

TURN FROM SIN AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL

by, W. C. Moore

1

Turn From Sin And Believe The Gospel

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Jesus never preached an easy Gospel, a soft, compromising way of salvation. Before we are saved, we live to please ourselves. When we get saved, we give up our own ways and seek to please God.

"No man can serve two masters" (Matt. 6:24). "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33).

"Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:24). This last was in answer to the question, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" (Luke 13:23).

It is not in any sense a hard thing to get saved when a person comes wholeheartedly to the Lord and is willing to forsake sin and trustfully to surrender his life and his all to the Lord. But there must be this wholeheartedness before a person can be saved.

It is easy enough to get saved when a person is willing to give himself and all that he has over unreservedly to the Lord and to trust the Lord for salvation. But without this surrender, any person is deceived if he thinks that by a mere intellectual assent to certain truths of the Bible he is therefore a saved person.

People talk about "believing" on the Lord Jesus Christ when they have never truly repented of their sins. A mere mental assent to the truths of the Bible never saved anybody and never will. Even the devils do more than that – they believe *"and tremble"* (Jas. 2:19) but they are not saved.

Jesus put repentance before believing: *"Repent ye, and believe the Gospel"* (Mark 1:15). After His resurrection He still commands that *"Repentance and remission of sin...be preached...among all nations"* (Luke 24:47).

Paul follows his Lord, *"Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Acts 20:21).

Christians, too, if they sin, must repent. Jesus the Son of God, the Head of the Church, speaks from heaven and to a very zealous and strongly orthodox church He commands repentance: *"Thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent"* (Rev. 2:4-5).

Multitudes Deceived

That many are already fearfully deceived and will continue in a state of almost unthinkable delusion right up to the very day of judgment, is revealed by the startling words of the Son of God:

"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out devils? and in

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2

Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity"(Matt. 7:21-23).

Jesus came to save His people *from* their sins (Matt. 1:21), not *in* their sins.

Vance Havner, American revivalist, wrote: "The great awakenings of the past have been accompanied by preaching against sin – and preaching for conviction, repentance, godly sorrow, confession and forsaking of sin, restitution, return to first works, return to the Scriptures, and praying and witnessing, and godly living."

E. E. Shelhamer, writing on "Shallow Revivals," sounds forth a mighty warning that is sorely needed in this day when there is such a widespread misapprehension as to what real salvation is. He says, "No wonder Wesley cried out and said, 'How terrible is this! When the ambassadors of God turn agents for the devil! When they who are commissioned to teach men the way to heaven, do in fact teach the way to hell.'

"If ever asked, "Why, who does this?" I answered, "Ten thousand wise and honorable men, even all those of whatever denomination, who encourage the proud, the trifler, the passionate, the lover of the world, the man of pleasure, the unjust or unkind, the easy, careless, harmless, useless creatures, the man who suffers no persecution for righteousness' sake, to imagine he is in the way to heaven."

"These are false prophets in the highest sense of the word. These are traitors both to God and man...They are continually peopling the realms of night; and whenever they follow the poor souls they have destroyed, hell shall be moved from beneath to meet them at their coming."

Warning Every Man

Paul "*ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears"* (Acts 20:31). He says, "*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men"* (2 Cor. 5:11). There is not enough terror of the Lord today, either in the pulpit or in the pew, either among professing Christians or among out-and-out sinners who make no profession.

God is indeed holy, just and good, merciful and kind; but He hates sin. The fact that He gives human beings space to repent, by no means implies that the most terrible judgments are not coming on those – all those – who despise His mercy.

It is an awful thing to trample underfoot the Blood of the Son of God and to ignore the mercy of the Almighty.

It is impossible to "*fully preach"* the Gospel (Rom. 15:19) and to "*declare... all the counsel of God"* (Acts 20:27) – without warning men of judgment to come! Even Felix trembled when Paul "*reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come"* (Acts 24:24-25).

Anyone who goes about lulling Christians into a yet deeper spiritual sleep than they are already in, is not a disciple of Christ – but rather, a wolf in sheep's clothing (Matt. 7:15). Jesus says, "*Why sleep ye? Rise and pray"* (Luke 22:46). Jesus tells His own, "*Take heed to yourselves...watch ye therefore, and pray always"* (Luke 21:34, 36).

Unless we want to be "*cut asunder"* and have our portion appointed with the hypocrites, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 24:51), we must heed the

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3

warning of our Lord and *"Watch"* – be alert, be aroused, be awake spiritually, and *"Be...ready"* – for the Second Coming of Jesus! (Matt. 24:42-50).

The least thing God wants us to do is more important than anything else in all the world! It is better to miss anything than to become careless and fail to be ready at the coming of the Lord. *"In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh"* (Matt. 24:44).

Some might say that Jesus only spoke these warnings to His disciples of that day, but Jesus is the Head of the Church (Eph. 5:23). *"The church is subject unto Christ"* (Eph. 5:24). He taught His disciples to teach all nations to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them (Matt. 28:18-20).

Jesus is the Mediator of the New Testament (New Covenant), under which we now live, as Moses was the mediator of the Old Covenant (Heb. 8:8,13; Heb. 9:11-15).

Jesus says that when the Holy Spirit is come, *"He will reprove [convict] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment"* (John 16:8). There will be conviction of sin when the Holy Spirit is freely moving in the midst.

God does not tell us to go about trying to make things nice and comfortable and pleasant for the people, so they may enjoy themselves and be self-indulgent. He says, *"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion"* (Amos 6:1).

Jesus says, *"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"* (Matt. 16:24). Consider what it means to follow Jesus. Was He trying to get all the enjoyment out of life He could? Was He self-indulgent?

"Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2). *"Exhort one another daily"* (Heb. 3:13). *"The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force"* (Matt. 11:12).

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Today many people are deceived, actually imagining that they can give some kind of mental assent to the truth of the Bible, and then live in sin openly and flagrantly and expect to get to heaven when they die!

The rich man in hell was told: *"Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented"* (Luke 16:25).

Unless you repent of your sins, you will certainly reap what you sow! Let us quit living for self and for sin now and repent, and cry unto God before it is too late for forgiveness, in Jesus' Name. Jesus says, *"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out"* (John 6:37).

"This commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto My name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings".