Evangelism in Reformation Days.

By Richard Cameron

"The Lion of the Covenant"

"Our Lord is here this day, saying, 'Will ye take me?' There may be some saying, 'If I get or take Him, I shall get a cross also.' Well, that is true; but ye will get a sweet cross. Thus we offer Him unto you in the pulpit of Auldearn, Dunglas, Creeperjohn, and all ye that live throughout. And what say ye? Will ye take Him? Tell us what ye say; for we take instruments before these hills and mountains.

"... Angels are wondering at this offer; they stand beholding with admiration that our Lord is giving you such an offer this day. The angels will go up to report at the Throne what is everyone's choice."

The historian says that Cameron could not let his listeners go without learning how matters stood between them and his Lord. "As he closed, again he passed, compelled to do so by the depth of his passion. He fell into a rap of weeping, and the congregation wept along with him. It is covenanting never to be forgotten."

From Men of the Covenant page 271.

Covenanter Evangelism

The keynote of the Covenanters Church this year is "Evangelism." We find it in the discussions and conclusions of last Synod. The title of this tract does not imply that we are introducing a new brand of evangelism. Rather we wish to consider the old brand, of which the Covenant Church approves and which the world do well to practice.

The direct aim of Evangelism is the winning of souls to Christ. Soul winning has been an outstanding accomplishment in the Covenant Church. We need to aloud in this grace also. This little tract, which is only suggestive, is designed to assist in carrying out the evangelistic plans that are now under way.

The Necessity for It

Evangelism in the Covenant Church is necessary in order to fulfill the last command of Christ. The great business of the Church is not merely to instruct its own members, but to present the claims of Christ to the last. This is a crowning test of our love. The second great commandment bids us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Failure to spread the claims of Christ upon our lowered neighbor places a discount on our love.

Covenanter Evangelism is also necessary to save sinners. The number of strays and the number of deaths within the Church are so nearly the same that we cannot grow in numbers unless we gather from the world. The work of true evangelism is the remedy for decline in numbers.

No church can be indifferent to the perishing and live. A man freezing in the Alps, gave up to die. Then he discovered another man who
The Aims of It

The first aim of Covenant Evangelism is to save the lost. Christ values a soul above all worldly possessions. "Ye shall be in heaven over and above that repenteth. We could never sleep at night if we fully realized what it meant for a soul to be lost. What a lay it will be to meet in heaven the ones we have helped into eternal life?

What It Includes

The work of Evangelism is broader than an annual series of meetings. It is more than a mere spasmodic excitement of religious feelings. The spirit of evangelism should permeate all the activities of the Church. Our members should breathe an evangelistic atmosphere. This will require

Evangelistic Preaching

The preachers need it to increase their interest in the unsaved. The saved members need it to help them appreciate their own salvation and to feel a deeper responsibility for others.

All other unsaved ones need it to rescue them from an eternal hell.

Sabbath School Evangelism

is also essential. Our Sabbath Schools should be evangelistic in their teaching. It is very well to know Bible history and doctrine and biography, but the teaching of their alone will fail unless it is saturated with the message of personal salvation. The first aim of the Sabbath School should be to lead all of its members into a saving relation with Jesus Christ.
Personal Work

Christians should talk to others about Christ's saving love. People usually talk about the things in which they are interested the most. Why do we not talk more of "His wonderful works"? If we would cultivate religious conversation in our homes, it would be easier to talk the Christ outside.

I am not responsible for bringing man to Christ. This I cannot do, for I must work against his prejudices, his stubborn will, and his unrepentant heart. But the thing for which I am responsible is the bringing of Christ to men. The responsibility of what they do with Christ is left with their.

We need to learn the art of turning the common topic of conversation into topics of religion as Christ did with the woman of Samaria. How many of us work month after month in the same office or on adjoining farms with those who are not saved, and never offer to them the salvation that Christ has given us? Do we really care if they perish?

Since the Word of God is His instrument for regeneration, we need to learn how to use the Word in dealing with the unsaved. As a simple suggestion we must,

1. Show the sinner his condition.
   1. That he is lost—Isa. 53:6.
   2. That he is condemned—Jo. 3:18.
   3. That he is polluted—Ps. 51:5.
   4. That he is dead—Eph. 2:1.

II. Show him his need.
   1. To be found—La. 20:10.
   2. To be pardoned—Is. 55:7.
   3. To be cleansed—Is. 1:18.
   4. To be made alive—Jo. 3:16, 36.

III. Show what he must do to be saved.
   2. Confess—(a) Sis.—Jo. 1:9.
   4. Trust—2 Tim. 1:12.

These are common passages every Christian should know and be able to use in dealing with the lost.

Using the Tract

The printed page, under the blessing of God, has led many souls into the Light. A well-worded tract leaves the uppermost thought the person who reads it is sure to think about. Tracts are used primarily in the Christian's personal work. It can be used either as an introduction to a religious conversation or it may be used as a fitting conclusion.

