

A SALVATION THAT DOES NOT SAVE

A VITAL MESSAGE EXPOSING SPURIOUS PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL

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MOCK SALVATION

In the last days the Apostle Paul declared that there would be a segment of people that would give heed to “seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.” We are living in the reality of this passage of Scripture for there are “doctrines of demons” being preached from many pulpits worldwide. But you might argue that the gospel is being preached and we should approve! My friend we must realize that there were many false gospels preached in the apostles days and there are many false gospels being preached today. God has no interest and is not required to honor such a gospel that is false. There is a epidemic of a sort of “mock” salvation being preached from many pulpits today. It is a gospel message that is not authentic. It is correct in doctrine but false in reality. It is a salvation that does not work! It is a salvation that does not save! The holy Scriptures warn of a “falling away” apostatizing from the faith of Christ. Christ spoke of

a strong word of emphatic warning to his disciples: "Take heed that no man deceive you." Oh believer! it is possible for you to be deceived with a gospel that is spurious, false, and counterfeit. You might ask what is this "mock" salvation that is being spoken of? Simply defined it is a salvation that does not make men holy. It was warned about in the Epistle of Jude in this phrase: "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." Catherine Booth in her book "Popular Christianity" speaks of this gospel and her dismay of many that follow in its deception: "Alas, many false, delusive, disappointing christs; so I have to show that there are many make-believe, mock salvations, which only deceive, disappoint, and damn those who trust in them. As I walk about the world, and as I look at professing Christians, my soul cries: O God, make haste to help us raise up a holy people, in order to show the world what salvation really means, for they do not know. They are utterly befogged and bewildered, and I do not wonder."

SINNERS SAVED TO SIN?

Perhaps no other evangelical phraseology has caused more damage to true gospel preaching than this simple coined phrase: "sinners saved by grace." Thus the Scriptures read to most such as: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the sinners which are at Ephesus, and to the unfaithful in Christ Jesus." No, ten thousand times no! Rather the Holy Ghost spoke a message that did not glorify sin but rather the holiness and salvation of God in believers from sin. The deception is real and persuasive. The simple question can be asked "what have you been saved from?" Not positionally but practically. Is there any sins which Christ has delivered you from? Christ was manifested that he might "take away our sins." He spoke to the women caught in adultery "Go, and sin no more." Paul stated that we "who are dead have been freed from sin." A French infidel, answering a caviller against holiness, said the other day, "You believe and sin, I do not believe and sin: where is the difference? It seems to me I am the better of the two." Exactly, for however true or grand a man's beliefs, of what use are they if he does not act them out? 'Can faith save him?' Nay, verily, but such a faith can damn him." This is false security to believe that we can act, talk, and walk like the world and still claim salvation in Christ. Sinners are not saved to sin but rather saved to holiness and good works. We are the light of the world so that our "good works" may be manifest before men that they may "glorify our Father in Heaven," this is biblical Christianity.

It might seem strange to say that ministers of religion are "pleading for impurity and sin." Yet dear reader this is exactly what multitudes of professors preach and teach that you cannot be free from sin. That you must sin! This is a unbiblical emphasis and the Apostles and Christ always preached from the vantage point of the possibility to walk holy and free from sin. Is "Christ the minister of sin? God forbid!" Christ is the minister of holiness and righteousness in God. Hear the lament of Fox over this opposition to the truth: "But they could not endure to hear of purity, and of victory over sin and the

devil. They said they could not believe any could be free from sin on this side of the grave. I bade them give over babbling about the Scriptures, which were holy men's words, whilst they pleaded for unholiness. Then I bade them forbear talking of the Scriptures, which were the holy men's words; "for," said I, "the holy men that wrote the Scriptures pleaded for holiness in heart, life, and conversation here; but since you plead for impurity and sin, which is of the devil, what have you to do with the holy men's words?" The warning of Christ is against this gospel where professors of religion are forbidding people to be a part of the holy body of Christ: "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

