

~Other Speakers G-L: Raymond Golsworthy:

Ordained to be with Him
 Reading Time: 4 minutes
 Raymond Golsworthy

“And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach.”
 Mark 3:14

I would like to introduce what I have to say about this verse by mentioning an experience I had soon after coming to India. Although it was nearly sixty years ago, I have never been able to forget it, and it left a very deep imprint upon me.

At that time, I had the great privilege of accompanying brother Bakht Singh on one of His campaigns in the city of Karachi, then part of India. For some weeks we shared the morning and evening ministry in the fairly large Anglican Church, and, in spite of the very difficult situation, God’s anointing was very evidently upon our brother. Then, one morning, our brother said to me: “Let us go and pray together down on the seashore.” I readily agreed, and off we went. Brother Bakht Singh seemed to know the area very well, and he took me straight away to a stretch of sandy beach, which seemed to be more or less unknown to others, and we just knelt down in the sand. It was the cold season in Karachi and the warmth of the sand was very welcome and comforting. Then brother Bakht Singh began to pray, sometimes in English, and sometimes in his native Urdu. I could really feel his burden as he spread out the whole need of the whole area before God, and pleaded for a merciful entrance of God’s Light. Also, as the Holy Spirit moved him, he remembered by name these countless individuals who had asked him to pray for certain personal needs. His intercessions were sometimes interspersed with pauses, and I had the sense that our brother was somehow “watching God” and listening for what His responses would be.

I had the privilege of kneeling beside our brother all through that day, and occasionally interspersing my own prayers, and trying to express what was on my own heart. It was, indeed, a day I shall never forget, and all who know our brother will know that this was his “manner of life”. Whatever were the pressures of the work, he wanted, above all, to be with his great Lord and Saviour. I shall never be able to describe the “glow” and the “glory”, which seemed to “take over” as we knelt there in the sand. I knew personally that I had been brought near to God, and that we were “dwelling with the risen King for His work” (1 Chron. 4: 23). With that in mind let us now return to our verse in Mark’s gospel. It is there clearly stated that the Lord ordained these twelve disciples that, first and foremost, they might be with Him, and then only would they “go forth and preach.” Does it not follow from that, that time with the Lord must always be linked with service for the Lord? Indeed, there is the inference that it is that time with the Lord that determines the degree of success in the service that we render. In any case, it is clear that when our Lord “ordains”, it is this fellowship with Himself that is firstly in His thought. He wants His servants to be near Him, and to stay near Him. Even if we cannot duplicate the experiences of others (and we should never even try to do that), a “real fellowshiping with the Lord” must always be regarded as a first priority. If we but set our hearts upon that, God will certainly work out the details. “Preaching” is best done by those who are showing themselves to be close friends of Christ, and it is the same with all forms of service. As all know, close friends always love to spend as much time as possible in each other’s company!

What we have been saying is perhaps just a call to us all to get our priorities in order. So many of us are enthusiastic about “going” and “preaching” and yet know little about time with the Lord Himself. It is noteworthy that the same twelve of Mark 3:14 were the ones who, years later, declared to their colleagues (and please note the order): “We will give ourselves to 1) prayer and 2) the ministry of the word.” (Acts 6: 4). They had learned their lesson well. Their priorities were still intact. We remember how Paul referred to ministry as the going forth of “the sweet savour of Christ” (2 Cor. 2: 14,15). For ourselves, we are persuaded that that fragrance has first to be poured upon us, “within the veil”. Only then will it be shed abroad “without the veil”. Perhaps the greatest need of the church in our day, is to heed the call of Heb. 10:22, and to “draw near” to God. Only then shall we be fit and ready to hold fast “the profession of our faith” (verse 23). We would like to conclude now by mentioning some words of a sister in Christ, who, as yet, is quite unknown to us. It would seem, from the name we have, that this sister was of Indian extraction, and of a distinct Hindu background. The name given is Ellen Lakshmi Goren, and she wrote a lovely hymn which we often sing in our meetings. In her hymn, she tells of the inexpressible joys that are hers as she spends time in what she calls “The Secret of God’s Presence”. Joy after joy she mentions and then concludes by telling her

readers that they, too, can know the joys of that happy meeting-place™. She assures them that, whenever they go forth from such a tryst, they will carry, in their faces, the shining image of their Master™. The actual words are:

“Would you like to show the sweetness of the secret of the Lord? Go and hide beneath His shadow; this shall then be your reward; And whenever you leave the silence of that happy meeting place, You will bear the shining image of the Master in your face.”

May the Lord teach us all the meaning of “life within the veil”™. The Lord Himself longs for our nearness to Him, and it is that nearness that will give meaning to whatever may be our allotted task among our fellow-men. We must realise that, if we are “ordained”™ at all, it is firstly that we might “be with Him”™. All the other privileges will follow. Like the potters of 1 Chron. 4: 23, we must “dwell with the King for His work”.