

Dial Daily Bread: He Who Does Not Speak in Love Cannot Be Speaking Truth

Dear Friends of "Dial Daily Bread,"

Jesus had no fear of the multitudes. He had faithfully preached the truth--so faithfully, in fact, that His path was leading Him directly to His own death. Why then need He fear to present the cross to the multitudes and to call for their decision? Only the man who himself bears the cross dare summon others to do so. What need had Christ to resort to any psychological subterfuge? The way of the cross had delivered Him from any such helpless vanity.

Since it is clear that a decision to accept the gospel is a decision to accept the cross, and since that decision can be made only by the inner heart of hearts, it follows that there must be confusing pressure in true soul-winning work. Simple truth needs no alluring embellishments to make it attractive to the honest heart.

In fact, such embellishments serve only to repulse the sincere seeker for truth who fails to discern the voice of the True Shepherd in the confusing appeals to "self" voiced by the would-be soul winner. Psychological tricks and egocentric inducements to "decision" can be the tool only of one who knows not the strength of the cross.

The reason the cross is the "power of God unto salvation" is that love alone has true drawing power. "I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you" (Jer. 31:3).

The converts who come by way of the cross are those whom the Father draws. In His mysterious process of drawing, He doesn't want mere lip servers to be sought, but disciples who will *follow* the Lamb wherever He goes. The power of the drawing is in the truth, for Christ is the Truth. If truth is made unmistakable, the power will prove to be invincible. Another way of saying the same thing is that the truth-seeker and truth are made for each other and when they meet, they unite.

On the other hand, the use of psychological and emotional techniques designed to force "decision" may attract an entirely wrong class of adherents who are neither disciples nor followers of the Lamb. If "decision" is secured on the basis of blatant self-interest, it cannot be of faith. And "whatever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23). In the resultant confusion, the True Shepherd's "sheep" may be turned away completely because "they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers" (John 10:5). This may be one reason why sometimes so few people respond to gospel invitations.

Jesus said that His own sheep hear His voice. "The sheep follow Him, for they know His voice"; "My own know Me, as the Father knows Me and I know the Father" (John 10:3, 4, 14, 15, *Revised Standard Version*). Those "other sheep" of Christ's fold therefore need not be *persuaded* to accept gospel truth; once the truth (made known by the voice of Christ) is clearly presented to them, no power in earth or hell can possibly *dissuade* them from following that Voice!

The winsomeness is in the truth itself because love and truth are inseparable. He who thinks he is speaking right doctrine but does not speak in love cannot be speaking truth.

--Robert J. Wieland