



Light from the Word

The Faithful Church has a Heart for the Lost

“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.” (Matthew 12:30)

Who is the Faithful Church? What is meant by the term, “heart”? Who are the lost?

According to the Word, the faithful are those who continue in an endeavor through both good times and difficult times. Jesus encouraged His disciples by letting them know that they were, *“they which have continued with me in my temptations.”* (Luke 22:28) “Continuing with Jesus” means that we consistently co-operate with Him in His obedience to the Father. It was in this obedience that Jesus overcame the world. John tells us, *“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”* (1 John 5:3-4). We understand that obedience to the Lord’s commandments is the essence of the Faithful Church.

The Lord taught His disciples that, *“a good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.”* (Matthew 12:35) In contrast, He condemned the unbelieving of His people saying, *“For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”* (Matthew 13:15) From these teachings of Jesus, we understand that the heart is the seat of truth in our being – it indicates who we really are. Moreover, Jesus clearly teaches that actions are indicators of what is in the heart. The word translated as “lost” in the New Testament carries a much greater significance than a lost set of keys or some other object. It is steeped in a sense of perishing and death similar to how a doctor might feel that he

has “lost” a patient who died despite the physician’s best effort. It is a condition that seems incurable. The greatness of God is that He is able to bring life out of death. Even when we might consider someone to be hopelessly lost, Jesus offers life. The parable of the prodigal son is just one example that Jesus used to communicate this to His disciples. *For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.* (Luke 15:24)

The very purpose of Jesus coming to this world is to seek and save the lost. *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* (Luke 19:10)

It seems self-evident that the purpose of Jesus ought to be the purpose of the church. However, like so much of life in the spirit, fulfilling this purpose is possible only when it comes from the heart. In fact, according to the words of Jesus, the heart will reveal itself - bringing forth limitless charity from a good heart and horrifying indifference from an evil heart. A heart that has not been transformed by Jesus cannot care about the perishing, and in stark contrast, a heart that has been reborn through Jesus cannot be indifferent.

This concept of indifference is the heart of Jesus’ message to the Pharisees. As they witnessed Him delivering men, women, and children from the power of evil spirits, they accused Jesus of doing so by the power of Beelzebub (Satan). The profound indifference they exhibited toward those who had been delivered from bondage is astonishing. As eyewitnesses of humanly impossible miracles, they could only see the threat to their way of life and were uncaring and indifferent to the shattered chains of wickedness. Perhaps that is why Jesus’ reply to them was, *“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.”* (Matthew 12:30)

Jesus did not condemn those who were actively opposing all that was good - perhaps because it is obvious

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Heart for the Lost

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that all that is evil is sin and that idol worship is contrary to the worship of the living God. Rather, He homed in on exposing the indifferent and inactive - those who were perceived as good people. But their good did not include “gathering” with Jesus, and He condemned their seemingly benign inaction as a very malignant “scattering.”

What does it mean to “gather” with Jesus? What did He do?

Jesus told His hometown congregation of Nazareth that, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”* (Luke 4:18-19)

If He is the Head and the church is His body, then we ought also to preach the gospel to the poor. If He was sent to heal the brokenhearted, then we will tenderly and patiently do all we can to heal the brokenhearted. If He came to preach deliverance to the captives, then we will gather with Him by preaching deliverance to those who are captive to lust, addiction, pride, hopelessness, and every other form of spiritual slavery.

We will demonstrate the proof of deliverance by living free from these. By the power of His Spirit, we can open the eyes of the blind and set the bruised free. In faith and love, we can freely proclaim the awe-inspiring and genuine hopefulness that now *is* the acceptable year of the Lord.

Through simple faith and deep humility, the faithful church will gather with Jesus.

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

(2 Timothy 4:1-5)

Out of a pure heart, let’s gather with Him.

Eastern Europe

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is significant as meager budgets are often stretched beyond limits.

Using sewing machines donated from Germany, fabric by the pallet donated from Hungary, working in rooms donated in a families home, these sisters allocate time from busy motherhood/household schedules to create clothing for needs within the brotherhood.

One sister describes her feelings, “We thank God for the opportunity to help in a small way when others have donated so much to help us. This is our way of passing on the great love God and others have shown upon our people in need.”

How you can help

Pray that those with needs can be served to make the love of Christ be seen and felt to make hope come alive. Also that Nazarean brethren may continue to recognize and take full advantage of opportunities to serve one another.

Your donations will be used for assistance toward basic material needs of food, clothing, and housing for destitute and infirm individuals and families in Eastern Europe.