about it?"

Ronny said, "Well, I was out swimming in a lake and got into the deep water. An older boy pushed my head under water and I almost drowned, so the lifeguard had to come in and save me!"

Chuckling to myself, I asked, "Have you ever been saved by Jesus?"

He wasn't sure about that question. A puzzled look came into his eyes as he said, "No, I never have." In just a few minutes, I gave him the plan of salvation, and Jesus saved him from the lake of fire "which burneth forever and ever."

## 53 YEARS A DRUNKARD

Old Harry drew a circle around his right knee with his finger. “I’ve got arthritis in this knee. I can hardly walk. Have to use this stick to get around. It’s because of sin that I’m like this. That old booze hurt my body, and now I’m not so healthy, but Jesus is still with me.”

I was in Gladstone, Michigan, for a speaking engagement, and had gone visiting with the pastor. It had been the pastor’s turn to talk as we came to the ramshackle old store building with the apartment in back. He knocked on the door and we were greeted by a little old grey-haired lady. She invited us inside, where we met her bed-ridden husband, Harry.

The pastor began to witness to Harry. “If you died today, do you know for sure that you would go to Heaven?” And it wasn’t long until Harry himself took over.

He said that he had been a drunkard for 53 years. One day he turned his face to the wall and told the Lord, “Jesus, I’ll trust You to take away this booze. I’m tired of my sin.” And Harry says that he hasn’t touched a drop of liquor from that day to this!

Harry was hard of hearing, and there were many pauses in our conversation. But the pastor and I stood fascinated as Harry told of his love for Jesus Christ. He was 88 years old, and had been a Catholic all his life. Yet the Catholic church had never cured his drunkenness. He went to church, confessed his sins to the priest, but stayed in the same old trap. The day that he trusted Jesus Christ, things changed for old Harry. He told us, “I am a Catholic, but I don’t go to the Catholic church anymore. They play Bingo there, and they aren’t even allowed to gamble like that in the bars anymore. Why, one lady won \$400 in a Bingo game in the church, and then went and bought drinks for everyone in the bar!

“I used to confess my sins to the priest, but I don’t do that anymore. Mister, look in that room there.” I did as he asked me, and saw an artist’s representation of Jesus Christ. “Jesus is everything I need,” Harry said. “My wife and I get down on our knees and we confess our sins to Him now, not to the Catholic priest.

“Jesus gives me what I need, too. This sounds funny, but I just pray and ask Jesus, and it comes in a couple of days—a pair of pants, a pair of shoes. I don’t have a lot of money. I used to drink it all up. But now I have so much more because of Jesus!”

Harry’s voice trembled as he said, “Jesus goes with me wherever I go.” He looked over his right shoulder as he sat on the bed, and my gaze followed his, half expecting to see Jesus in Person right behind him. But old Harry was looking up at another artist’s conception of Jesus hanging on the wall.

He was a soul winner, too! Though he was an old man when he got saved, and had no education, yet he knew that his friends needed what he had. “I’m just an old lumberjack—can’t read or write,” he said. But Harry had been telling his drunken friends about Jesus, and four or five had quit the bottle and accepted the Savior!

Harry knew better than to pal around with those who would not quit the bottle. He told us that if they don’t quit that booze, then they just aren’t his friends! “Jesus tells me to keep away from them if they have been drinking. If someone comes around me with booze on his breath, his breath poisons me!”

Just an old lumberjack—illiterate, knew little of the Bible, yet Harry got his prayers answered, won people to Jesus Christ, lived a clean life, and loved Jesus with all his heart. How about you?

## “YOU BETTER NOT LAUGH!”

As I walked up to the car, I saw a man standing next to it, and a set of legs poking out from under it. The father was giving his son Michael instructions on how to change the oil.

As soon as I mentioned the Gospel to the father, I was rebuffed. “I don’t want that,” he sneered, and then went inside the house. Out from under the car came his sixteen-year-old son, whose attitude was totally different.

I held out my hand to Michael to shake, but he grinned as he showed me the oil all over his hands. “I’d sure like to hear what you’ve got to say,” he said.

It was easy to get Michael to admit he was a sinner. “Sure, I’ve been a thief and a lot of other rotten things,” he said soberly.

Tears came to his eyes as I told him the sweet story of how Christ died for our sins. Michael turned and shook his fist in the face of his friend Terry. “You’d better not laugh!” he warned through his tears. The three of us went over to sit on the steps, away from prying eyes.

As I told Michael the Gospel story, he cried and said over and over, “I’ve been looking for something to hang on to. Our family is falling apart.” In just a few minutes Michael had learned to “hang on to” Jesus!

Then I turned to the other boy, Terry. “Have you ever done this?” I asked.

“I sure have,” he said. Taken by surprise, I asked him when.

“Just now, while you were talking to Michael!”

Christian, you are missing some great blessings if you are not a soul winner!  
What a joy it was to win two at one sowing of the seed!

## MY GRANDFATHER’S EXAMPLE

All of my life I have watched my soul-winning grandfather, read his books, listened to his sermons, heard his heart beat for the lost. One thing that stands out in my mind is how he loves the little ones. Many times after a service, or at a home in which he was entertained, I have watched him talk to the children.

Dr. Rice’s conversation with little Susie might sound like this:

Dr. Rice: “Well, hello there! What is your name?”

Child (shyly): “Susie.”

Dr. Rice: “You look mighty nice today. Are you a good little girl?”

Child (giggling): “Sometimes!”

Dr. Rice: “Have you ever trusted Jesus as your Savior?”

And then, if the child has not been saved, Dr. Rice will tell her (or him) of the Jesus who said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14). Often, Dr. Rice has led little children to Christ in this way.

One Sunday I was filling the pulpit in a church in a small town in Tennessee. I preached in the morning, then was invited out to the house of a deacon for dinner. There were two children in the family, a cute little girl and a boy named Darrell. I played with them, kidded with them, and made friends with the two lovely children.

