

Men, Whose Hearts God Has Touched!

Text: Acts 6:3, 5; John 1:6-8; Ezek. 22:30; I Sam. 10:26;

Introduction:

- When we want something done, we look for better methods; we are constantly straining to devise new methods, new plans, new organizations to advance the church, to meet the need of the hour.
- The trend of the day is a tendency to lose sight of the man or to sink the man into the plan or the organization.
- God's plan is to make much of the man, far more of him than anything else... men are God's method.
- While the church looks for better methods, ways, and means, God is looking for better men.
- The shortage is men; men who are dedicated, men who are committed.

Ezek. 22:30 *"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none."*

Acts 6: 3, 5, 7 *"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among yourselves seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business... and the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. . ."* *And the Word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly."*

John 1:6-8 *"There was man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not the Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light."*

I Sam. 10:26 *"And Saul also went home to Gibeah; **and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.**" (God called a man, Saul, to fulfill a task, but **He also called men to go with him, men whose hearts God had touched.**)*

- The glory of God, the work of God, the Christian home, the Church and its needs are dependent upon men. Men, whose hearts God has touched.

I. GOD TOUCHED THE HEARTS OF MEN IN THE PAST!

In the past, God has touched the hearts of men, in all ages, for many purposes, for His glory -- He has touched the hearts of men.

A. To Save the World -- God touched the heart of Noah.

1. Noah believed God, by faith making the Ark.
2. He found grace in the eyes of God, and two times it says in
Gen. 6:22 *Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so did he.* Gen. 7:5 *"And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him."*

B. To Call a Nation -- God touched the heart of Abraham.

1. He left Ur of the Chaldeas; He went out not even knowing where he went;
2. He went by faith; trusting God, worshiping, building altars for worship every where He went!
3. Here was one who was called the friend of God. He knew and walked with God -- his heart was deeply touched by the Father!

C. To Lead a Nation -- God touched the heart of Moses.

1. What a feat, what pressure to lead two or three million people; people who murmured, complained, griped, and did about every thing they could to stand against Moses.
2. Here was one whose heart God touched -- the meekest man that every lived -- was the testimony of Christ Himself.
3. A mighty statesmen who had counted the cost; who *seeing Him who is invisible* had turned his back upon the riches, glory, pomp, position, and power that could have been his in Egypt. He rather chose to suffer for God for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. (Heb. 11:

D. To Rebuild the Walls -- God touched the heart of a king's cup bearer.

1. God moved on the heart of Nehemiah. He wept, fasted, prayed, begged God for days, for the glory of God.
2. He was burdened for a nation that was maligned; hated, badgered, beset with enemies.
3. He had compassion for the remnant that had returned who needed the walls rebuilt. He knew the good hand of God upon him personally!

E. To Establish the church in many places -- God touched the heart of a Paul.

1. He stated, that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. (Acts 26:19)
2. He was especially called by God -- touched by the hand of God. (Acts 9:

I Corinthians chapter two teaches us that God calls, but not many mighty, not many noble are call, but God has called the foolish, the lowly, the humble, and obscure.

II. GOD TOUCHES THE HEARTS OF MEN, TODAY, FOR A PURPOSE.

Ezek. 22:30 *"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me in the land, . . . "* I don't think that this has changed any. God has many purposes as He seeks for a man... God sought for a man! Is it any different today? God's plan is men!

A. In that hour God was looking for a man, *He sought for a man who should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before Him for the land, that He would not destroy it; but He found none.*

1. The Lord was unable to find anyone who would stand defensively, through spiritual leadership and intercession for the nation against the impending judgment.
2. Moses at an earlier time had stood in the breach of the wall before the Lord in his day, to intercede for his people and to instruct them in the ways of the Lord as their leader.
3. Now God could not find anyone who would step to the front and lead Judah to repentance and to a godly walk according the stipulations of the Mosaic covenant.
4. There was no person to take the lead, lead the nation into confession and resulting righteousness. No ruler who would intercede for the people. All were corrupt and indifferent. How sad!
5. This man whom God would have called, and sought after, would have done the noblest of work that any one can do -- its aim is the very loftiest. Such work for God brings man into companionship with God, its fruits are permanent, yea, eternal.

