

of a missionary in Central India who told of a Hindu woman who went to the outsirts of the city and sat down on a pile of dirt and wailed as though her heart would break. And that she had been doing this for three months and he said the reason that she lost her four year old boy and as a pagan she had no hope in God beyond the grave.

How different it is when we might stand beside an open grave as a Christian and lay a beloved one away. Though there be tears there is a rainbow of promise in the resurrection. I would not have you to be ignorant brethren concerning them which are asleep. That ye sorrow not wen as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Now there is great comfort in that statement.

What a difference it makes to a Christian and to the pagan women. We have a feeling of hope and compassion. You cannot compare the two. You can only contrast them. The gospel over against those who have no gospel.

III. The third man I would call Cooperation. As we introduce this man to you, the idea some may object. But here is a name of a Christian & Cooperation. And much harm has been done because of a lack of it. Now there are some who insist that organizations should not be in the church. And that the church does not need such. But if we are going to have conviction and

"They come unto him bringing one sick of the palsy which was born afore." (Mark 2:3) In the second chapter, first twelve verses, we find an interesting story. Also in Romans 10:1-15, a story about missions. Here is a picture of missions in action. The text refers to evangelism. Not even in the New Testament can we find a better picture of what we Christians mean by missions in action. Missions is our way of working together to bring men and women, one by one, face to face with Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Here four men are doing that. A team of four men putting the Great Commission into action.

Consider the man about whom these four showed their heart's concern. See this palsied person by the roadside. Friendless, hopeless, and here is a living example of men everywhere today without God and hope in the world. And apart from the Christian hope, the world today is one of despair. Everywhere sin has left its deadly marks in the souls of men. Sin has marred and ruined the image of God.

This holds true for the poor soul down on skid-row. Who knows that he is down and out. It holds true also for the one who thinks that he is a monarch of all that he surveys but knows not the disease that eats at his souls. In the midst of the world, men have lost their way to God. And people are confused and frustrated in this present world and in this crisis. Such conditions around the world make us think of that palsied man

who was helpless by the roadside. The world that God still loves and he commissioned his church to evangelize. How is it going to happen? We must have teamwork

Let us consider these four men who formed the team and brought this man to Jesus, who healed the body and healed the soul. The Scripture does (not tell us who) these four men were. But we might use names to describe them that would help us to remember them. And of course when we get to heaven we can ask who they were and what their real names were.

I. The man called Conviction. Let us call the first man conviction. If we are going to have a real gospel team there must be at least something that motivates us. There must be a conviction about this palsied man who needed help. And here was a man who had a missionary endeavor with conviction to help.

Here in the home church, as everywhere throughout the world, we too need to be (motivated) by conviction. I can think of at least two things that we need to be convicted of. First, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:23). And second, outside of Christ, all men are lost. And Christ alone can save. I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. Today there are even many church leaders who are not sure that non-Christians are lost. Many of the modern theologians

about hell. They gladly accept what the Lord teaches about heaven. But the multitude of non-Christians; they say that's kinds inconsistent. But the thing that motivated William Carey and Judson was that men were lost and that they were without hope. The pioneer missionaries had a mighty conviction what the gospel meant - good news. Good news that Jesus came to seek and to save.

They had Bible conviction about Jesus Christ. Who he was and why he came and what he accomplished through his death and his resurrection.

If we too would be willing to do our part in the great commission by preaching the gospel to every creature, we must be motivated by this mighty conviction. So we name the first man conviction.

II. The man called Compassion. The second man on this missionary team we call Compassion. A man may have conviction and refuse to have warmth and compassion. It is not enough for us to believe that countless people today stand in need of Christ and that Christ alone can give them this help. It is not enough for us to be convicted that the palsied man by the roadside is lost; but like the Lord Jesus Christ we too must care.

Paul said he was controlled by the love of Christ. (2 Cor. 5:14). The world must look to us to demonstrate this love of

to continue in obedience with the great commission. One by one until we win them.

This is the final objective of missions. The reason we pray and preach; the reason we give our substance; the reason we offer our sons and daughters. That they might go forth and preach the gospel to men and women and boys and girls everywhere. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. That whosoever believed in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

So let us begin to magnify conviction, compassion, cooperation, and consistency. In our church today we need to demonstrate this kind of teamwork and join hands together for the glory of God.

compassion, there must be cooperation among Christians who have conviction. There must be some way. All of God's work is in need of Christlike cooperation. In fact, that's exactly what this scene shows to us. That these believers were working together. These four men worked as a team to bring this one person to Jesus. No one of the four working by himself could have rendered that service. But when they pooled their resources, the task was easy. And so in our missionary work, seldom does a person work all by himself to win another soul to Christ. There must be a chain of events and the person who does the witnessing does not form the only link with the saving power of God. Because the person in need makes his decision, others everywhere have prayed. As the scripture says, one plants, another waters, but God gives the increase.

If there is in the service of the Lord any one place where Christians ought to cooperate, it's in the place of world missions. And without the missionary to go overseas the church at home could not carry out the Great Commission. Without the prayers and without the gifts of a church at home, the missionary himself comes from the local church where God's people have learned the joy of teamwork.

Missionaries will tell you that while they are on the field of the necessity of cooperation. No matter how much one man might have desired to carry this sick man, he couldn't. but

Four men taking hold of each corner could carry the task and carry it out to completion. And how much more in the entire church of our Lord if we could find this in our hearts to work. When we think of the littleness of our missionary work, and our lack of prayer, we wonder how long. Today in spite of the opposition to our mission work around the world, there is still need for Christians to enter this area all around the world.

IV. The man called Consistency. Now I would like to introduce the fourth member of this team. And we might call him persistent or something else. But we ought to make it clear what we mean here. The four took the sick man to the house where Jesus was teaching. They found the place crowded, nobody seemed willing to give way, so the four could bring the helpless creature to Jesus. If these four men could have been like some church members today, they would have said one to another, we have done our part. Now let the people on the inside do their part.

No, the four men did not talk that way. They were consistent. They had undertaken that job and they would not let nothing interfere with its completion. And so they climbed on the roof and took up some of the tile and let this man down in the presence of Jesus. And when he saw their faith and their resourcefulness, he responded to their teamwork by doing the for the paralytic what only he could do. He gave healing of

the body and of the soul.

Earth hath no sorrows that heaven cannot cure. Right here and right now as well as beyond the seas. And the Great Commission calls for a united effort.

When the Lord Jesus saw the faith of these four men, he said to the sick man, son thy sins be forgiven thee. By so saying he raised the theological question that troubled these men. What concerns others here is the way our Lord treated the man with the palsy. Clearly the Lord Jesus showed us that world missions can be and it can work through physical distresses. That we surely ought to do and go further. They need to be fed and clothed and healed. And at the same time they can be saved from their sins. Which leads us to say, seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

Today there are countless obstacles and difficulties in the way of missions. Some governments are against it. Language barriers, primitive living conditions, customs, all of these and many more. That still keep people from doing God's will. But we as the church of the Lord Jesus must not let these obstacles get in our way. The gospel needs to be preached to every nation. And like these four men in the scripture lesson, who consistently stayed at their task, until they heard the Lord Jesus say to the man, son thy sins be forgiven thee. So we need