That evening I preached on the Great Commission and our responsibility as Christians to fulfill it. At the invitation time, I asked who would try to win someone to



Jesus that week, fulfilling the Great Commission. Several people raised their hands, promising before God and the preacher that they would be a witness. Then, as is my custom, I asked all who were saved and on their way to Heaven to raise their hands. All hands were raised but that of nine-year-old Darrell, with whom I had made friends that day. Darrell peeked at his mother as if to say, "I wish I could!"

After the service, I went to him and asked him if he were saved, as I had seen my grandfather do with so many children. "No," he said, "but I sure want to be."

I asked, "Do you know how to be saved?"

"No, but Daddy said that he was going to tell me how sometime!"

I asked one more question: "Wouldn't you like to go to Heaven when you die?"

Darrell grinned and replied, "Yes, Sir. I sure don't want to go to that other place!"

So Darrell sat down with me and I showed him from John 3:16 how to be saved, and he readily bowed his head and accepted Christ as his Savior. Afterward I said, "Why don't you go tell your father what you have done." Darrell ran to throw his arms around his father and tell him with tears about the salvation that a boy's hungry heart had finally found.

I try to follow my grandfather's example. Why don't you? Be a soul winner, in the same business as Dr. John R. Rice.

### III

## Make Your Own Memories

I have shared with you some of the things God used to make me a soul winner and some of the developments in my life as a soul winner. Now may I challenge you to become one?

There are many Christians, even many in full-time Christian work, who have never yet won a soul to Jesus Christ by personal witnessing. No matter who you are, if you are a Christian, you ought to be winning souls. Make your own memories, memories that will last through eternity.

### ARE YOU IN CHRISTIAN WORK?

Are you a missionary? Then you are following the footsteps of the first missionaries of this age, the disciples of Jesus Christ. Remember that when Peter and Andrew were called to be disciples, Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt, 4:19). These men were two of the ones who later traveled the world as missionaries.

So if you are a missionary, you ought to be a soul winner. As a matter of fact, there is no excuse for you not to be a soul winner, because you are "one sent forth" to take the Gospel to every creature, following the Great Commission. "Missionary" comes from the Latin language and means "one sent forth," as does "apostle," coming from the Greek.

Remember that Paul, the greatest missionary the world has ever seen except for Jesus Himself, was an apostle, “one sent forth.” What was he sent forth to do? Read I Corinthians 1:17—“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.” So if you are called to be a missionary, you are called to preach the Gospel for the purpose of winning souls.

Are you an evangelist? Remember what the Greek word *euaggelistes* (from which we get our word “evangelist”) really means. According to *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*, an evangelist is “a bringer of good news.” This word is “given in the New Testament to those heralds of salvation through Jesus Christ who are not apostles.” And so you, as an evangelist, are especially called to give the Gospel and to win souls.

Are you a pastor? A shepherd of the flock? If so, then you are to follow the example of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Himself. Remember what the Good Shepherd said about keeping sheep? His view is given in Luke 15:1-7. Here Jesus tells about a shepherd who found that one of his sheep was lost, so he left the ninety-nine, safe from predators in the fold, and went to find the one lost sheep. Now this lost sheep is not representing a backslidden Christian, because Jesus Himself makes the application of the parable.—“Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.” Remember also that Paul exhorted Timothy in one of the pastoral epistles to “do the work of an evangelist” (II Tim. 4:5).

Are you a Bible teacher? Many Bible teachers feel that it is not up to them to win souls but just to teach the Bible. Remember the Great Commission in Matthew—“Go and teach all nations.” We ought to win people to Jesus by teaching them the Gospel. Then, after baptism, we are to teach them all things taught to us by Jesus.

Someone has to win the lost to Jesus before Bible teachers can teach them the Bible. Many times Dr. Lee Roberson has told of the Sunday school teacher who led him to Christ by teaching the Gospel every Sunday as part of her lesson. You are not being a very good Bible teacher until you teach the Gospel to the lost, for the cross is the central event of the Bible.

One of the greatest Bible teachers of today is Bill Gothard. I can never forget the experience of going to Atlanta in 1974 to hear his Bible teaching for a week. At the end of that week, a special session was held for everyone in which the Gospel was taught. A simple invitation was given for sinners to accept Christ right there in their seats. Then, those who had just accepted Christ as their Savior were asked to stand as a public testimony of their faith in Jesus. Hundreds stood all over the huge Omni auditorium. And so Bill Gothard, a Bible teacher filled with the Holy Spirit, brings many to Christ by teaching the Gospel. You should do the same!

Do you do Christian literature work? Then you ought to be bringing people to Jesus Christ. You may take as your example in this the great Apostle John, who wrote some of the most beautiful literature of history under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit. Remember why John wrote his Gospel? He specifically gives the reason in John 20:31: “But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

If you take for your example one of the greatest literature workers of all the ages, the Apostle John, who wrote literature that will last for eternity, who wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit Himself, then you will be primarily concerned with bringing people to Christ and Heaven.

Are you a church musician? Or do you handle the music in revival campaigns? You ought to follow the example of David, one of the greatest musicians in history. Remember that it was David's music that calmed Saul when the Lord sent depression to the king. Remember that David wrote many beautiful songs, which we know as psalms. Remember that David even invented musical instruments, some of which might be the ancestors of our own instruments (Neh. 12:36).

When you were saved, God put a new song in your heart; He gave you a desire to use your musical talents for His work. Read what David says about the connection between salvation, music and God's work: "*He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.*"—Psalm 40:2, 3.

Mrs. John R. Rice says that the sweet Gospel song, "Just As I Am," had much to do with her salvation. The preacher preached that God's Spirit will not always strive with man but did not make the way of salvation plain. It was only when the words were sung, "Just as I am, and waiting not to rid my soul of one dark blot," that the young girl who later married the great preacher and became a great Christian was saved.

Musicians, you might bring someone to Christ with your music. That ought to be your first goal as a musician—to draw others to Christ. If it was the goal of David, one of the greatest musicians of all time, shouldn't it be yours?

Perhaps you are involved in the great Christian education movement sweeping America. Are you a teacher? An administrator? Then you ought to be a soul winner.

