



The Mission Trail

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"LIFT UP YOUR EYES, AND LOOK ON THE FIELDS; FOR THEY ARE WHITE ALREADY TO HARVEST." — JOHN 4:35

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"Almost a Christian"

(Radio broadcast on KOMA Sunday, July 30, 1967.)

*audition - KGGF - call
- KOSA - edless*

. . . A very pleasant good morning to all the listeners of radio station KOMA. We hope that all of you are well and happy and enjoying the blessings of the Lord today. This is THE MISSION TRAIL broadcast of Guthrie, Oklahoma coming your way once again by means of radio. Your speaker is Willie Murphey. I count it a real privilege to speak in defense of the gospel and in behalf of Christ our Saviour. We do this in the interest of the Lord's people everywhere. Those who desire to write us may do so by addressing their letter to: The Mission Trail, Guthrie, Oklahoma.

Listen now to this 28th verse from the 26th chapter of Acts. It says, "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Many of you, I am sure, are familiar with the life of the Apostle Paul. You may remember how that he was a very strict Pharisee, but Christ spoke to him on the road to Damascus one day, and his life was changed.

Instead of persecuting the saints, he became one of them. Instead of seeking to destroy the gospel, he began to build it up. In doing so, he met with much opposition. The opposition was not coming so much from those who made no pretense of being a believer, but it came from the chief priests, the Pharisees and the professors of that day. Those who pretended to serve God were the ones that brought the pressure to bear against the life of Paul.

Therefore, in due course of time, Paul found himself face to face with the bonds and the persecutions which had been promised. Now I want you to

get the picture here. First, Paul was brought before Felix the procurator of Judea. Now remember that we are dealing with the Jews and also the mighty Roman empire which appointed these governors and kings.

It is written of Paul and Felix in Acts 24:25 that, "As he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

I am inclined to believe that this is the case with many people today. They are waiting for a more convenient season to do the things which they ought to do today.

But let us go on. Another governor or procurator named Festus came down to Cesarea, and he was interested in hearing Paul. Therefore, once

again Paul was called in question before the governors. Many of the Jews and Pharisees wanted to catch Paul and take his life, but somehow, God prevented this and spared him yet to witness before more kings and rulers.

I want you to imagine, if you can, the pomp and show of that day when the famous and unforgettable words of Agrippa were said, "Almost thou persuadedest me to be a Christian." It was a real parade of show, of power, and authority when King Agrippa entered into the place of Judgment with the chief captains and principal men of the city, with his sister Bernice, and Festus.

You see, Festus did not know what to accuse Paul of, and he hoped that he might be able to have somewhat to write to Ceaser after Paul was brought before King Agrippa. In verse 27, chapter 25 of Acts, we read, "For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him." You know that would be a rather embarrassing situation to be placed in -- to have a prisoner and then not know what to accuse him of.

But it seems that God had a purpose in Paul being bound. That purpose and plan was carried out by him being able to witness for Christ among the kings and those who had authority. Paul reasoned and showed that Christ was the son of God, and that it was through him that the believers were to be saved. Festus accused him of being mad because he had so much learning, but Paul said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."

Now King Agrippa was expert in the customs of the Jews even though he

was a part of the Roman Empire. No doubt, these things must have moved his heart. Perhaps he himself felt a need of the saving grace of Christ. Perhaps he realized that it was a losing battle which he was fighting against the wicked Jews who wanted to put Paul to death. I really believe that King Agrippa in his heart would have liked to have seen Paul set free, but Paul had appealed unto Ceaser, and Agrippa would have had a hard job to turn him loose.

But here are the words which I want to stay with you. Let me give them to you once more from Acts 26 and verse 28. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadedest me to be a Christian." Friends, I do not know whether King Agrippa was ever fully persuaded to accept Christ or not. It is quite likely that he was caught with the tide of public opinion and swept along in this condition without Christ in his life.

But I would like to emphasize his words. "Almost thou persuadedest me." It is not enough to be almost persuaded. Almost means near or close. One might come ever so near a place and yet not be there. I once heard about a man who was running a race. He was ahead and leading his opponent, but through the groans and puffing of the man behind him, he became distracted and lost the race. Yes, he almost won, but he failed.

Friends, Felix and Festus and King Agrippa had their day of choice. Felix trembled. Festus said that Paul was mad, and Agrippa said, "Almost thou persuadedest me to be a Christian." These men and others have lived their lives, but you and I are faced today with a choice which we are required to make. It is an important choice, but

it should be made of one's own free will. I cannot choose for you. Your parents cannot choose for you. Neither can your wife or husband choose for you. We cannot force you.

