

A BLESSING TO OTHERS

“...and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord’, except by the Holy Spirit.”
—1 CORINTHIANS 12:3

The conversion of people to Christ provides an important lesson in how to reach them and what it means working together with God in the process.

Many people worship a God they really don't know, as in the case of Lydia. They are aware there is a Creator, and have felt that inner conscience or sense of eternity God has placed in our hearts. That lets them know there is something much greater and more powerful out there than what they see. In the best way they know how, they are seeking God and wanting to know Him.

Many people are searching, but in the wrong places, and we can be quick to criticize for that, rather than seeing the heart that is searching. Jeremiah 29:13 says, “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” This is because God is also seeking, and He puts within our hearts that appetite to seek Him and know Him. It is His working in us that opens our hearts to the truths of Scripture. His Spirit leads us to salvation, and then to a new life, where He begins to express His character in us and then through us for the enrichment of others.

It is essential we commune with God on a regular basis in order to become sensitive to His timing in people's lives. Christ is the One who knows which hearts are ripe and ready. If Paul would have taken immediate action with the slave girl, it might have been too soon. We are sometimes inclined to think one size fits all – anyone, anywhere at any

time, but that isn't the case. If there is no spark that is responsive, the timing is wrong. In working with God, we learn to recognize His voice and be keen observers of opportunities He opens to us.

The problem for many of us is that we miss opportunities because of hardships and things going wrong in our lives. We tend to get upset, become self-pitying, and are no longer on the lookout for God-given opportunities. Thrown in prison and locked in stocks, Paul and Silas sang and worshipped God. Even in our hardships, sometimes especially in our hardships, God gives us opportunities to bring the saving grace of Jesus Christ into someone else's life. God is never outwitted by any circumstance, and in our suffering, we are able to help others. Keeping our eyes open to opportunities God gives us is a way of worshipping Him. It demonstrates our trust in Him, dependence on Him and love for Him, which always results in blessing to others.

PRAYER: Precious Lord, The way You work is remarkable. Make me a blessing to others, I pray.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I keeping my eyes open to opportunities God gives me to witness for Him?