The basic premise of Christian education is that the Bible is the primary textbook, and all subjects should be taught with a philosophy based squarely on the Bible, not on the humanism of the Philistines. With that in mind, please read what the Bible itself has to say about such teaching:

*"We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. . . . That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments."*—Ps, 78:4, 6, 7.

Christian educators, you must win the children to Christ. The failure of education in the past has been the failure to win souls. As verse 8 of the same Psalm says, win them to Christ so that they will not be stubborn and rebellious. Are you a deacon? Then study the life of Stephen. He was a tremendous soul winner, with a boldness rarely equaled in his day or ours. He spoke so boldly in the name of Christ that he became the first to ever die in the name of Jesus!

Study Stephen's death. At the very time he was dying he was praying for those who killed him that they might be forgiven of their sins. The Bible says that "he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). Think of what his heart cry must have been at that moment: he must have wanted them saved, so that no sin might be charged to them for eternity.

If you are a deacon, you ought to be a soul winner like Stephen. Are you a student training for Christian work? Think how wonderful it would be to be in that three-year Bible institute that Jesus conducted for His disciples! But don't forget that the disciples went on extension work to try to win souls (Matt. 10; Luke 10:1-20). All good Bible

colleges and institutes require the students to report each week about extension work done and souls saved, and this is proper. Practical training is needed besides book knowledge.

Are you called to full-time work of any kind? Then remember what you are called for. Read Romans 10:14, 15:

“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”

Servant of the Lord, make memories of soul winning. Servants of the Lord are to be “in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” (II Tim. 2:25).

### WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?

What is your denomination? What do you believe about the Christian life? What system of theology do you follow? Whatever your answer to these things is, if you are a true believer in Jesus Christ, then you ought to be a soul winner. Make your own memories about soul sinning.

I am a Baptist; I will always be a Baptist; and so I believe the Baptist distinctives to be true and important. I study the lives of the Baptists of past years. I love the Baptist history. But we Baptists ought to be soul winners. Remember what Paul said, “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel” (I Cor. 1:17). That doesn’t mean that Paul did not believe in baptism by immersion (I believe that he did); it just means that Paul realized that his first calling was to win people to Jesus Christ.

Baptists, follow Paul. Be soul winners.

Are you a Pentecostalist? Then you claim to look for the same experience that the disciples had at Pentecost. There is one thing that many Pentecostalists forget though—at Pentecost there were three thousand people saved (Acts 2:41)! I would not dare to be called a Pentecostalist if I did not see many, many people won to Christ.

In an issue of a certain Christian magazine, most of the articles were written about a recent giant charismatic conference. In all those articles about unity among Christians and about the gifts of the Spirit, there was not a single mention of souls being saved. In the schedule of that gigantic charismatic conference, with over 15,000 in attendance for a week, there was not a single lecture on personal soul winning. Out of two entire days of workshops, with many topics announced, only one lecture had to do with evangelism, and none about personal soul winning and how to do it. All this in spite of the emphasis given to winning souls through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Pentecostalists and Charismatics, either begin winning people to Christ or never again claim the power of the Holy Spirit and a Pentecostal experience.

Are you a Calvinist? A member of one of the Reformed churches? Then you ought to be a soul winner, despite the fact that you put such an emphasis on the calling and election of God. Memorize John 15:16—“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain....”

Do you claim the Spirit's fullness? Many Christians put a great emphasis today on the necessity of the Holy Spirit's fullness for a victorious Christian life, which is good, Biblical and necessary. However, they sometimes forget what else goes along with the Holy Spirit's fullness—the preaching of the Gospel and the winning of souls.

Acts 1:8 teaches that when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you will be a witness for Christ. Notice also that when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, it is recorded in Acts that they “spake the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31). So if you are filled with the Spirit, you will be a bold witness for Jesus Christ. Read in the book of Acts how often the early Christians witnessed with boldness.

You who emphasize the gifts of the Holy Spirit, you who read and write books about the Holy Spirit and claim His fullness, you had better be winning souls!

Do you follow the teachings of dispensationalism? Do you claim to do all for the glory of God? Then you ought to be winning souls. The thing that glorifies God the most is the bringing of souls to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. You ask where I learned this? You may learn it also from John 15. Read verse 8, which says, “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.” There is only one thing that the fruit of a Christian could be, and that is the bringing forth of more Christians.

When you plant the seed of an apple in the ground, you expect eventually to have fruit from the apple, and that could only be more apples! If you don't have more apples from that first one that gave you the seed, then that apple is not bringing forth fruit.

In the same way, when you see the Holy Spirit working in a life, you will see the fruit of the Spirit; that is, those things which characterize the Holy Spirit Himself—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control (Gal. 5:22,23). So for a Christian to bring forth fruit, he must bring forth another Christian, like himself.

Dispensationalist, glorify God and be a soul winner. Make your own memories.

Are you a student of the deeper life? Do you seek to abide in Christ? Are you a follower of the Keswick movement? Then you ought to be winning souls. Andrew Murray wrote a beautiful book, *Abiding in Christ*, referring to John 15:1-8. Christians, examine these verses. Find out how many times the bearing of fruit for the one who is abiding in Christ is mentioned. Let all who claim to be abiding in Christ, all who claim to have found the deeper life, bring forth fruit or relinquish their claim.

Student of the deeper life, make memories of fruit-bearing—be a soul winner.

Are you a student of prophecy? Do you love to study about the Second Coming, the millennium, the Antichrist, the Great Tribulation period? Then surely you have studied the doctrine of the Judgment Seat of Christ, when we Christians will receive what we have done in the flesh.

The Apostle Paul was also a student of prophecy. As a matter of fact, he studied it much more than you do, and even wrote some of it himself! Read what he says the study of the Judgment Seat of Christ did for him:

*“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. . . .”*—II Cor. 5:10, 11.

Prophecy students, remember the terror of the Lord, the Judgment Seat of Christ, and win souls so that you will have gold, silver and precious stones to present to Christ at His Judgment Seat, and memories for all eternity.

Do you emphasize love and the body of Christ? All Christians should seek to have love manifest in their lives, because this is the mark of the Christian (John 13:35). But if you love, then you ought to love lost souls. If you emphasize the body of Christ, then you ought to seek the increase of that body (Eph. 4:16).