The Apostle Paul could not force King Agrippa to be a Christian. But it is the most important choice which all of us are called upon to make in life. This choice, if made for God, will bring a change in one's heart and life. True repentance and a living faith will bring happiness. Your home will be a better place in which to live. Your state and your nation will be a better place for yourself and others when you make the correct choice to serve God.

There is a little touch of sadness about anyone being "almost" persuaded. One may come ever so close to heaven and yet be turned away. The rich young ruler who knelt before Christ wanted to know what to do to be saved. Jesus looked at him and loved him. He reminded him to keep the commandments. The young ruler said, "All these have I observed from my youth up, what lack I yet?" He came close to being a Christian, but Jesus said, "One thing thou lackest yet". But somehow he must have had his heart set upon that one thing--that was his riches. He went away sorrowful for he had great possessions. He came close, but I doubt if he ever returned to find Christ in his life.

Friends, let me make this personal appeal to you. Are you almost persuaded? Are you in doubt? Are you unconcerned? May God help you to be not almost persuaded, but fully persuaded and wholly given to the cause of Christ. If you have made failures in the past, may God help you to commit them from this day on and let the

blood of Christ erase them from your lives.

Listen now to this poem entitled:

TODAY MINE

Yesterday now is a part of forever;
Bound up in a sheaf, which God holds tight,
With glad days, and sad days, and bad days which never
Shall visit us more with their bloom and their blight,
Their fullness of sunshine or sorrowful night.

Let them go, since we cannot retrieve them,
Cannot undo and cannot atone;
God in His mercy receive, forgive them!
Only the new days are our own.
Today is ours, and today alone.

I hope that each of you will be not "almost persuaded" but "fully persuaded" to commit your lives into the hands of God. Let us pray.

Our Father,

Even as the Apostle Paul was not "almost" but "fully" persuaded to do thy will, even so, we pray that you would bless those who hear this message today. Help each one to fully surrender their lives to the will of God, and to thee we will give the praise through Christ our Saviour. Amen

Listen now to this song entitled, "I Shall Not Be Moved". It is sung by Bobby Forbes, Dale Doolittle, Randall Flynn and Troy Gentry.

This message has been brought to you by THE MISSION TRAIL of Guthrie, Oklahoma. If you would like a printed copy free of charge, we would be glad

to send you one if you will write and give us your name and address and request it. Now until next Sunday morning at 8:30, this is Willie Murphey saying may God's richest blessings watch between thee and me while we are absent the one from the other. Good-bye!

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FUNDS NEEDED FOR CAMPGROUND

Plans were made at the national business meeting in Monark Springs, Missouri on Friday, July 28, 1967 to raise funds to purchase additional land adjoining the campground if it can be bought at a reasonable price.

A number of saints in the past have desired to obtain lots on the campground and build their own cabin, but it has been difficult to do since no new lots were available.

Now this is your opportunity to make more lots available by the purchase of land which is also needed for parking space. The price on a 99-year lease for each lot is \$100. You may take several at \$100 each. The money should be sent to the secretary at once. It will then be deposited in a reliable savings account drawing interest until such time that enough is available to purchase the land.

In the event the trustees are unable to buy the new land, the money will be returned to the sender with the interest it has earned. This offer is limited until November 1st. Choice of lots will be given in the order in which the money is received. Congregations may participate in this plan and help finance several lots at \$100 each.

All checks should be made payable to The Church of God and sent directly to: Bro. Bob Stover, 6304 S. 97th West Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74131. Bro. Ralph Beisly, 407 Eldridge, Coffeyville, Kansas 67337, will be co-signer on the deposit.

Testimonies

From Louisiana: "Dear Bro. Willie, Sister Frances and family, Greetings in Jesus' name. I am encouraged to press on for Jesus. I know it seems hard sometimes, but it will pay us to be true and let him have his way with us. I am so thankful for the way he has healed my body. The enemy would rather that I would not testify to it, but I know that the Lord will do what he says in his word, and even if the soreness still pains some, I know the Lord has touched my body.

"I enjoy the Mission Trail paper and look forward to receiving each issue. I read it as soon as I can. It is real inspiring and blesses my soul.

