

A Word for All Christians

Are you a Christian? I mean, by that, have you repented of your sin? Do you have a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour? Do you submit to him as your Lord? Are you resting in him, trusting him, relying upon his precious blood, shed upon the cross, to cleanse you from your sin and to present you faultless before God his Father? You are a Christian – in these terms? You are trusting the Lord Jesus like that? Excellent! Then this tract is for you.

But before I go on to speak to those of you who are Christians, I must have a word with those of you who are not. My friend, I tell you the truth – unless you repent of your sin, turn to Christ and trust him and his precious blood to save you, you will perish. I mean it. I cannot leave you in the dark. I cannot pull the wool over your eyes. I dare not. As I have to answer before God for what I say, and as I know that you have to face an angry God in your sin, I must speak out. On the authority of God's word – the Bible – I tell you as plainly and as lovingly as I can: 'Unless you repent, you will... perish'. Christ said so. And he said it twice in quick succession (Luke 13:3-5). My advice to you, therefore, is to repent and turn to the Lord Jesus now – and to do so at once, without any delay. The devil will tell you to wait. Don't, I plead with you, don't put it off. Repent now.

But as I said, I write this tract for those who *are* true believers. So, if you are one such, this is for you.

You have been saved from your sin. You know you have eternal life. You are on the way to everlasting glory. Very well. Now, surely, you want others to enjoy the same, don't you? You want them to have the same experience as you, do you not? Of course you do! You cannot sit still knowing that most of your fellow men and

A Word for All Christians

women – some of them, perhaps, members of your own family, maybe even your own children or your own parents – your friends and acquaintances – are on the broad road which leads to destruction. Surely you cannot sit still, knowing that such people are lost, helpless and hopeless without Christ (Ephesians 2:12), dead in their sins and under the wrath of God (Ephesians 2:1-3), can you? Surely not! If you know what it is to be free of condemnation through Christ (Romans 8:1), you want others to be saved, too, don't you? Of course you do!

So then, how can sinners be converted? How will they come to know Christ? Well, we know that God is sovereign, and his Spirit must convict sinners of their sin and bring them to Christ, yes. The Scriptures make that very plain indeed. But God, in his sovereignty, is generally pleased to use means to bring about his purposes. What do I mean? Let me spell it out. We know that 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved' (Romans 10:13). Ah! But how can they call upon Christ for salvation if they do not believe? 'How... can they call on the one they have not believed in?' (Romans 10:14). Let Paul the apostle go on with his argument: 'How... can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?' (Romans 10:14). In other words, if sinners are going to call upon the name of the Lord and be saved, they must believe in Christ. And to believe in Christ, a preacher must tell them about him.

Now don't get this wrong. Of course, a preacher can stand in a pulpit or on a platform to preach. But we must not limit the word 'preach' to such. Sinners can hear of Christ in many ways other than by a formal preacher. Why, I am preaching to you now as you read this tract. A believer preaches when he engages someone in spiritual conversation. When the early church was persecuted, the believers were driven out of Jerusalem. 'Those who had

been scattered preached the word wherever they went' (Acts 8:4); that is, they talked to people, they told them about Christ, they 'gossiped' the gospel. What I am saying is this: If you are a Christian, then you, in this sense, are a preacher. It is your job and your privilege to tell others about Christ and his gospel.

Let me remind you of some scriptural examples of what I am talking about. After he had healed a demon-possessed man, 'Jesus was getting into the boat' to cross the lake. 'The man who had been demon-possessed, begged to go with him'. But Jesus refused. He was adamant: 'Go home to your family', he said, 'and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you'. And the man did it (Mark 5:18-20). Well, that's clear enough. Now you know, believer. You must tell your family and friends what Christ means to you, and what he has done for you, and done in you. Have you told them? If not, why not?

Take another case; namely, Andrew. John the Baptist directed him to Jesus as the Lamb of God. Andrew followed Jesus, and had his eyes and heart opened. Andrew discovered that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Christ. What happened next? 'The first thing Andrew did' – note that. 'The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him: "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus' (John 1:41-42). What about you? You have come to know Jesus as your Saviour and Lord? Have you gone back home and told your family about him? Have you tried to 'bring them to Jesus'? If not, why not?

Take another case; namely, Philip. Jesus called Philip. Philip followed him. 'Philip found Nathaniel and told him: "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the law, and about whom the prophets also wrote – Jesus of Nazareth"'. When Nathaniel doubted, Philip had his answer ready: 'Come and see', he said (John 1:44-46). What about you?

You have found in the Lord Jesus all that the Scriptures promise, haven't you? Well then, have you told your friends about him? Have you answered all their doubts by telling them to 'come to Jesus and see' for themselves? If not, why not?

Take another case; namely, the woman at Jacob's well in Samaria. After she had met Jesus, what did she do? 'Leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people: "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"' Notice how she was so occupied with her meeting with Christ, and her experience of him, she forgot why she had come out to the well in the first place – to fetch water – and she left her water pot and went back into the town (John 4:28-29). And that took some courage. She had come out to the well at midday (John 4:6), probably to avoid people – because, as we learn from the account in John 4, she had a notorious reputation.

But whatever the rights and wrongs of that, having met with Jesus, she couldn't help herself. She left her water pot and went back to speak to the people, and to invite them to come to meet him, too. We read: 'They came out of the town and made their way towards him'. Later, we are told, 'many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony'. Jesus stayed with them and spoke to many others: 'And because of his words, many more became believers. They said to the woman: "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world"' (John 4:30,39-42). Do you not see, believer, that – just like this woman – your word of testimony might be used by God to bring many others to know and trust the Saviour, too? Do you not feel encouraged by her example?

Take another case; Philip with the Ethiopian eunuch. Philip saw the Ethiopian reading the Scriptures. At God's

bidding, he ran to the man and spoke to him about what he was reading. The Ethiopian said he did not understand, but wanted to know. ‘Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture, and told him the good news about Jesus’. And what happened? The Ethiopian believed and was baptised! (Acts 8:26-38). Can you not see, believer, how a word from you can bring a sinner to Christ? Will you not speak about your Saviour to others?

And one final case; namely, Saul of Tarsus. Saul was converted on the road to Damascus. He met the living Lord Jesus. He trusted him and was baptised. What happened next? ‘At once he began to preach... that Jesus is the Son of God’ (Acts 9:1-20). You may not be a preacher in the formal sense, but if you are a Christian, you must tell others. You cannot keep it a secret.

Why not? Because God commands you to confess with your mouth that which you believe in your heart: ‘If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved’ (Romans 10:9-10). This confession, of course, has nothing to do with the nonsense of confessing your sins to a priest. It means telling others what Christ has done for you.

Believing friend, do these examples not convince you? Do they not challenge you? Do they not encourage you? God is sovereign, of course, and only he can convert a sinner. You have proved that for yourself in your own experience. But he generally uses means. He might even use you to bring another sinner to himself. Wouldn’t *that* be wonderful! In any case, it is your duty – Christ has commanded it – you must tell others. You say that Christ is your Lord. Will you not obey him in this? Whether or not he will use your testimony to convert another, I cannot say. But you will be blessed in testifying for your Saviour.

A Word for All Christians

If, until now, you have been a secret, silent believer, will you put it right – now, at once? Will you not ask God to give you grace and strength to tell someone of what the Lord Jesus Christ means to you? And will you not speak to someone about Jesus? May God bless you in your testimony. May he use it to convert another sinner, bringing that one to Christ to be saved.