

It Is Written

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The Anti-Gospel

By Doy Moyer

The gospel is rooted in the fact that all have sinned and fall short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23). The wages of sin are death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23). Mankind, left to himself, is lost, without hope, and unforgiven. There is no grace without Christ, and no path to God without the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). The gospel message is that we can receive forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus and be born again to that living hope, reserved in heaven, through the resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3-5).

The gospel is also inseparable from this primary message: "repent!" Jesus said, "repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). This is a clear kingdom mandate:

"Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

"Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

God wants all to "come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). He wants the gospel taught to grant "repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 2:25), for godly repentance leads to salvation (2 Cor. 7:10).

Sadly, this message has been rejected in favor of one much more palatable and easily accepted by a world indoctrinated with moral relativism and forced tolerance.

The anti-gospel is the message of non-repentance. This message tells people that repentance is not necessary, that it is good to embrace your own version of self, that those who say otherwise are the haters, the bigots, the ones who need to be shunned and shamed. God made us the way we are, so there is no need to do anything but affirm our own feelings. Modern culture deems that the more enlightened embrace the anti-gospel, for modern understanding is superior to the ancients; and since Scripture is a product of the ancient world, we can see the need to move beyond it as a relic of the past.

The anti-gospel turns the grace of God into a license to sin (Jude 4), allowing for all to continue in sin while affirming this twisted version of grace (Rom. 6:1-2). The anti-gospel preachers proclaim that love wins, that the Spirit is with them, that God understands. In the process, a new idolatry has emerged. God has been reshaped to look just like the anti-gospel message. This god no longer requires repentance and despises those who preach it. This god bends to the whims and desires of those who have shaped the anti-gospel. The standard of the anti-gospel is self-will, not Scripture, though once in a while some passage will be trotted out as support of what has already been decided. Those Scriptures that do not support the predetermined conclusions are summarily dismissed and relegated to the shelf of antiquities, appealed to only as evidence of a world that everyone now knows was backwards.

This message is anti-gospel because it teaches people to affirm their sinfulness, to be proud of their sinful behavior, to march in lock-step with flags unfurled to show solidarity. Grace is perverted and the real gospel is veiled as the minds of the anti-gospel advocates are unable to "see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:4), while they preach themselves rather than "Christ Jesus as Lord" (vs. 5).

The anti-gospel shuns the Lordship of Jesus. It mocks those who embrace God's authority as revealed

in Scripture. It manifests the works of the flesh while parading in disguise as the fruit of the Spirit. Because the anti-gospel denies true repentance, it also denies the kingdom of Christ. There is no grace of living waters in the anti-gospel, but only a poison that may momentarily taste of pleasure. In the end, it will become bitter, and it will kill those who drink of it.

"Repent and believe in the gospel." Only in Christ will true salvation be found. Preach the gospel. Let the foolishness of the cross become the power of the saved (1 Cor. 1:18). Now is not the time to compromise; now is the time to embrace the real gospel with even more intensity. It's not about politics; it's about truth.

Idleness

By W. R. Jones

We are all acquainted with an old adage which says, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." It is possible for one to misuse his mind and it is possible for one to allow his mind to become disused. God condemns both. We frown exceedingly upon the person who misuses his mind by allowing it to be filled with lust, avarice, and hate, but we have failed to understand that disuse or idleness of the mind concerning the things of the Lord will bring "spiritual decay." I am told the following story which very graphically shows "disuse will result in decay."

Victorious Roman Legions, left behind to rule a defeated Spain, built an aqueduct in Segovia in AD 109. And for 1800 years - sixty generations - that aqueduct carried sparkling water to hot and dusty Segovians. About the turn of the twentieth century, thoughtful Spaniards decided the aqueduct should be preserved for posterity, and so should be relieved of its age-old labor. They laid modern pipelines and stopped the flow that for years had gushed and gurgled in the aqueduct. Shortly after, the aqueduct began to fall apart. The blazing sun dried the mortar and made it crumble. Its stones sagged and fell and soon it lay in ruins. What ages of SERVICE could not destroy, idleness rapidly disintegrated.

There are many people today who use their minds to dwell upon the very "rot" of the earth. Concerning such people, God expressed the following attitude in the long ago. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and it grieved him at his heart" (Gen 6:5-6). It grieves God to see His creation engaged in the distortion of their minds.

I believe it can be said with equal force that God is also grieved to see our minds lying idle in spiritual disuse. For this very reason Paul admonished. "Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Tim 4:15). And again, "Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things (Phil 4:8).

May God help us all to study and meditate upon his Holy Word. And by all means remember: "Disuse Will Result in Decay."