"I thank all of the saints for their prayers. I don't know what we would do if the Lord did not have a few children who could trust him. I love every one of the saints and desire your prayers that I will be faithful to him and do what I can for him. Pray for my unsaved family. Love and prayers,"

--Mrs. Maurie Lea

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From Oklahoma: "Dear Bro. and Sis. Murphey. . . The first Sunday you were on the new station I put the old radio in the kitchen and had it ready, and we heard you plain and clear. It made me feel so good to hear the sermon and singing. I felt like I had already been to services that day. . . . May God bless you all,"

--Mrs. Guy Keeler

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From Arkansas: ". . . We are so thankful for God's great love and tender mercy. Pray for my unsaved loved ones and pray for me. I want to be what God wants me to be and work for him in his love and have his fullness in my heart. Yours in love,"

--Lugunia Jones

God's Kingdom Is Compared to a Family

"And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?" I Chronicles 17:21

God bless the close knit family
Whose ties of love extend
Throughout the home in little ways
And to each precious friend.

God bless the father who works hard
To keep the family fed
Who strives to give them Spiritual
As well as earthly Bread.

God bless the Mother who each day
Labors from morn till night
To keep the home a welcome place,
A clean and humble sight.

God bless the close knit family
Whose bonds of love extend
To each one in the home and then
To each and every friend.

--Agnes M. Gatties

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From Alabama: "Dear Bro. Willie and family, Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus who gave His life that we may be saved.

"I am writing to let you all know how I enjoy The Mission Trail paper. I think it is wonderful, although I can't seem to get it on my radio. . . I am sure trusting the Lord for both soul and body. The Lord really blessed me in my body back in January. I thank and give Him all the praise.

"We are few here in Picking County, Carrollton, Alabama. We were glad to have the out-of-state saints with us in May--Bro. Louis Williams, Bro. Chandler and others. We had a good meeting in Aliceville. Also after their return home, Sis. Katherine Williams and also Sis. Gladys Williams were

impressed to come back for three or four weeks and work in Tuscaloosa which we appreciate. . . Yours in Lord,"

--Mrs. Levonia Cook

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From Oklahoma: "Bro. & Sister Willie C. Murphey and family, Today finds me saved and striving each day to obey God and do more.

"I enjoy reading the Mission Trail very much, and I listen to your service Sunday morning over KOMA. I really get the entire service more clearly over KOMA than over XEG. Praying that the Lord will continue to bless each one of you as you bring the true holy gospel by radio and printed page to dying, lost souls. . ."

--Sister Mary Anna Brown

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LIFE'S PATHWAY

Tho the road of Life be rugged
And your burdens seem heavy to bear,
Friends seem to forsake you,
No one seems to care--

Look away from this world of sorrow,
Then call on the blessed Saviour
You are sure to get a blessing,
When you seek to win his favor.

He knows all about your burdens,
He knows your every need,
He is willing and ready to help you,
If you will his gentle voice heed.

Listen to the Voice of the Master
Do his will each day,
He will bless and keep you
All along Life's rugged way.

--Sibyl Delahunt

AT PRESS TIME WE UNDERSTAND:

The Monark Springs, Missouri camp-meeting is now a matter of record and past for this year, but it was one which will be long remembered because of the glorious power of Christ manifested in the lives of those who attended. The old-time gospel preaching from the pulpit brought conviction to sinners, and many of them came kneeling at the altar of prayer where they received pardon and help. Others were sanctified, and the testimonies of those who received definite healing touches brought much rejoicing. Just as the angels rejoice in heaven, even so, the spirit-filled services brought rejoicing, singing and shouting to the saints.

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From Pennsylvania: "Dear Bro. & Sis. Murphey & family, Greetings of love to you all in the name of Jesus. I want to thank the one who had the Mission Trail sent to me. I sure do enjoy it. I love this truth and wouldn't want any other way. Do remember me in prayer as I am afflicted with breathing trouble, don't sleep very much at night, and also have an inward trouble that needs to be healed. . . Love and prayers,"

--Avis Tinsley

We are pleased to know that Brother Willard Underdown and his wife Helen along with their family are making plans to move from Fairborn, Ohio to Monark Springs, Missouri where they will serve as care-takers on the campground. We trust that God will richly bless them as they serve in this capacity for the benefit of many.

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A new top for the evangelistic tent has been ordered and by this time should have been delivered in Joplin, Missouri. Bro. Mart Samons is planning to take the truck and the equipment back to Kentucky where he and Bro. Curtis Williams are scheduled to begin a tent meeting near Junction City, Kentucky, on August 18th. The location will be a few miles south of Lexington. Louie and Evodna Marler are in charge of the missionary-evangelism funds and contributions for that purpose may be sent to them at Route 1, Box 180, Senath, Missouri 63876.

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The Oklahoma state campmeeting begins here in Guthrie today, Fri., Aug. 4th. Come and enjoy the services in the newly air-conditioned building.

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Return Requested