

Bulletin

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND

JANUARY 1, 1926

The Motive of Service

THE best service, the service which is most acceptable to the Lord, and the one that does the most good to the one ministering and the one served, is that which comes from a heart overflowing with love and compassion. We see a grand illustration of this in the Master. St. Matthew gives us a record of it. We read (Matt. 9:36-38):

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

The three words here translated by the expression "moved with compassion" signify an intense yearning, accompanied by a trembling of the intestines, as might be the case where one's emotions stir one to the very depths of one's being. Jesus had great powers of intellect; but he had more: He had a great, warm, loving, tender, sympathetic, compassionate heart.

We see other uses of this same expres-

sion when Jesus fed the multitude with the five loaves and two fishes (Matthew 14:14) and when later, he fed another large multitude with the seven loaves and a few little fishes. In the latter instance the Master said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way."

So here we have the motives that should actuate us when we go out to place the message of the kingdom in the hands of the people. The motive should not be to make money, nor to make a record, nor to get a great name for ourselves or for the class or for the SOCIETY, nor to pride ourselves on our standing in the Lord's cause. The motive, to be acceptable to the Lord, must be the same motive that stirred him—a motive of love, compassion, sympathy for those needing our assistance.

And we have just the food of which the people are in need. Is there any food which the people could have that would do them as much good as the truth regarding God's character and plan? Jesus

ADVERTISE THE KING AND THE KINGDOM

did not neglect the physical needs of those to whom he ministered, but he fed them for three days on spiritual food before he gave attention to their stomach.

It is so now. There is a famine in the land, not a famine for bread and water, but for hearing the word of the Lord; and our hearts should go out with compassion for those who need the help which we can give, and which was given to us, as a gift from God, so that we might pass it on to others.

Moreover, realizing, as every active worker can plainly see, that the work is exceedingly great and the real workers very few, we should pray the Lord of the harvest that he will more and more stir up his people to go forth and do the work for which he has been training them. Book-selling in the eyes of the world is ignoble; but the placing of the truth literature in the hands of the people is, in the sight of God our Father, and in the eyes of our Lord Jesus, and in the eyes of the holy angels, the grandest work in which we could be engaged.

For a thousand years in the future we are hoping to be used to bless the human family. During that time we hope to have an earnest, energetic, industrious part in placing the image of God in the heart of every human being who is willing that it should repose there. True, it is God that will take away the stony heart out of their flesh and give them an heart of flesh, but he will use The Christ to do that great work.

And now as we see the work which The Christ is to do, what joy is ours to see that we may have a hand in that work now, and in a sense in which that was never before possible! It has always been true that God's people could so live and so teach the truth by word and example that others, seeing their good works, should glorify our Father in heaven in their day of visitation; but the present time is the dawn of their very day of visitation itself.

We may be sure that there are millions of people now living who have heard and

understood something of the message of present truth. None of that work has been lost. It has been like bread sown upon the waters. In due time it will be food for the needy. "Your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

What thrilling stories revolve about the efforts of services rendered by colporteurs in very recent years! There is, for instance, the story of the weary colporteur, near sunset, at the close of a day peculiarly filled with rebuffs and disappointments, who saw as the last house in his territory a dwelling nearly a half mile away. He was inclined to omit a visit to it, because it would be out of his way, and it might mean only an added burden to a day already well filled with them.

But the brother was moved with compassion. He wanted to bring to others the comfort that had come to his own heart; and so, after debating the matter for an instant, he set off, trudging along down the road, determined to take joyfully whatever portion the Lord might place in his cup.

The brother visited the home and told his story as only those can tell it whose hearts are bubbling over with the joy which comes from the never-failing Fountain of Life. When he had finished, the lone occupant of the house, a woman, said to him, "Stranger, the Lord sent you to my door. When you came to me I was so crushed with sorrow and woe that I had determined that this day should be my last. This night I would certainly have taken my life had you not come to me and implanted within my heart renewed assurances that God does really care, and that at some time this tangled web of life will all be straightened out."

Who shall say that that brother was not fully rewarded that very day for all he had suffered in Christ's name and for his sake? But yet, the best of it is that his reward will go on and on; for others to whom he ministered that same day will at sometime remember with joy the message that he told. And who shall say that he may not at some time have the joy of seeing some of those to whom

he ministered, or most of them, or perhaps all of them, bring their all and lay it at the Master's feet in loving, joyful submission to his will?

To be moved with compassion for the poor world, to wish to wipe away their tears, and to do what we can to accomplish that end in the here and now is to be filled with the Master's spirit; and the doing of his will is to prepare ourselves for sweet fellowship with him, begun here and continued in eternity.

METHODS OF WORK

The year 1926 unveils to every worker, we are sure, wonderful opportunities of witnessing for the Lord's kingdom. As a message in season comes his admonition to raise a standard for the people. But what 1926 will actually produce depends greatly upon the plans made to take advantage of the opportunities to witness; and it is not too soon to begin to plan to make 1926 the greatest year of witnessing for the truth, the year that will find the message in a greater number of homes than has any past year.