The American Tract Society, 108 Nassau Street, New York, will send you samples of tracts that may be used to good advantage. They publish a list of helpful tracts by Rev. H. W. Pope, with such titles as:

"Why a Boy Should Be a Christian"
"Why a Girl Should Be a Christian"
"A Message to Students"
"Let the Rescued of the Lord Say So"
"How He Secured His Title"
"Talking by the Way," etc., etc.

If you send fifteen cents to the above address, they will send you twenty-five sample tracts to use during your work. A Christian who carries a tract and tactfully passes it out here and there well-worded tracts may be an immeasurable power in the Kingdom of God.

Equipment of the Workers

Those leading in the work of evangelism...
must be thoroughly converted themselves. They should have a full assurance of their own salvation. Their lives must be consistent with their profession. They must be persons of faith and prayer, and fully consecrated to God. They must have a love for souls and a working knowledge of the Bible. With all of this they must be baptized by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the source of power in bringing men to Christ. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of Hosts."

The Special Meetings

Special evangelistic meetings present a fine opportunity for gathering in the fruitage of the year. The late Dr. R. J. George, in his last letters to the editor of this magazine, pointed out that such services are "Scriptural," and have been vindicated by the history of the Church.

Making Preparation

This must be done first by searching the proper tissues of the congregation. Every true revival must be born in prayer. The way must be prepared weeks in advance. The congregation should be divided into prayer groups. These groups should meet frequently for conference and prayer. We who compose these groups must be willing that the revival shall begin in ourselves. We should pray that all divisions be healed, and that a spirit of confession and repentance may take hold of sinners members themselves.

Then a prayer list should be made of those whom we especially desire to reach for Christ. What unsaved souls are a burden on your heart? If I feel no responsibility for anyone in particular, then I am in a sad state and need to be prayed for myself. A prayerless evangelism will fail.

Preparation for Evangelistic meetings also calls for sensible advertising. People must be shown that we are interested in them. Church members should talk about their church meetings as enthusiastically as they talk about their Chautauqua. Give all your neighbors and friends a personal invitation to attend. Repeat the invitation if necessary, twice and again. If they have no suitable way of group, offer to take them yourself.

The printed card or the poster circulated the work before will have a fine advertising effect. Then supply the editor of your local newspaper with advance notices together with an account of the meetings day by day.

The Preaching

We must now see that the meetings measure up to the promises made in the advertising. The preacher here has the opportunity of a lifetime to present the unsearchable riches of Christ. The service will depend on scriptural or rhetorical effect, but upon the Spirit's use of a simple message delivered from an earnest heart. It is well to devote the first of the services to Christians themselves. We are not ready to reach others until we have been fully reached ourselves.

The messages should center around the great revival themes such as: The Work of the Holy Spirit; The Nature and Effects of Sin; The Atonement; Repentance; The Gospel Invitation; Eternal Life; Confessing Christ, etc., etc. The heart of every evangelistic message will, of course, be Jesus Christ.

The preacher should be impressed with the unique privilege of presenting the glorious Gospel of the Son of God.
The Praying

The public prayers at such services should be brief, pointed, informal and offered from the depths of the Christian heart. It is sometimes well to allow the prayers to come spontaneously from the people. It may be helpful to invite the congregation to kneel. The Spirit may occasionally lead us to turn the whole meeting into a service of prayer. The Spirit's work cannot be circumcised by unbending forms. We must make much of the service of prayer.

The Singing

The praise service holds a vital place in meetings for revival. People from the outside are often more involved in the singing than in any other part of the service. People ought to attach greater importance to the praise service than Covenanters. We have the greatest revival songs in the world to sing. We have as fine music set to these songs as the world has produced. Why, then, shouldn't we have the best singing? Yet in this respect most of our congregations have been lame.

If we would spend as much time practicing our music as other churches spend in training their choir, our Church would be famous for its singing. Where at all possible, the evangelist should be accompanied by a singer who should have full control of the song service. He should not only be able to lead the congregational singing, but he should be able to bring out the beauty of the Psalms and enable the people to see that no songs like them have ever been written. It may be necessary to sing the same verse over and over again for the truth fully to impress itself.

A half hour might be profitably spent in each meeting singing the Psalms. In our prayer meetings and other devotional gatherings it is well to encourage spontaneous singing. Let some one start a familiar Psalms with no announcement whatever, while the others join in. "Let us make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms." Ps. 150.

The Invitation

Covenanters have not been forward to invite the unsaved to accept Christ in a public meeting. But at the door of an evangelistic appeal we are seeking to reach be given an opportunity to say, then and there, what they will do with Christ.

Of course this part of the service should be conducted with caution. Invidious distinctions should not be made between Christian and non-Christians. Care should be taken not to place low social position before people by not a falsehood about their condition. We must avoid giving offense to those whom we desire to reach with further instruction.

But it is unwise and unwise to invite those who desire to begin the Christian life to come forward and receive Christ. This puts them in touch with the pastor and other Christians who may encourage and instruct them further in the faith.

Too much dependence, however, must not be placed in the public appeal. In the enthusiasm of the moment we may think that nothing more should be needed to head everyone to decide for Christ. But the work done outside of the meetings may prove more fruitful than the meetings themselves. In a two weeks series it is sometimes wise not to extend the invitation publicly until the first week. But the leaders or personal workers should converse privately with those who have reasonable hope of receiving and serve to prepare them for answering the public invitation when it comes.
Some in this way came to the meetings with their minds made up, and the thing that led them to their decision was the personal touch outside.