B. God has specific purposes today.

1. ***To save souls*** -- consider Abraham, burdened for Lot and his family in Sodom and G.; See Him pleading with God for souls!
 - a. Abram was apprised by God of what He was about to do!
 - b. He knew the judgment of God would fall on Lot's home town.
 - c. Men, God has apprised all of us of what He is doing!
 Acts 15:14 *He is calling out a people for His Name.*
 I Peter 2:4,5 *Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth...*
 II Pet. 3:9 *"The Lord is not slack..... but is long suffering usward, not willing that any should perish."*
2. ***To Rally Men for Worthy causes*** --
 - a. This is what God did when He burdened an Ezra, and a Nehemiah.
 - b. This is what God did when He called, commissioned and sent an Elijah and an Elisha in the time of Israel's need.
 - c. This is what God did when He called a Gideon, a Joshua, and a host of others.
 - d. The major and minor prophets were men whose hearts God had touched -- with a purpose, a plan, a vision.
3. ***To Resist the forces of evil about us.***
 - a. I Tim. 2:8 *"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."*
 - b. God seeks for a man to stand in the gap, to make up the hedge;
 Cf. Eph. 6: He calls for those who will *stand therefore, having done all to stand.*

B. God Purposefully Touches the Hearts of Men. *I Sam 10:26*

1. ***Men whose hearts God touched*** -- these men who followed King Saul were ready to support, encourage, spend and be spent for him -- because they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit.
2. ***God seeks after men*** -- men who will ***stand in the gap*** -- filling in the void, standing where needed; supporting, encouraging and spending and being spent for the cause which is greater than the leader and greater than themselves -- for it is God's cause!
3. ***God seeks men who will make up the hedge***; building a hedge of protection; surrounded the work with their prayers, compassionate interest and burden.

God seeks -- men who have vision who plan for God's work -- men whose hearts are touched with great inspiration with desire for service, and consecration. He needs a Phillip, a Peter, a Paul, a Stephen; a Barnabas, a Titus, a Timothy, etc.

4. ***God seeks men who are committed to their family and their marriage. Who desire to have godly living; who share the message of the Cross--- who are willing to put away petty self-interests and who are committed to ministry.***

Acts 15: 25, 26" . . . to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Men that have hazarded their lives for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

III. GOD TOUCHES HEARTS of MEN WHO FULFILL THE CONDITIONS!

God is not going to use just any one. He touches hearts through men who are prepared! We see the conditions that were set forth in Acts 6. Men might say -- but I'm not a deacon, and I don't aspire to be either. But the word merely means *one who serves* and in that context every married man is a deacon.

A. God seeks for men of honest report -- Acts 6:3

1. God puts His hand on, touches the hearts of men who are of good report; whose lives are a witness to the power of the gospel.
2. God looks at the whole life; He uses men whose spiritual influence is like the perfume of the flower, permeating all their lives and effecting the lives of others.
3. He seeks men who provide things honest in the sight of all men.

B. He also seeks for men who are full of the Holy Spirit -- Acts 6:3,5

1. Men whom God has touched will be men who are endued with the power of the Holy Spirit upon their lives.
2. Such men submit to His control, seek His power and leadership, and are tender and sensitive to His plan and direction.
3. Men, whose hearts God has touched will endeavor to never quench nor grieve the Holy Spirit.

C. God also seeks for men who are full of wisdom -- Acts 6:3

1. Only the wisdom that comes through the Word of God that is lived, and loved will meet the need.
2. The Spirit of God can impart that gentleness and wisdom that makes men great. Great in His sight and in His service.
3. Such wisdom was seen in Nehemiah's life and many others who had the good hand of God upon their lives.

D. God desires for men to be full of faith -- Acts 6:5

1. The just shall live by faith; as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so we are to walk in Him.
2. We received Him by faith... we are to walk by faith. This will be the walk of all who have God's good hand on his live, whose heart God has touched.
Heb. 11:6

Conclusions

1. Has God touched your life, men? Did you yield, surrender or resist when God ask for the surrender of your all? Is everything on the altar of sacrifice?
2. Has God called you for a committal of everything to Him? Did you move at that call?
3. He would touch your heart that you might be a dedicated person, to bring others to salvation, to Christ.
4. He would touch your heart that you might be dedicated to serve in the Church -- to bring for fruit, to God's glory.
5. He would touch your heart that you might surrender you all to the end that you would bring your family into a closer walk with the Savior.
6. Men dedicated to allow the love of God to flow through the life is greatly needed in the Church and in the home.

Some have resisted the touch of God upon their lives --

Lot did -- Jonah did -- Demas did -- Samson did -- King Saul himself did.

Some unsaved have resisted the touch of God upon their lives --

King Agrippa did -- Kg Herod did -- Pilate did -- Judas did! **How about you?**