Make memories for yourself of soul winning.

Whatever your beliefs are, whatever your denomination is, whatever you teach about the Christian life, then you ought to be a seeker after divine wisdom. You ought to read the Bible all you can, and love it. You ought to want to know what the best things should be in the Christian's life,

If you are a seeker after divine wisdom, you will end up being a soul winner. The Bible teaches this very clearly. Anyone who has studied soul winning in the Bible has discovered this verse: "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30). Every experienced soul winner has learned to love Daniel 12:3, also—"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Love is one thing we know that we will have in Heaven (I Cor. 13:8). And soul winning is an expression of love. Those you win to Christ here on earth will be eternally grateful in Heaven for their salvation from Hell, and will be eternally grateful to you for your part in their salvation.

So be wise—make memories for yourself for eternity—be a soul winner!

### ARE YOU AN AVERAGE CHRISTIAN?

Perhaps you don't fit any of the categories mentioned so far. Or perhaps you have a special problem that is not experienced by most Christians. Yet you can still have a part in bringing people to Jesus Christ. The Bible still has a message for you about this matter of soul winning.

Are you a brand new Christian? Just recently been saved? You, too, can be a soul winner! Read of some of the people in the Bible who had just been saved, and see what they did.

For example, the woman that Jesus spoke to at the well in Samaria was told how to get the living water that gives eternal life. As soon as she had learned that He was the Messiah, the Son of the living God, the one that should save Israel—as soon as she had been saved, she went back to the city and told the men, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John 4:29). My grandfather likes to say here, "Now she's a woman, she stretched it a little bit, but I'll forgive her for that!" At any rate, she knew that she had been saved, that her sins had been forgiven by the Son of God, and she wanted others to know about it.

All new Christians can do the same. I remember the joy in my soul, the feeling of usefulness which came when I led my first soul to Christ. What a thrill it was to have the mother of my friend Paul come to our house to thank me for leading her son to Jesus Christ!

I once heard a young preacher say that it is wrong to get a new Christian to win souls. I disagree totally! I do not think that young preacher had examined what the Bible has to say about the matter. Jesus did not rebuke the woman at the well for trying to be a witness for Him. And He did not rebuke the maniac of Gadara for wanting to follow Him. On the contrary, He told the man to go back and tell his town what had happened to him.

You, too, new Christian, can do the same. In fact, your enthusiasm for what you have just found in Jesus Christ is an aid to your witness!

In the book of Revelation, the church at Ephesus was told by Jesus that they had left their first love, the joy and peace that they had found in salvation, the love that they had gotten towards Jesus Christ for His salvation. Let us who are older Christians never forsake our first love, and you who are younger Christians, you be the best witness you can be.

Have you been a Christian for years, but have just gotten right with the Lord? Then you are just like David. He had committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband Uriah. David wrote the great penitent Psalm, the 51st, to share with us his desire to get right with God. Notice that after David had gotten right, he wanted to see sinners get saved; he wanted to be a soul winner! “Restore unto me the joy of my salvation then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee” (Ps. 51:12, 13).

The joy of a backslider returned to Christ is great. That joy ought to be shared with others, as David shared his joy. You who have just gotten right with the Lord ought to be soul winners, and you who are not soul winners ought to get right with the Lord.

Christians, make memories about soul winning.

Are you a working man? The Apostle Paul knew your problems. He followed the trade of a tentmaker when he needed to support himself. We find this mentioned in the book of I Thessalonians by Paul himself. When he went to the city of Thessalonica for the purpose of starting a church and winning souls, he found some special circumstances that made it necessary for him to go back to tentmaking to support himself while he preached the Gospel.

Paul, no doubt, worked just as hard as the working man does today. He knew what you have to go through. Yet just the same, he did a great work for God in the city of Thessalonica, won many to Christ, and started a church. Years later, he wrote to the Thessalonians, “For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God” (I Thess. 2:9). Paul had to work to support himself, yet he won many to Jesus Christ in Thessalonica.

I have many vivid memories of my college days, when I worked at Cumberland Corporation in Chattanooga, Tennessee, a minimum of 40 hours a week to put myself through Tennessee Temple College. My days were very busy, since I worked eight hours a day, went to classes and did my required school work. Yet in spite of the lack of free time, I knew that it was my duty as a Christian to win souls.

So on the week-ends, I traveled in an evangelistic team with other young men, and we often saw souls saved through our ministry. In one year, the team of five young men saw 56 souls come to Christ through week-end evangelism.

You see, it is entirely possible for a working man to be a soul winner. You may have to give up some of the pleasures of life, perhaps a hobby or something else that is, in itself, harmless, but you ought to win souls.

Working man, build memories for yourself for eternity—win souls!

Has Jesus healed you from sickness? Blessed you in some other great way? Then remember the story of the maniac of Gadara. His condition brought him to do such terrible things as cutting himself, throwing himself into the fire, breaking the chains that

kept him from harming others, and attacking anyone who came near. Yet when he saw Jesus, he went to the Great Physician to seek healing and forgiveness. When the maniac of Gadara received salvation, he wanted to follow Jesus wherever He went. But Jesus had a better plan for the cured maniac. The Bible says,

*“And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus hath done for him: and all men did marvel.”—Mark 5:18-20.*

And in Luke where the story is told, we find that the whole region of Decapolis found out what Jesus had done for this maniac. This man, newly saved, delivered from great affliction, became a great soul winner.

If God has blessed you, then you ought to bless others. Don't be ungrateful for what God has done, but spread the word of His goodness. Be a soul winner—build memories of blessing.

Are you confined to your house? Are you an invalid? Or for some other reason you cannot go out? Then study the example of the Apostle Paul in the last part of Acts 28. The situation is this: Paul is under arrest, yet allowed to stay in his own house, awaiting the decision of Caesar as to whether he should live or die. Paul knows not what the future holds, yet he does not lose his burden just because he cannot go out and preach and witness.