A personal worker's hand should be selected and instructed with great care. Their work is vastly important. It is also responsible. Every Christian is qualified to do this work properly; they should do it tastefully. The members of such a board will make a great deal to the success of the evangelistic campaign, and give prestige to the campaign that helps it. Every Christian should feel responsible for bringing Christ to the un救ed neighbors and friends, but a small band especially qualified and trained will be of incalculable value in promoting a revival.

In addition to their work outside, the personal workers can be of great value in the service when the invitation is being given. They may have some conversation with the inquirer by quietly offering to accompany them forward. It is well for them to say to themselves next thing when they wish to reach so as to attract the inquirer's attention as possible. At the close of the service these personal workers should invite into the Inquiry Room those who have not made their decision to serve Christ.

The Inquiry Room

The late Dr. R. J. George, in his lectures on Practical Theology, has a chapter devoted to the Inquiry Meeting. He says that such meetings are scriptural and of the greatest importance. He advocates a separate room for the inquirers and invites them to gather after the public service is over. Besides a public introduction, the Christian worker should do personally to the unsaved and invite them into the Inquiry Room. This meeting furnishes a fine opportunity for personal dealing, away from the gaze of the unconverted. It gives an opportunity for removing difficulties, and aids the inquirer in taking the first step toward salvation. The personal worker should use the Ruse. He should place the passage before the inquirer and get him to read it for himself. Encourage him to feel the pain of his sin, and to yield his heart to Christ. Then lead together in prayer. Have him pray for himself, asking God to be merciful to him, a sinner.

All inquirers should be carefully followed up and visited in their homes. The attention shown now will likely determine where their church membership will be. Remember through all that immortal souls are hanging in the balance.

Conserving the Results

There is often a pernicious reaction after a revival season. Satan will try hard to win back all he has lost. We must strive to see that such a reaction shall not take place. To do this, church workers must maintain a high plane of Christian living. It is vital that the people make a diligent use of the means of grace and be kept active in Christian work.

The new converts should receive special care. Their Christian characters are still plastic, and their religious habits are not yet fixed. They will meet peculiar temptations without the knowledge of how to overcome them.

To safeguard these young Christians they must be enlisted in a study of the Bible. They must be taught the proper methods of prayer. They should become regular in attendance upon the services of the church. When the new converts enter into the social circle and identify them with the congregation's life and work. They should be trained to witness for Christ and to recognize that they are stewards of all God has entrusted to them. It is important that they be given some definite work to do in the church.
All young converts should be instructed in the matter of church membership. First of all, what church should they join? Frequently we hear it said that we cannot expect the people of the world to join the Covenant Church because her standard is so high. As a result of such reasoning we have been too content to see other churches reap the fruits of our labors.

Why should we take for granted that those whom we have won for Christ will not join our church? Why not take for granted that they will? What church has a greater claim on them than the one which is the means of their salvation? The fact is, that when a person is thoroughly convinced, he wants to join the church he thinks holds the greatest amount of truth. If you can convince him that your church measures up to that ideal, yours is the church he will join.

It is rank fallacy to say that our standards are too high for converts from the world to reach. Are they any higher than they were all through the New Testament Church? If so, they should be changed.

When true converts that we have helped to win go into other churches, it is not so much because they will not accept our principles as because we do not seriously try to convince them that such principles are vital or true.

Then we should remember that there are many people who are looking for an earnest church that stands on a platform of scriptural truth. They are distressed with the things brought in for entertainment. They do not approve of the sins of Sabbath desecration and anti-biblical secrecy common among other churches. Such conversions have kept many from joining the church and from confessing the Christ whom the church proclaims.

Many such persons when led to Christ will be attracted by a church, no matter how small, that has a simple spiritual warmness, that believes fully in the inspiration of the Bible, that reveres the Sabbath day, that renounces all entangling alliances with the world, that is hostile to Christ, and that believes in putting Jesus Christ first, at whatever cost, in every relationship of life.

Reaching Out

The result of such a quickening in our congregations will be a desire to press into every open door. In one community a mission school will be organized. In another, openings will be found to visit and hold meetings in the shops or perhaps it is the hospital and the jail. The Young People's Society will arrange places for their pastor to preach and will hold meetings themselves. Gospel Teams will go out to present Christ to men, and all will work together to make the Sabbath School and other congregational agencies and neighborhood forces for evangelization. In this part the church will go on a new venture to raise the standard of life in the community where it dwells.

The Covenant Church must be an evangelical church for her own sake. We cannot neglect this part of the Great Commission and live.

The Covenant Church must be an evangelical church for the world's sake. We cannot neglect it and hope the world live. The world is dying for the message we have to give. We have long specialized in the message of Christ, the King and of national salvation. Perhaps the world would more readily hear our message if we were more zealously thrusting the message of individual salvation.

Who is ready to help place the Church of the Covenanters in the vanguard of soul-winning churches?
"Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." James 5:16.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Dan. 12:3.

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