

You're Going Too Fast!

by William Booth

William Booth emphasizes the urgent need for increased speed in ministry to effectively save souls and fulfill God's mission.

Scripture: Isaiah 60:1

Topics: "Urgency of Salvation", "Advancing the Kingdom of God"

Description

William Booth passionately addresses the criticism of the Salvation Army's rapid progress in spreading the Gospel, arguing that the call to slow down is misguided. He emphasizes the urgency of saving souls, comparing the speed of salvation to the swift spread of sin and the need for Christians to match that pace. Booth challenges both friends and foes to recognize the importance of advancing the Kingdom of God without hesitation, asserting that the stakes are too high to slow down. He encourages his comrades to push forward, regardless of the risks, as the mission of salvation is paramount. Ultimately, he calls for a collective acceleration in efforts to fulfill God's desire for all to be saved.

Transcript

They say we go too fast! This accusation comes from all directions. Our enemies do not like our speed and our friends are afraid of it. What do they mean? If they had complained that we did not go fast enough, I could understand them. If our enemies had argued that after all we say about the evils of sin, the terrors of the Judgment Day, and the damnation of hell, we do not believe in these things ourselves, I could understand that, and feel humbled under their indictment.

If our friends came together and said, "Why don't you increase the speed? Look at the dying millions at home and abroad. You have evidently got a wonderful way of reaching the masses. You have accomplished what no other organization has. You can adapt yourselves to all peoples and countries and climates. Why don't you push on faster? Why don't you train more cadets-send out more officers-hunt up more criminals, drunkards and fallen women? Go faster; get up more steam!" Now, this seems to me would be the natural way of talking for both foes and friends. But no! The cry is not "Go faster" but "You go too fast!" What do they mean?

Speed is a good thing, and, if combined with safety, the faster the better. It is reckoned good in traveling. I don't know of any train that goes fast enough for me. Time is so precious that unless it can be spent in sleeping or working, every minute of it is begrudged. My feeling whenever I am in a train is, "Now, engine driver, do your best, and fly away!"

Speed is reckoned a good thing in money-making. Who would complain if we were an Investment Company developing a profitable gold mine? The same people who complain of our speed in spreading salvation and saving men would all want to buy shares, become our partners or buy us out.

If we were a killing army, no one would complain of our going too fast on the line of victory, slaughtering Arabs, or Afghans, or Zulus, or anybody else who did not live on our side of the sea. If we killed plenty of them, burnt plenty of houses, took plenty of spoil, we should fascinate the world again as Napoleon did with the speed of his successes. Painters and poets and newspapermen would fill the whole earth with our fame.

But because God has given us a little success in saving men and women from endless damnation, and extending the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, there is a great outcry-especially from those who every morning pray "Thy Kingdom come!" -that we are going too fast; they say we are ambitious and seeking great things.

Can we go too fast, my comrades in saving souls? I will not attempt to answer that question. No soldier in the Salvation Army would ask such a question. It is an insult to the Bible-to the teachers of Christianity. I refuse to reply to it.

If anyone still wants a reply, let him ask the lost souls in Hell whose brothers and sisters are following them there. Let him go and ask the blood-washed throng in Heaven, whose eyes are wide open at last to the value of salvation. Let him anticipate the Judgment Day, and in spirit stand before the Throne and propose, if he dares, the question to God Almighty. I think from Hell, Heaven and the Great White Throne, the answer would come back; "More speed! Go faster!" If it should entail the stopping of legislature, pleasure, business, and all the employments and occupations of time, push forwards! Hurry onwards! Save the world!

Some warn us, "but there is danger with great speed". Perhaps there is, but that is not certain; and even if so, I refuse to abate the speed to avoid the risk. If this thing is worth doing, let us do it with all our might. They say, "but if you go on at this pace a smash will come". Well, perhaps it will. Perhaps God will let the devil and those who help him smash The Salvation Army. They smashed Jesus Christ. There were slanders and riots and injuries terminating with the Crucifixion. Then a great number looked on and said, "I told you so!" If they smash The Salvation Army, there will also be a great number looking on and telling them to do it, and saying the same thing. However, there are no evident signs of this terrible danger. For twenty years we have gone on paying our debts, breaking up and taking possession of new ground, and holding it when occupied; and, thank God! We are more closely bound together-more wrapped up in the spirit of sympathy and unity today than ever we were before.

Is our speed really too great after all? Is not all this talk a delusion? Speed is a relative thing, and the accuracy of the estimate depends upon the standard you measure it by. The coach is a rapid vehicle compared with the old carrier's cart, but it is very slow when put alongside a royal express train. What do our objectors measure us by? Anyhow, I object to be measured by the standard of the carrier's cart.

Does salvation travel as fast as sin? See how wickedness spreads. Talk about a prairie fire - it devours everything before it. Does Salvation keep pace with our ever-growing population? Make the calculation in your most favored Christian cities, and you will find we are terribly behind in the race. Do we keep pace with the devils in energy and untiring labor? Do we go as fast as death? Oh, say no more! We'll close our ears to this cold, unfeeling, stony-hearted utterance of unbelief.

LET US GO FASTER! We must increase the speed if we are to keep pace with the yearnings of the Almighty Heart of Love that would have all men to be saved. We must go faster if we are to have a hand in the fulfillment of the prophecies. Read the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah, and think of the speed that must be reached before all that comes true. We must go faster if we would wipe out the reproach and taunts of the mocking infidels who are ever asking for living proof of God's existence. We must increase our pace before our own prayers are answered, our own expectations realized, our own relations converted, and our own consistency proved.

My comrades, the General issues the command to every country, and to every division, and to every corps, and to every soldier-to advance. The pace of the past is to be no standard for the future. We must go faster. Obstacles, difficulties, and enemies shall be swept before us, and the mouths of those who condemn us shall be forever stopped before the Lord.

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