There were four ways Paul used while confined to his house to give the Gospel of Jesus Christ: (1) He made appointments with all who wanted to hear the Gospel to come to his house so he could talk to them—and this without a telephone! (See Acts 28:23.) (2) Anyone who came to Paul's house for whatever reason was given the Gospel (see vs. 30). If he lived today, Paul would give the Gospel to the milk man, the mail man, the meter man, the repairman, the Avon lady, the newsboy—anyone who knocked on his door. (3) Although it does not say this in the text, I am sure Paul often prayed for those he knew to be lost. Paul is the man who wrote in I Thessalonians 5:23, “Pray without ceasing.” There is no reason to assume that Paul ceased praying for the lost just because he was about to die! (4) I imagine also that Paul wrote letters to lost people from his confinement. Did he not have at least thirteen books included in the New Testament, all of which were letters?

Dear invalid, I am sure that God does not expect you to win as many souls as an evangelist. I know that God does not expect you to win as many souls as your preacher. Yet you can pray, invite people to your home, use the telephone to witness, and give a witness to all who come to your door.

There is a dear lady who works at the Sword of the Lord Foundation named Miss Dottie Reichel. Miss Dottie is barely able to get from her home to the Sword of the Lord building next door. She can only work half a day. Her bones are brittle and break easily from a disease she has had since childhood. Yet Miss Dottie has a longing to see people come to Christ, and has written a tract called “Handicapped, But Happy.” She witnesses to those whom God brings to her during the course of her limited life. Miss Dottie prays for those she knows to be lost.

If only all of God's people were like Miss Dottie, who is making memories for Heaven, many more people would be saved!



Are you in prison? Are you confined to a single small cell for something you have done against society's laws? And were you perhaps saved after you got in prison? The Apostle Paul is an example for you. There is an old joke among preachers that when Paul came to town, he did not check the prices at the local inn, but went to the jail to see what the accommodations were there, knowing that is where he would probably end up for preaching the Gospel!

Paul was often in prison. Yet even in prison he won souls to Jesus Christ. The little book of Philemon was written about a man that Paul had won while in prison. In the city of Rome, a runaway slave named Onesimus had been caught and put in prison. It was the wonderful chance (planned by God) of that prisoner to be put in with the greatest preacher of the day—the Apostle Paul.

It was not long before Onesimus heard that Jesus Christ had died to forgive his sins, and was saved. So Paul wrote the letter to Philemon to ask him to forgive his runaway slave Onesimus because Paul had “begotten” him while in bonds, had won him to Christ while in prison.

Prisoner, even you can make memories for eternity!

Are you depressed and looking for a cure? There seems to be many Christians in our modern society who have had a nervous breakdown, are “mentally ill,” or are depressed. Many books have been written on how to defeat depression, how to lick your problems and gain cures from the ills of the soul that modern society has supposedly brought upon us.

Perhaps more Christian psychologists ought to look into the matter of soul winning as a cure for depression and other problems. You see, the basis of sin is the desire to please self rather than God and others. This was Satan's invention when he sinned against God and was cast from Heaven. See Isaiah 14, where Lucifer (Satan) declare his rebellion against God, and notice how many times he said “I” or “me” or “my” or used some other personal pronoun.

A young man of my acquaintance had been saved for years, but he had spent a year in a mental institution because of a severe inferiority complex. This young man was persuaded to go to the church's Thursday night visitation program, but he arrived late. When he did arrive, he rushed up to me and said, “I have just won someone to Jesus Christ.” He had picked up a hitchhiker, had witnessed to him, and won him to the Lord. It wasn't long before this young man had surrendered to preach and had gone off to a Christian college.

I shall never forget his words after winning his first soul—“At last I've really done something to help someone else!” Soul winning means living for others. The soul winner is one who does his best to bring news of the gift of salvation to all he can, the greatest gift in the universe.

Learn to win souls, downcast Christian, and you will find joy. “He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (Ps. 126:6).

Now there is one class of Christians that I have missed so far. If indeed he has even read this far, he may be feeling smug. He is the backslider!

Mr. Backslider, did you know that there were backsliders in the Bible who preached the Gospel and tried to win souls? The reason why was not really very good,

though. They knew that the Apostle Paul was in jail and they wanted to make things worse for him. Read what Paul had to say about them:

*“Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”—Phil. 1:15-19.*

Mr. Backslider, the best thing for you to do would be to get right with God. But if you’re not going to get right, why don’t you stir up our enemies by preaching Jesus Christ to them? Why don’t you be a good-for-nothing soul winner even if you are not going to get your life right?

All of God’s children ought to be soul winners. You cannot be a good Christian without being a soul winner. The Apostle Peter made this plain when he listed the qualities of a good Christian, then wrote, “If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (II Pet. 1:8).

One of the last things God gave the Apostle John to say in the last book of the Bible, Revelation, is recorded in 22:17, “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

If you have heard the good news of salvation given by Jesus Christ, and have accepted it, then you are one who has heard. If you have heard, the Holy Spirit and the Apostle John say that you ought to tell others to come to Jesus Christ.

Why don’t you become a soul winner and build up treasure for yourself in Heaven, and make memories for eternity?

## IV

### How to Become a Soul Winner

Chapter Four of *The Making of a Soul Winner*, by John R. Himes

Sword of the Lord Publishers, Murfreesboro, TN: 1979

(Note: the addresses of the publishers of the material mentioned in this chapter have been updated to 2006.)

Every Christian ought to make an irrevocable decision to become a soul winner, then set out to accomplish that. Nothing is ever done without that original decision that, come disaster or death, the goal will be reached. As that great man of God, Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., often said, “Do right till the stars fall.”

You ought to call yourself a backslider when you are not winning souls. Just take the Lord at His word: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of man.” Decide the one

thing you want most in the world is to be called a disciple of Jesus Christ, and realize that the mark of a disciple is to win souls. Dedicate yourself to the bringing of a lost world to Christ.

If I could die a martyr's death for Christ, I would for Him.  
If He should ask my eyesight I would let my eyes go dim.  
If those I hold most dear He took, I'd count it but His will,  
And if my gifts from friends He needed, those would be His still.

