

A Tribute to Bro. Bakht Singh He Taught Us to Pray

By
C.R. Golsworthy

Our best teachers are those who teach us to pray, and specially so when their teaching is supported and proved by their personal example. Such a teacher was our Lord Jesus Christ himself. Not only were there those special seasons when He withdrew Himself to be alone with His Father, --often all through the night, but in His daily communion also, --for He was perpetually in touch with the throne. How often He would lift up His eyes to heaven, to give thanks or to receive from Him any counsels or comforts He might be needing. He seemed to carry The Presence with Him, and it was all around Him like a cloud of glory.

There is a verse in 1 Chronicles. 4, which speaks of certain "potters" in the tribe of Judah who "dwelt with the king for his work" (v. 23). No actual details are given, but the phrase, as it stands, could be taken as an apt description of ALL TRUE SERVANTS OF THE LORD; --they, too, "dwell with the King for His work." Such a servant for the Lord was our dear "Brother," taken away so recently from us, and now enjoying his great reward. It can truly be said of him that "He dwelt with the king for his work."

It is more than sixty years since I first met our Brother, and had the privilege of being numbered amongst his co-workers. In those days we lived in very close proximity to each other, and we got to know each other intimately. We lived together under the same roof for weeks on end, and had all our meals together. We traveled together in the same trains and buses, and often walked from village to village together. For much of the time, when we were in Madras, four (or more) of us shared the large "upper room" at "Jehovah- Shammah";--each in his corner, as it were. Often, when going to bed after a tiring day we would see our Brother wrap his Kashmir shawl around his shoulders, and kneel down at his bedside for his "time of prayer," and, no doubt, to go over the events of the day with his Master. If we looked up much later, we looked across the room, we would usually see our Brother in the same position and with his lips still moving as he continued his communion with God. Whatever other gifts our Brother might, or might not, have had, everybody knew him as, --above all else, a man of prayer, and an example to us all.

During those very early days I had the privilege of accompanying our Brother to Karachi, and sharing in weeks of morning and evening meetings at the large "Anglican Church." In spite of very difficult situations there, God's anointing was very evidently on our Brother, and large numbers were being challenged and blessed. Then, early one morning, Brother said to me, "Let us go to pray together down on the sea-shore." I readily agreed, and off we went. Brother seemed to be no stranger to the area, and he took me straight to a stretch of beach that seemed to be more or less unknown to others, --and we immediately knelt down in the sand. It was cold season in Karachi, and, to this day I remember how the warmth of the sand was very welcoming and comforting. Then Brother Bakht Singh began to pray, --sometimes in English and sometimes in Urdu. I found myself sharing deeply in his burden as he spread out the 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, those countless individuals who had asked him to pray for certain particular personal needs. His intercessions were sometimes interspersed by pauses, and I had the sense that Brother was somehow "watching God," and listening for His responses. I knelt along side our Brother all through that day, occasionally praying myself, and trying to express what was on my own heart at that time. It was, indeed, a day I shall never forget, --and to God be the praise.

All who know Brother Bakht Singh will agree that this was typical of his whole "manner of life." WHATEVER were the pressures of the work, our Brother above all, to be close to his Lord. I, myself, shall never be able to describe the "glow" and the "glory" that came upon us that day, as we knelt, hour after hour, in the sand. I only knew that I had been brought very near to God, --for His work.

What I have been describing is drawn from what is now a distant PAST, but it was always the same through the years that followed. These are just standing portraits our Brother's whole "way of life," – for as long as he was physically able for it. He was always "with the king for his work." And we could say, too, that he was a true "potter," –ever seeking to secure "vessels meet for the Master's use" (2 Tim. 2:21), -- be they individual (sanctified Christians), or corporate (sanctified local churches), but all of them "meet for the Master's use." I dare say that the degree to which we NOW respond to his example will determine the nature and quality of God's on-going "testimony" in India. Our response can be the right one as we yield to the powers of the out-poured life of our risen and ascended Lord (1 Tim. 6: 12; John 1: 16).

To my younger brethren who do wish to "GO ON" with the Lord, at ANY cost I recommend Hebrews 10: 19-25. Here, the writer gives three suggestions:

1. **vs. 19-22 Cultivate a life within the veil.** We may use the "Way" that has been opened for us (Christ's own blood), and we will be welcomed by the presiding priest Himself, --Christ "Alive for evermore."
2. **vs. 23 Tell out the full truth of God's Word, without wavering, and live it out for all to see.**
3. **vs. 24, 25 Live the kind of life that provokes LOVE in others, relishing constant fellowship.**

AND let us note the predominating emphasis (FOUR verses!) is the one on drawing NEAR TO GOD. It comes first, and, only when it is in its place, will the others be possible, and effective. In other words, LET US "dwell with the king for his work!"