

# Commentary: Where is the passion?

July 16, 2008

It is incredible how many professing Christians do not see themselves as God's soldiers embroiled in a great cosmic conflict against a deadly supernatural foe—participants in a war that demands spiritual weaponry for defense and attack, spiritual armor for protection, and spiritual power to overcome.

Where are the great calls for commitment to prayer, repentance and surrender to God's purposes? Where are the people who would stand and accept such a challenge if it were offered? Churches, most often, seem to have just a gnawing desire to survive and maintain the status quo. It is as if they do not want to do much and they're looking for someone to not do it with them.

As George Verwer puts it....

*Backward Christian soldiers,*

*Fleeing from the fight,*

*With the cross of Jesus,*

*Nearly out of sight.*

*Christ our rightful master*

*Stands against the foe*

*Onward into battle, we*

*Seem afraid to go.*

It takes all the oil they manufacture to oil the machinery that manufactures the oil. Months come and go, programs lurch and sputter, fingers remain snugly stuck in gaping holes in the dike, and malaise is the order of the day.

*Sit here then ye people,*

*Join our sleeping throng.*

*Blend with ours, your voices*

*In a feeble song.*

*Blessings, ease and comfort*

*Ask from Christ the King,*

*But with our modern thinking,*

*We won't do a thing.*

More frightening is the evident lack of belief in basic doctrine. The Bible says everyone who dies without a personal relationship with God through acceptance of his Son, Jesus, will spend forever in hell. It also states that the only way these people can escape this judgment is if God's people share Jesus with them. No angels preaching, no gospel written in clouds or carved on the stone face of mountains. If Christians don't share their faith, then people will remain lost and hellbound, period.

Have we abandoned that biblical truth, or are we naively neglectful and distracted, or are we wickedly uncaring about the dying that surround us?

We sing it...

*People need the Lord, people need the Lord*

*At the end of broken dreams, he's the open door.*

*People need the Lord, people need the Lord.*

*When will we realize that we must give our lives,*

*For people need the Lord.*

**And sing it...**

*Throw out the life line! Throw out the life line!*

*Someone is drifting away;*

*Throw out the life line! Throw out the life line!*

*Someone is sinking today.*

**And then we sing it...**

*There's a call comes ringing over the restless wave,*

*"Send the light! Send the light!"*

*There are souls to rescue there are souls to save,*

*Send the light! Send the light!*

We preach it, and teach it, and study about it over and over again. We create programs with fancy names, print volumes filled with instruction, and practice telling our testimonies to one another.

We do everything except do it.

Where is the passion?

I saw a young couple and their children working passionately in our neighborhood last Saturday, going door to door late into the night, offering their latest issues of Watchtower magazine. As I drove past the park on the way to church, I saw two young Mormon missionaries, surrounded by a group of wide-eyed young people, passionately sharing their testimonies.

Where are the passionate people of God?

Do you know what would happen if all of God's people became burdened for the lost souls around them and began to share their faith? The church would be on mission and alive throughout the community every day, and the result would be neighbors, co-workers, fellow students and countless others accepting the promise of life in Christ. The aisles would be filled each week with God's people coming with their newly won converts to celebrate with the fellowship. The baptistry would be full each week, the water swirling around young and old alike giving testimony of their newfound faith through that age-old rite. And it wouldn't cost a cent.

If they be lost and damned, let it be because they rejected the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit or shunned the truth of God's word. Please don't let it be because they never heard.

Charles Spurgeon, the "Prince of Preachers," implored: "If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms around their knees, imploring them to stay. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned or unprayed for."

Let us not be hypocrites. Let us believe what we sing and teach! We are stewards of the only hope offered to a hopeless world.

Please, Lord God, set us afire!

*Dale Freeman is pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Albany, Ore.*