But all He asks is that I live today for Him alone,  
And seek to win some sinner that forever He'll bring home.  
For Jesus will I Live my life, His Word I shall obey.  
To all things else allegiance dies, and love cannot hold sway.

### SACRIFICE—THE FIRST STEP

Many times I have heard Dr. John R. Rice say, "You can't be on fire for God and everything else at the same time." How true! The soul winner must sacrifice some things in order to win souls.

A close friend of mine has a valuable stamp collection. One day while I was at his house, he showed me this collection. I was amazed. As he turned the pages of this stamp collection, he would say, "This stamp is worth about two hundred dollars. And this one is at about fifty dollars now. I have this whole set of stamps—and it is worth quite a bit." The complete value of that stamp collection is in the thousands of dollars!

He told me how his grandfather had a collection that would be the rival of any in the world. For a time my friend had followed in his grandfather's footsteps in that field.

But he said something unusual to me: "John, I hardly ever open this collector's album anymore. I have found something much greater—winning souls!"

This young man spends his free time witnessing for Jesus Christ. He usually wins five to ten people to Jesus every week. His zeal as a soul winner makes me ashamed when I am with him.

How about you? Jesus comes to you today as you dabble in the things of this world, and He says, "Deny thyself; take up thy cross and follow Me." What is it that keeps you from winning souls? It may be something that is innocent in itself, something that is not really wrong. But if it keeps you from serving God, then it becomes a weight that holds you back in the race for Jesus.

Are you an athlete? Sports can be a great factor for character-building in the life of young people. God can use sports to build self-control and self-sacrifice in young lives. But there comes a time when a mature Christian will grow out of the lust for competition and victory in sports. Bodily exercise does profit a little, but remember that godliness profits unto great gain (I Tim. 4:8). "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (II Tim. 2:3, 4).

Though I have never been a top athlete, I have always loved sports, and have competed in six different organized sports. I have known the thrill of victory, the joy of winning a trophy, the companionship of team work. Yet what will it all mean in eternity? Who will care about that in Heaven?

What about you? What sport do you glory in? Do you spend all your spare time in the bowling alley, and play in the league championships? Is it softball that holds your attention? Does your church team need you on Saturday when it is time for bus visitation? (May Heaven deliver us from church-sponsored sports which do nothing to lead others to Christ!) You have to make a choice.

Which is more important to you; the “thrill of victory” in sports on earth, or eternal rewards in Heaven for the soul winner? Remember that the soul winner will shine “as the stars for ever and ever” (Dan. 12:3), while the sports star of today is forgotten after his glory fades. (Who won the World Series of baseball in 1951?)

Is there some game that occupies all your attention? Is it your pride and joy that no one in the neighborhood can beat you in Monopoly? Are you the checkers champ of the town? Perhaps you need to quit your game to serve Christ. if you do, you will not miss it at all. Chess players, perhaps you should leave the “game of kings” to live for the King of kings!

Whatever keeps you from being a soul winner, be it game, hobby or sport, it is worth nothing in the light of eternity if it doesn't help bring the lost to Christ. Give it up. Learn the thrill of winning souls to Jesus, and so avoid the agony of remorse at the judgment seat of Christ.

## DENY THYSELF

What sense of loss there always is  
When leaving self behind.  
What unfulfilled desires must die,  
Hopes lost within the mind.

The heart may cry, “It is enough,  
My life can lose no more.  
My fondest dream, are swallowed up  
My strength crushed to the floor.”

Yet still the kind Creator moves  
His hand across the life,  
And takes impurities away,  
And cancels sinful strife.

Yet still the precious Savior takes  
The vessel broken up,  
And shapes it very patiently  
Into a golden cup.

The joy that comes from sadness deep,  
The happiness from pain,  
Will far exceed the strongest hopes,  
And make earth's pleasures vain.

So tremble not to lose yourself,

And live for Christ alone.  
The life you live for others  
Will forever be your own.

### FIND A GOOD PLAN, AND USE IT

Most soul winners today have a definite plan that they use each time they deal with a sinner. Find a scriptural plan that you can use to teach the Gospel to a lost person, and memorize and practice it.

One much-used plan is called the Romans Road. Start with Romans 3:10, then explain the plan of salvation as you move through Romans 3:23; 5:12; 6:23; 5:8; 10:9, 10, 13. Show the person that he is a sinner deserving of death; that there are two kinds of death, physical and spiritual (which is eternal separation from God in Hell); that God has provided the gift of eternal life; that when Jesus died on the cross, He took our place in spiritual death, separation from God the Father; that Christ rose again to conquer death, and is thus able to provide eternal life for all who believe; that simple faith in Jesus and repentance from sin is all that is required for salvation.

The best discussion of the Romans Road is in *Let's Go Soul Winning* by Dr. Jack Hyles (Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1962). Dr. Hyles has done more than any man alive to promote the use of this excellent plan for giving the Gospel, and his book is a must for every soul winner.

Another good plan is in John, chapter 3. Jesus Himself gave us this plan, which has led many to Christ. I was saved through the truth contained in John 3:16, and the first soul I ever led to the Lord was by that same verse. And you can do the same. The term "born again," as used by Jesus in John 3, is an attention-getting phrase. If the sinner has never heard of it before, it is bound to capture his ear, just as it did the ear of Nicodemus when Jesus used it. The prospect will usually ask for an explanation.

Remember especially that the Gospel of John is the book of the New Testament specifically written so that sinners can believe on Jesus: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

The best discussion of how to use John, chapter 3, in winning a soul to Christ is given in *The Golden Path to Successful Personal Soul Winning* by Dr. John R. Rice (Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1961). Read and study this plan on pages 255 to 261 of this great book. Dr. Rice's book also gives several other plans for leading a soul to Christ from the Scriptures which might help you.

You may feel too inadequate and inexperienced to use either of the above plans for leading a soul to Christ. But you still need to be a witness for Christ, even before you gain enough confidence to use one of these plans.

All Christians know at least one plan for leading a soul to Christ, the plan by which you were brought to Christ. Your own personal testimony is one of the best ways that you can be a witness.

