

SUBJECT: A CHALLENGE FOR THE CHURCH

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 9:36-10:1

From the sermon file of Dr. Doyce H. Nolan

INTRODUCTION

The Allegheny Ant, a common species in the eastern United States, helps enrich forest areas by carrying tons of soil from below ground to the surface. Researchers from the University of Wisconsin made a three year study and discovered that one colony of ants moved 15 tons of sub-soil, building clusters of large mounds and burrowing 5 1/2 feet below the surface. This process increases the nutrients of the surface soil. It is no wonder that Proverbs 6:6 tells us "to go the ant, consider her ways, and be wise."

If God can use a colony of ants to move 15 tons of sub-soil to the surface, surely He can use one church fellowship to accomplish mighty things. There are three requirements if God uses us:

I. WE MUST SEE OTHERS COMPASSIONATELY. (36a)

1. We Must Demonstrate Christian Love. (Matt. 9:36; I Cor. 13:7)
 - a. True Christianity reaches out to people and accepts them regardless of their race, creed and color.
2. We Must See The Desperate Condition Of The Lost. (9:36b)
 - a. A person without Christ will never have the answer to their problems.
 - b. Illustration:

When the book Payton Place hit the book stores in 1965 Grace Metalious was happily married to a school teacher. They had three children and their income was a fraction over three million dollars a year. When she died the newspapers estimated her fortune, the earnings from Payton place, at a million dollars. Her liabilities were one hundred twenty five thousand dollars more than her assets. Grace Metalious married George Metalious when they were 17 years old. After the book was published and the money came rolling in, they divorced. She next married a disk jockey which lasted two years. She came to their divorce court drunk. She then remarried George, her first husband and they separated in less than a year. She then began going with a Welch journalist, who was married and had five children of his own. She died five months later, leaving what she thought to be a fortune to her lover. There were 25 people who attended her funeral. Among these were her three children, and George, who set by her coffin and cried. She had gained success out of life, but lost all purpose and meaning in life.

II. WE MUST RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGE. (37-38)

1. The Actions Of Christ.
 - a. He looked upon the multitudes around Him and saw them abandoned, harassed and neglected. He saw them as victims of Pharisaic guidance, trying to hold on to forms and rituals with their souls uncared for.
2. The Actions Of The Church.
 - a. We need to see the wretched conditions of the world around us. But before we can, we must wipe away the dissension and separation among ourselves, replacing with love, unity and strength.

III. WE MUST REALISE OUR COMMISSION. (10:1)

1. The Source Of Power.
 - a. Christ provided power against unclean spirits, over sickness and disease. Christ is not physically present with us as He was with His disciples, but He has given us assurance of this power in Acts 1:8.
2. The Purpose Of The Power. (10:7)
 - a. You can share the Gospel because you have been born again as proof positive that the unsaved are saved through the message of the Gospel. The fields are white unto harvest.

CONCLUSION:

Will you commit yourself to serve and work for our Lord?

- There must be the experience of salvation.
- Only then can you see others compassionately.
- Always remember you are capable of doing what God has called you to do.