

~Other Speakers S-Z: John Sung:

"What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world but lose his soul?" Those words kept bouncing around inside John Sung's head. The brilliant son of a Chinese Methodist minister, John was in the United States to learn all he could about the sciences. In just five years, even while working to support himself, he completed his Bachelor of Science Degree, his Master of Science and his Ph.D.

But the importance of the soul did not escape him. He entered Union Theological Seminary. That brought him to the crisis of his life. Union had abandoned many clear teachings of Scripture and substituted modern theology (God is dead) and Bible criticism in their place. John began to doubt everything that he had been taught while growing up. This troubled him and he prayed and studied the Bible looking for answers.

Suddenly, one night, his soul was transformed. He began to weep and to shout for joy. He raced to tell teachers and fellow students. The next thing he knew, he was locked in an insane asylum! In the eyes of the spiritually dead school authorities, his behavior indicated that he had gone mad.

John was allowed to take only his Bible and a pen into the cell with him. In the 193 days that he was locked up, he read the Bible from cover to cover forty times. He later said that that was his real theological training.

After his release, John returned to China. On the ship, he threw overboard all of his diplomas, certificates and awards, keeping only his doctorate for his father's sake. From that moment on, his life was dedicated to winning souls.

And that is what John did. After a slow three-year start, God sent him from end to end of China and around Southeast Asia where he preached sermon after sermon stressing mankind's sin and need for the gospel. He named specific sins by name. Stung to the heart, his listeners wept openly. Many confessed their sins in front of the whole congregation.

At meeting after meeting, people listened to John and repented. He preached for only fifteen years, but in that time, he led hundreds of thousands to Christ. The secret of his success was hours of prayer. Every morning he rose early to pray for two or three hours. People said he prayed as if Christ were an intimate friend in the room with him. To him, faith was watching God work while you were on your knees.

John died on this day, August 18, 1944; He was only 43 years old.

Sources:

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