The first three months of the year do not present very favorable weather for working, but this season should present the opportune time for perfecting plans that will make the most of the favorable season beginning with April. We urge frequent meeting of the workers for the purpose of discussing methods of work, methods of canvassing. These meetings we recommend to be entirely method meetings rather than meetings that will tell of experiences in the work. As April presents more favorable weather and thus opens the way for a larger number to enter the service it will find those who can engage in the work better equipped because of the meeting for discussion that they have enjoyed and taken part in.

In comparing our records of past years it has been found that the spring usually allows about 500 more friends to engage in the service than were in the work during the winter months; that August and Sep-

tember allow about 300 additional workers to engage in the service, and that during these months the greatest number of workers is in the field. Each worker probably knows how he is situated to engage in the work, and what season of the year is the most opportune for him to devote his time to field service. But what is important at the beginning of 1926 is that each worker, appreciating this, will plan far enough in advance to become acquainted with the methods of work, the canvass, and the conditions in the field so that the time spent in the service will enable him to reap the greatest possible results.

Conditions seem to warrant the forecast that 1926 will find a great increase in the number of homes in which literature can be placed. Our observation of the people of the United States is that during times of prosperity they are more inclined to purchase our literature than during times of depression. There seems to be a disposition among the people of this country to want assurance that their present joy and happiness and contentment is stable; and while they are enjoying better times they are more apt to believe and accept information that still better times are in the offing. Throughout Europe the literature sells during times of depression mainly because the people are more concerned with understanding why conditions exist as they are; while in the United States the people wish to be assured that better times are still in prospect. Hence, since the general trend of times through 1926 is toward prosperity, we believe that you will find the people more ready to accept your message, and that especially you will find a greater field for placing the Eight Volumes in the homes of the people.

During 1923, '24 and '25 we have urged the canvassing for the sets of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES; particularly since 1924 has it been advocated that the Eight Volumes be canvassed for at \$2.85. We urge the workers to make a campaign during 1926 of the Eight Volumes. Present to the people the

message of the Eight Volumes rather than that of a single book or a booklet. Let the people understand that the plan of God's Word is covered exhaustively by I. B. S. A. publications. We believe that you will find it no more difficult to present the message of the truth and to demonstrate the Eight Volumes than you would to present the message of the truth and demonstrate a booklet or the HARP BIBLE STUDY Course. Then if they do purchase but a booklet they will not read it as merely a treatise on present-day conditions; rather they will read it as a sample of the larger offer that was brought to their attention. And the booklet or bound volume which you have left with them will provide them with the argument that they need, that is, an argument that will convince them that the Eight Volumes are necessary for their home; and your next call with the Eight Volumes will produce a larger number of sales than the first canvass. An additional advantage in offering the people the Eight Volumes and making a consistent campaign or canvass with these volumes is that you bring to their attention the scope of the work of the I. B. S. A., and for the most part you have presented a new proposition to them.

We have, in outlining the work to directors for 1926, urged them to attempt to canvass that section of their assignment that is known as isolated and near-by territory twice during the summer months instead of just once. This territory being inaccessible the larger part of the year, should, we believe, be given more attention during the period that it is accessible than the neighborhood or local territory that can be reached with handbills, advertising material, and canvassing parties that can devote but two or three hours of work per week. This is a diversion from the general outline of campaign of past years, but it recommends itself because of the results attained by a few classes that have made experiments in canvassing territory every three months. It has been demonstrated that the second canvass

always produces more sales than the first canvass. Hence, since your second canvass will be within a period of three months' time to people who at your first call purchased only a booklet or the HARP BIBLE STUDY Course, you will, we are quite sure, find a greater demand for the Eight Volumes.

Notice to Colporteurs

We begin our colporteur sales records anew at the first of January each year; therefore we desire all colporteurs to begin the year 1926 with new totals on their report cards. Please consider this and do not carry over the 1925 totals when making out your cards for the new year.

The year 1926 should prove to be a great year of witnessing. We trust that the standard will be so raised for the people that they will come to a greater appreciation of God's wonderful plan and to a better comprehension of the blessings in store for mankind because of the efforts that you have put forth; for you have planned for the service, and in your planning sought not only to make a drive day notable or one week notable, but to make the entire year an outstanding one. As you go forth as the standard bearers of the Lord you are assured of the promised strength and grace and assistance in every time of need; and when obstacles seem to block your path for service, when difficulties seem almost unsurmountable, we trust that you will lay hold upon his promise of strength and grace in such times of need, and surmount the difficulties, sweeping aside every obstacle that would hinder the wide spread of the message. Be assured of an interest in our prayers as you valiantly go forth in the strength of the Lord, raising the standard for the people.

With Christian greetings, we are
Your brethren and servants in the Lord,
Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society.
Service Dept.