

IS THE SAVING GOSPEL SAVING MEN?

“Sin” is not an idea which preachers have invented to keep themselves employed. Sin is a reality; it is a way of life for many people; it is a tragic form of moral bondage; it is the pursuit of a vain life that robs men of peace and hope and which deprives lost people of eternal life in heaven.

We must keep in mind that God doesn't want people to be lost. His mercy and love for mankind caused Him to provide a means whereby man may be delivered from the power and eternal consequence of sin. Consider these verses: John 3:16; Romans 2:4; II Peter 3:9,15. God has the power to save mankind, and that power is the gospel--a message of good news about forgiveness of sins available to men through Jesus Christ the Son of God. Romans 1:16.

When we consider the power of God in the gospel, the question comes to mind, “Why are so many people lost?” If God is all powerful, and if the gospel is his power to save the lost, then why isn't the gospel more effective?” The apostle Paul answered that in Romans 1:16---gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” He reminded the brethren at Corinth that they have been saved by the gospel because they had believed the message, (I Cor. 15:1-4).

Salvation, or deliverance from sin is conditional. God requires a response on our part. Why aren't more people being saved by the gospel? The response must be: they are not believing the gospel! The gospel is God's power to save those who believe the message, therefore unbelief nullifies God's power.

I. Why don't People Believe the Gospel?

A. Pride and Vanity.

1. When Paul preached the gospel at Corinth, some believed-- I Cor. 15:1,2.
2. However, there were a number who refused to believe.
3. The reason why they refused to believe is given in I Cor. 1:18-25
 - a. To some, the preaching of the gospel was foolishness. These were the one who were perishing.
 - b. To others, it is the power of God.
 - (1) I Cor. 1:24--Christ, the power of God.
 - (2) I Cor.2 :2,5--Christ crucified.
 - c. The wisdom of God far surpasses the world's wisdom.
 - (1) There are men who boast of their wisdom and understanding, but God will nullify their wisdom and understanding because they are human and ungodly.
 - (2) Psalm 33:10
 - (3) True wisdom is obtained from God.
 - d. The Jews wanted signs.
 - (1) They decided themselves which way God's power was to be shown.
 - (2) God needed to reveal himself in a way which fit their opinions concerning revelation.
 - e. The Greeks idea was wisdom, philosophy.
4. Intellectual pride gets in the way.
 - a. Mankind thinks he is too intelligent to accept such a message.
 - b. I Cor. 1:24
 - c. Those that are called. How?
 - (1) Acts 2:39
 - (2) II Thess. 2:14
5. There is a wisdom of God which works and saves in Christ. The world, because it despises this wisdom, lies under judgment.

B. Some Demand a Sign.

1. I Cor. 1:22
2. The sign seeker has trouble believing the gospel simply because he is looking in the wrong place for a manifestation or a revelation of God's power.

3. He is looking for a miracle instead of believing the message.
 4. He wants a special dream, or vision, or 'still small voice' to be heard.
 5. He wants the H/S to come to him in a mysterious, miraculous, overpowering way, to convince him that he is lost.
 6. Instead of looking for signs in the skies, we need to be looking for a Savior in the scriptures.
 7. Consider — Romans 3:23; I Timothy 2:4; II Peter 3:9
 8. But you see, if you have been convinced that God will make known his will for your life through some means other than the gospel message, then there is a barrier between your mind and the gospel.
 9. Romans 1:16. . . to everyone that believeth. . .
- C. "The Blinding done by Satan"
1. II Cor. 4:3,4
 2. The god of this world is Satan.
 - a. "Satan is not a god properly, but is merely one in reference to those who have sinfully made him such." McGarvey.
 3. When people rebel against God, they become blinded, hardened, or darkened.
 4. Satan cannot blind any person who has not rebelled against God.
 - a. Satan tries to prevent the truth from being proclaimed and received.
 - b. John 3:19-21
 5. Satan has his workers — II Cor. 11:14,15...
 6. These servants often succeed in getting people to think that religion is altogether an emotional thing; or a kind of religious happening.
 7. The religion of Christ is not an irrational religion. In order for one to become a Christian, that person must first be taught God's word.
 - a. John 6:44,45
 - b. Acts 15:7
 8. Matt. 13:15
 9. Romans 12:2
 10. We must use our minds to understand the will of God--Eph. 5:17
 11. Some simply don't want to understand, thus Satan has blinded them.
- D. Some people do not believe because of perversions of that message.
1. Gal. 1:6-9
 2. The gospel has certain facts to be believed by those who would be saved (I Cor.15:1-3)
 3. To deny any of this is to pervert the gospel.
 4. The gospel has commands which men must obey. (e.g. plan of salvation) To deny this is to pervert the gospel.
 5. Matthew 15:8,9
 6. I John 4:1
- E. Some refuse to believe and obey because of family ties...
1. Luke 14:26
 2. Matt. 10:37
- F. Some think they have plenty of Time.
1. Proverbs 27:1
 2. James 4:14
 3. Felix wanted a convenient season--Acts 24:25
 4. How many on that plane in Lexington last Sunday thought they would be in eternity today?
- G. Some don't Believe because **we have not** taken the Gospel to them.
1. Go...make disciples (Matt. 28:19)
 2. The lost are never told to go to church, but the church is told to go to the lost.
 3. We cannot substitute building a building and putting a sign on the highway and over the door and saying "come unto us all you lost sinners!" We have got to get out of our

buildings!

4. The Bible says we are to GO!
 - a. Mark 5:19
 - b. Mark 16:15
5. All that we do should be centered around saving souls.
6. There's no such thing as being sound doctrinally, alive spiritually, and dead evangelistically
7. God does not want people to be lost. I don't think you do either!
8. We nullify God's power when we don't go with the gospel!"
9. Evangelism is a life-style.

Con: God has commanded men to preach the cross of Christ as the only way of salvation and those who despise this only way will suffer the consequences. The gospel is God's power to save those who believe it. Don't refuse to come to Christ any longer. The invitation is extended to all. Why not obey that form of doctrine today (Romans 6:17,18) Don't let anything stand in your way. Who can believe that man today, now in the act of turning away from God, will be any more successful in finding the good life apart from his Creator than were his ancestors? (Romans 1:18ff). Accept and obey the gospel of Christ.