The Apostle Paul often used this plan, and there are recorded in the book of Acts two messages to sinners by Paul in which he told the unusual story of his conversion (Acts 22 and 26).

Now you may not have such a spectacular story as Paul, but you were a sinner who came to Christ just the same and thus have something in common with any sinner who needs Jesus. So you should be able to use your testimony to witness.

Whatever plan you use, make sure that you give the Gospel as defined by Paul in I Corinthians 15—"That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (see vss. 1-4). Be sure to tell the sinner that salvation comes through repentance from sin and faith in Christ the Savior (Acts 20:21; Heb. 6:1).

All good soul winners use a plan. It makes good sense to know ahead of time what you will say, so that your nervousness will not prevent your being a good witness. It is much easier to deliver a prepared and practiced speech than an impromptu one, as any public speaker will tell you. So get a plan memorized, and go out to win souls.

### ALL THAT I HAD DONE

One night I spoke to God, and told Him all that I had done.  
I thought that He should understand the victories I had won.  
I bragged, "Dear Lord, my knowledge grows; I search your precious Word."  
He said, "My son, your love is small; your sharp tongue I have heard."  
I moaned, "I carry a burden, and my ailment is so sore."  
He said, "But look around you, child; their burdens are much more."  
I cried, "So much has this saint done to spread the Gospel 'round!"  
He said, "But, weeping, I loved the earth: so many you've not found."  
I sighed, "O Lord, please help me, then, to weep for those I meet."  
He sees their need, and now through me, God brings men to Christ's feet.

### STUDY THE SUBJECT

If you are interested in space travel, then you will buy books on the subject. If you are a seamstress, then with great attention you will read the articles in "Woman's Day" about sewing. Whatever your interest, you will probably read about it when you get the chance. So it ought to be for the soul winner. Study your subject.

Read and memorize all the Bible verses about soul winning. Memorize verses that will help you deal with the works salvation heresy, with those who do not believe Jesus to be God (Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other infidels), with those who believe in universalism (salvation for all whether or not they accept Christ), and other damning doctrines.

Remember, whoever you deal with, "the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). The Bible is "the sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 4:17), a supernatural weapon that, like any other sword, will cut and convict whether or not the sinner believes in its truth.

Study books written by the best soul winners. Here is a brief bibliography to get you started:

*The Golden Path to Successful Personal Soul Winning*, by Dr. John R. Rice; Sword of the Lord Publishers; c. 1961.

*Great Truths for Soul Winners*, by Dr. John R. Rice; Sword of the Lord Publishers; c: 1964.

*Let's Go Soul Winning*, by Dr. Jack Hyles; from Sword of the Lord Publishers; c: 1962.

*Vest Pocket Companion* (a handbook of Scriptures to meet every objection and excuse), by Dr. R. A. Torrey; Sword of the Lord Publishers.

*Personal Evangelism*, by Macaulay and Belton; Moody Press; c: 1956.

*How to Have a Soul Winning Church*, by Gene Edwards; distributed by Rusthoi Publications, Montrose, California; c. 1962 by Soul Winning Publications, Tyler, Texas.

A Christian bookstore should be able to order any of the above books for you, or you may order them directly from the publishers.

There are, of course, many other good books on soul winning. The Sword of the Lord Foundation in particular is dedicated to printing good books on soul winning and evangelism, and has books besides those mentioned above by John R. Rice, Jack Hyles, Elmer Towns, Tom Malone, Leon Maurer, Jacob Gartenhaus (*Winning Jews to Christ*), Robert L. Sumner, Wally Beebe and Johnny Stancil (both the last are on the bus ministry), etc.

Another good way to learn how to better win souls is by going out with other soul winners and watching them at work. Dr. Jim Norton, veteran missionary to Japan, is one of the world's best soul winners, and everyone who has been soul winning with him has a story to tell.

Another missionary told me about walking through a shopping center with Dr. Norton. They were having a conversation as they walked; suddenly the missionary noticed that he was speaking to no one! Turning around, he saw Dr. Norton in the process of winning a lady to Christ! Certainly the young man was influenced by that demonstration of a burdened soul winner in action.

Great soul winners like Dr. Jim Norton, Dr. Jack Hyles, Dr. John R. Rice, Dr. Lee Roberson ought to be your heroes. Find out how these and other successful soul winners get the job done.

Make friends with the best soul winners in your church; go visiting with them; listen carefully as they plead for sinners to accept Christ. Go to conferences where soul winning is emphasized, taught and encouraged. The more you think about the subject and the more you study it, the better you will be at winning souls.

After you learn the basic steps in winning a soul to Christ, learn how to follow up, how to get that new Christian to church and down the aisle to openly confess Christ, be baptized, and join the church. Many soul winners often fail here, myself included.

## LEARN TO PRAY

As I walked down the street with my visitation partner, I bowed my head and prayed for God to lead us to someone to win to Christ. It was already getting dark, and we didn't have much time left. Shortly, we came to another house and began talking to the young man who lived there. What a joy it was to lead him to Christ! What a thrill it was to see my prayer answered at the very last house we visited!

You need to learn how to pray and how to get your prayers answered if you are to be a soul winner. Prayer is a necessary part of going out to win people to Christ. Pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit, pray for courage, pray for wisdom to deal with special

problems, pray for hindrances to the work to cease, pray for special opportunities, pray for the salvation of the one you are dealing with, pray for the message to be plainly understood, pray for your partner as he deals with a prospect. PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!

When a soldier goes out into battle, he must have orders from headquarters. In modern warfare, a squad on patrol has a radio with which to communicate with home base in case of trouble, or in case new instructions are to be given. Just the same, the Christian soldier needs to be in constant communication with Headquarters if he is to be victorious. We have not the wisdom to know where to go and who to talk to, so we ought to pray often for orders from on High.

In Denver, Colorado, I was to speak in several churches in the area. During the time I was there, Dr. Fred Brown, a greatly-used evangelist, was holding revival services at the great South Sheridan Baptist Church. God led me to do some visiting for the meetings, and try to get some people to come.