Can there be preached a gospel that damns people? The warning of the last days is that "there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies." They teach the gospel of God in a way that damns and does not free people. It speaks of life and heaven yet does not offer a release of the bondage of sin in believers. The great falling away will damn people even though they believed in a supposed gospel: "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." The true Gospel will free people from the pleasure, potential and possibility of sin. This is not a crucial matter and not something to accept as tolerable. The extent of this modern day "mock" salvation that does not result in producing a holy people is damning people to hell. Does this seem strong? Harsh? It is better to be offended over these words and repent from this gospel rather than meeting Christ as the judgement seat being found "in your sins" not "in Christ" and the freedom of sin that our precious Saviour offers. Yes! He is the Saviour from sin. Not to covering it but removing it. Catherine Booth again speaks to this contradiction of true biblical preaching: "It is doubtless better to have right opinions than wrong ones, but the best opinions will not save a man. I am afraid there is a great deal of preaching that amounts to a mere putting of the different theories about salvation, instead of persuading men to come to Christ and be saved." This error is subtle for it appears there is a preaching of the right texts and emphasis yet alas it does not bring people to the person of Christ. Mere theory will not remove sins but a encounter with the living Christ who died to take away sin.

PREACHING WITH TEARS

Preaching with tears is the mark of true gospel preaching. Not just the tears themselves bear witness to the truth but are an outward manifestation of the greatness and loftiness of the gospel that actually saves a sinner from their sins. Catherine Booth gives us her estimation of preaching that was worthless in her day. It was a preaching that did not save from sin, did not offer the sinner much except a theoretical pardon from their guilt complex: "The main idea of much of the preaching of this day seems to be that of teaching people, instructing them, which too often results in hardening their hearts, and finding them

an easier way down to perdition than they would have found without it. Unfortunately a man feels more comfortable when he has been to a place of worship and heard a fine theory about salvation, then he would if he had not been, although he may be no nearer being saved. All preaching or any other instrumentality which has not for its end the immediate salvation of the people, only leads them to trust in mere teaching, which is a mockery. You can see the want of it in the way they fail to bring men to Christ. How my heart has ached over this aimless, pointless preaching, I could not express." Preaching that is not impassioned with the goal of bringing people to the living God who can break the fetters of sin is then in turn pointless preaching. Catherine Booth relates this story showing forth an example of not mere doctrinal preaching but showing the power of God and effectual working of God's Word: "Would to God there were more preaching in the fix of a Baptist minister in a town where we are just now having a glorious work, who has been so stirred up and awakened to his responsibilities, that, on a recent occasion when he had read his text, he broke down, weeping, which had more effect than all the sermons he had preached during the years he had been in that town. His people wept too, and many of them got converted over again. I wish that a few thousands of the ministers of this kingdom could be brought to a similar state of mind before next Sunday; what a commotion there would be in the land, and what a stir in hell, ah, and in heaven too!"

The saintly Edward Griffin who was used of God in the second great awakening and gives us an example of bringing people to a Christ who is a saviour of sin. The church historian David Smithers gives us this word picture: "A hearer of Mr. Griffin in New Jersey in 1829 gives us a description of his preaching and of the love and brokenness which gave that preaching its power. "During most of the sermon his face was wet with tears, and for nearly an hour he spoke to us with such tender and appealing sentences that it seemed as if his hearers must cry out in an agony of fear and trembling . . . But what a climax the ending was! It was a wonder how he endured the strain so long and that he had not given up physically exhausted. The mental agony, the heartbreaking sympathy, were enough to break an angel down! When he fell on his knees as if he had been knocked on the head with an ax, with outstretched arms, tears coarsing down his face, he cried out; 'Oh! my dying fellow sinners, I beseech you to give your heart to the Savior now. Give your life to Jesus Christ, do not put it off! Do not leave this house without dedicating yourself to His service, lest you be left at last to cry, the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved.'"

What consolations can you offer to your hearers? Do you preach as one that has a freedom of sin and liberty in the gospel of Jesus Christ? This statement was given by the 'General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China' in 1877, yet perhaps in our generation we need a release of the tyranny of sin over the Church! "How long shall this fearful ruin of souls continue? Ought we not to make an effort to save China in this generation? Is God's power limited? Is the efficacy of prayer limited? This grand achievement is in the hands of the Church... We want China emancipated from the thralldom of sin in this generation." May we experience this "emancipating" power that the Church of God may sin no more!