



THE GOSPEL IN PURITY AND SIMPLICITY

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I read a beautiful article by a wonderful preacher regarded by the Baptists, as the prince of preachers, Charles Haddon Spurgeon and he spoke about the simplicity of preaching The Word of God. If ever we needed to get back to basics, it is in this day and age. It's not Jesus plus, it's Jesus only!

He says, "To try and win a soul to Christ by keeping that soul in ignorance of any truth, is contrary to the mind of the spirit; and to endeavor to save men by mere claptrap, or excitement, or preaching display, is as foolish as to hope to hold an angel with a bird-lime, or lure a star with music." We've got to get back to the old- old Gospel.

How often do we hear a message preached, for example from John 3:3 (NKJV), "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." or verse 7, "You must be born again." Was it not Nicodemus, the member of the Sanhedrin and one of the most powerful man in Israel who came to our Lord Jesus Christ by night and asked Him what he should do to inherit eternal life.

Nicodemus said "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Of course, Jesus answered, "You have got to be born-again (make a clean start)."

We can no longer serve two masters. Matthew 12:30 says, "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad." If we are going to experience a change in our lives, then we need to make a new start and people need to know that, like never before. There has got to be a difference in one's life. You cannot say, "because my parents and grandparents were Christians than I automatically qualify too." As the old saying goes "There are no grandchildren in Heaven." Each and every one of us has got to meet Jesus for Himself.

The change I am talking about, is what happened to Saul of Tarsus who was on his way to Damascus to persecute and kill the Christians, only to be knocked off his horse and to be converted instantaneously, from being a murderer of

the believer to becoming an agent of Jesus Christ. He was used mightily by the Lord to save souls.

While the disciples were fishing for food they met the Carpenter from Nazareth, the Son of God and got changed instantly into 'fishers of souls.' There has got to be a change! Zacchaeus, the rich publican was one moment extorting people, especially the poor and making himself extremely rich, and then the next moment he was giving half of his goods to the poor and restoring 400% of anything taken by false accusations.

Mary Magdalen a woman who seven demons were cast out of by Jesus Christ, turned her life around and became His most ardent, passionate and devoted follower right up to the cross, when even the disciples ran away, she remained faithful - a complete turnaround. That is why John Newton could write that beautiful hymn "Amazing Grace." He was the captain of a slave ship and I cannot think of a worse profession possible. Yet he said, "I once was lost, but now I am found. I was blind, but now I see." There has got to be a change.

I think of my own life, as a young boy who couldn't speak to more than two people, who ran away when he saw a girl and just a few months ago had the privilege of speaking to over one million people, and praying the sinner's prayer with them. Surely it was only God, for with man these things are totally impossible.

How do we see the results of a life changed? While quite simply, by the fruit of the Spirit. We have got to see love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23) taking place in a new believer. When people find such a gem, or pearl, as salvation they cannot possibly keep it to themselves, and that's all revival really is: - "a people saturated with God."

God bless
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