

Are You Concerned?

by Bill Crews

Have you ever felt the load of concern for lost, wayward souls that God has rightly placed on your shoulders?

Jesus, the Son of God, who died to become the world's Savior, came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10), became the master Teacher (John 3:2), and manifested compassion and concern for the lost He encountered (Mark 6:34 "*And He came forth and saw a great multitude; and He had compassion upon them because they were as sheep without a shepherd*") His heart went out to them; His time was always given to them; He saw them, *spiritually*, as lost without hope and as fields white unto harvest. In Luke 13:34 he cried out, "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent unto her! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathered her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!*" Hanging from the cross, He prayed, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*" (Luke 23:34). That prayer was answered in Acts 2 (read it to see how).

Noah, in his day, saw the wandering, rebellious and extremely wicked souls that surrounded him and accepted the thankless and fruitless task of becoming a preacher of righteousness and a builder of an ark of safety to offer hope (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5). He cared that men were in sin. He demonstrated that he cared.

Jeremiah has not been called "the weeping prophet" for nothing. For forty years he preached to the wicked people of Judah, striving in vain to get them to repent. He wept over their sins and their ensuing punishment. In the Lamentations he wrote: "*Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by*" (Lamentations 1:12). How could any be unmoved over the plight of the people of Judah?

Paul cared deeply about the lost souls among the Jews (Romans 10:1; 9:34); Paul cared about the souls of the Gentiles (Romans 15:16-21); and Paul cared about the souls of his brethren in Christ. "*Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is caused to stumble, and I burn not?*" (2 Cor. 11:29). Paul felt the plight of those around him and elsewhere.

But what about you, my brother and my sister in Christ? Have you ever felt and do you now feel the load of concern for lost souls that God has rightly placed on your shoulders? We are saved that we might save others. Do you possibly think that only the apostles and prophets of the first century and that only the elders and preachers, then and now, should be concerned about lost souls? You cannot **become** a Christian without being concerned about the salvation of your own soul. And you cannot **be** a Christian without being concerned about the souls around you who are lost in sin. And you cannot **be** a Christian without being concerned about weak or unfaithful brethren. Yes, and that concern must be demonstrated!

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