The day before, I had been given a sample of the tract by Dr. Ed Nelson, "Message From a Catholic Bible," by one of the soul winners in the church. Now some may call it "coincidence" that my attention was directed to a particular street, and that I found a Catholic lady on that street to give the tract to and witness of Jesus to. I call it an answer to prayer, the prayer for guidance that I prayed before I started out to visit. You see, I don't believe in coincidence!

So pray as you go. God will do miracles for you if only you live a pure life, walking by faith, and bathing your efforts for Christ in prayer.

Jesus Christ is our strong and mighty tower.  
Jesus saved us and gives us grace each hour.  
Now He sends us with Holy Spirit power.  
I pray for wisdom and love and compassion for souls.

Souls are dying; this gripped me once before.  
Souls are dying; I wish that I cared more.  
Souls are dying; the need is oh, so sore.  
I pray for wisdom and love and compassion for souls.

### GO IN GOD'S POWER

You will never be a successful soul winner until you learn how to go in God's power. Be filled with the Spirit! Be anointed with fresh oil! This business is so vital, so essential, so awesome that we cannot do it in our own strength.

A complete treatment of this subject is beyond the scope of this little book and beyond the wisdom of this author, but great men have written such books:

*The Power of Pentecost, or The Fullness of the Spirit*, by Dr. John R. Rice; Sword of the Lord Publishers.

*How to Obtain Fullness of Power*, by Dr. R. A. Torrey; Sword of the Lord Publishers.

*Endued with Power*, by Dr. Lee Roberson; The Hebrew Christian Press, Box 3307, Chattanooga, TN 37404.

Read these and other books by great men of God about the Holy Spirit, but most of all, read God's Word and find out what God has to say about His power in soul



winning. Memorize verses on the Holy Spirit and His power—Isaiah 44:3; Isaiah 61:1; Luke 24:49; John 14:12, 16, 17, 26; Acts 1:8 and many others. Meditate on such verses, applying their truths to your life and claiming their promises. Seek constantly for God's power. Without it you will be like blind Samson working for the Philistines.

Fulfill God's requirements for His power:

1. Read and meditate on the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.
2. Be absolutely yielded to God's will. As George Mueller said, "I seek...to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter."
3. Be empty. Get rid of all in your life you want more than God's blessing. Dr. Lee Roberson often speaks of "emptiness and willingness."
4. Pray for God's power. Dr. Jack Hyles has the words, "Pray for power" in prominent places in his house and office.
5. Be holy. God looks for clean vessels to use, because He Himself is infinitely holy. Confess your sins daily, stay in constant fellowship with the Lord that you "quench not the Spirit."

There is so much more to be said about the need for God's power. The power of the Holy Spirit is necessary for boldness (Acts 4:31), for wisdom (Exod. 35:31), for love, along with the other aspects of a good Christian life (Gal. 5:22, 23). Seek God's power for success in soul winning.

Dear Holy Spirit, fill me, I pray;  
Give me Thy courage, show me Thy way.  
Compassion for souls, give me today;  
Sweet Holy Spirit, fill me, I pray.

## PLAN AHEAD

Remember the Boy Scout motto, "Be Prepared"? This is a good motto for the soul winner also. Unless you PLAN to be a soul winner, you are not going to be one. Such things never happen by accident.

You ought to carry a New Testament with you wherever you go. So many times I have been ashamed when I left my Testament at home and lamely tried to quote verses to a sinner. If you have memorized the verses, then a Bible is not absolutely necessary, but it is a good idea to carry one so that the prospect can read for himself the words of God. (Yes, I know that they didn't carry New Testaments in Paul the apostle's day, but we are in modern times, and there is no excuse not to carry one.)

There is another good reason for carrying a New Testament: I often give away an inexpensive New Testament to those I lead to Christ. Even in America, many people do not have the world's best seller, so I carry New Testaments that I can give away because of the vital need for the new Christian to be reading God's Word as soon as he is saved. Children, especially, are likely not to have a Bible unless you give them one.

Another item I carry with me is a good tract. A good supply of Dr. John R. Rice's tract, "What Must I Do to Be Saved?" is in my car and pocket at all times. Dr. Paul Levin (now deceased) has a worldwide ministry of Gospel tracts (Bible Tracts, Inc., P. O. Box 188, Bloomington, IL 61702-0188). The famous tract by Ford Porter has won many to Christ; it is called "God's Simple Plan of Salvation," and is available from LIFEGATE, P. O. Box 425, Beech Grove, IN 46107-0425. You may want to use the colorful little

booklets from Chick Publications (P.O. Box 3500, Ontario, Calif. 91761-1019), which people are eager to take and always read. Your own pastor may have written a good tract which has the name of your church on it; if so, carry some of them.

Above all, don't let tracts become a substitute for your personal witnessing. Often I have tried to salve my conscience by giving a tract and not following it up with a personal witness, and this is wrong. There may be times when you cannot keep a busy cashier from her job by talking to her, or when your brief contact with a person only gives time for a tract, but it is always best to follow a tract with a personal witness, if possible. You may want to use the title of the tract as an opener.

The most important thing to remember about being prepared is that you need a definite time to go soul winning, as Dr. Hyles aptly points out in his book, *Let's Go Soul Winning*. Set a time each week when you plan to go soul winning, and let nothing hinder you. I have found that by having two times a week to go, and by averaging five to six hours of visitation every week, I win at least one soul to Christ a week, and often two or more. Usually I spend more time than this in a week, and often I spend all day Saturday on bus visitation, and win several to Christ in one day.

**BE PREPARED!!** Until you make soul winning a part of your everyday life, you will never be a good soul winner. Just decide that this matter comes before all else, and that you are going to be ready for every opportunity that comes your way.

God's Word commands us to witness to all the world. It is as simple as that. If you want to be a good and obedient Christian, then you must be a soul winner.

Please pray with me,

I want to live for thee, O Lord,  
To only do Thy will.  
I lift my cross to follow Thee  
Up to the rugged hill.

Now must you take my life, O Lord,  
And mold me In Thy way;  
For I have not the wisdom, Lord,  
To live—just to obey!

**THE END**