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Some Thoughts On Gospel Calls

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The Lord's gospel, good news, glad tidings or message, is thus expressed: 'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief' (1 Timothy 1:15). Now, it is the Gospel to say, 'He came to save sinners, and He does save them, even the chief of them.' It is not the Lord's Gospel to say, 'He came to put them into a salvable state, to offer them salvation.' This is neither the moral law, nor the Levitical law, nor the Lord's Gospel which Paul preached to sinners, and which we also preach to them; but this is one of those 'other gospels', the preachers of which Paul cursed long ago (Galatians 1:6-8).

J. Wilkins, 1878

Let us preach Christ, grace and blood redemption. There is nothing in these truths to 'offer'. To the Jews or religionists Christ is a 'stumbling block'; to the Greeks or worldly wise He is 'foolishness' (1 Cor. 1:23). 'For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God' (1 Cor. 1:18). When God has opened a man's heart, given him spiritual understanding, the truth will be received. If it is offered to those who have not been made alive by the Spirit of God, they can only receive it 'in the letter', which will deceive and delude and damn in a false profession.

Augustus Webb

Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters! (Isaiah 55:1). Let us now look a little at the invitation. It is God's call to the poor sinner, without hope or help in self, to come to Him. It is not indiscriminate. Most clearly specified are the people interested in it; therefore it is not of universal application. Being so definitely addressed to certain classes, it is not for all sorts and conditions of men. Yet it is very comprehensive, to 'every one' of the sort of persons mentioned, including all, excluding none, of the thirsty or the poor. Furthermore, it is a very personal and powerful invitation. The little word 'ye' is repeated twice in this first verse of Isaiah's Gospel chapter. How powerful the application of the Lord's own invitation is, can best be known by those who have experienced its Divine drawing and life-giving potency.

Edward Carr

Preacher, What is not yours to bestow is not yours to offer.

Anonymous

Assuming that it is the will of God that every creature should be saved, which is not true, men have made conversion of sinners an art, and have resorted to all sorts of unscriptural methods to compass their end. Sadly forgetful of Him who said, ‘I kill, and I make alive’, they are madly bold in their efforts to wrest God’s special work out of His hands. We have the new doctrine of ‘regeneration by faith’, singing theology, sudden conversions, the inquiry room, sensational advertisements, etc.. And when these new appliances have completed the task allotted them, we have an exhibition of the work done!

One of the sad features of this movement is that it is so approved and followed by so many ministers. Oh, where is the deep experimental religion of our Puritan Fathers and ministers, and where is their profound knowledge and ardent love of the Scriptures, which would not permit them to allow to pass un-challenged and with impunity such gigantic errors, which strike at the glory of God and the root of true religion!

J. K. Popham (1847-1937)

The Lord takes up none but the forsaken (Isaiah 54:6). Makes none healthy but the sick (Matthew 9:12-13). Gives sight to none but the blind (Luke 4:18). Makes none alive but the dead (Ephesians 2:1; John 5:25). Died for none but sinners (Romans 5:8).

The Lord justifies by His blood only those who feel themselves to be sinners (Romans 5:9). Reconciles none but enemies (Romans 5:10) Gives wisdom to none but the foolish (Titus 3:3) and saves none but the lost (Luke 19:10).

Therefore the salvation of Christ is only for those who both desire and need this salvation. The inner feelings of desire and need are given by the Holy Spirit in regeneration, thus we can clearly see that the Gospel message of deliverance and peace is addressed only to quickened souls, and not ‘offered’ to all and sundry.

Wylie Fulton

Thanks to Wylie Fulton for these contributions

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