

The Wednesday Word, June 24, 2020: The Non-Gospel ‘Gospel Invitation!’

Every day, sincere, well-meaning Christians unwittingly plunder the gospel. We see this especially in the way they often tell the non-Christian how to be saved. The terms they use, in the context of the Finished Work, demand or imply that human works are a part of the plan of salvation!

But works are no part of salvation. Biblical salvation is discovered wholly in the Lord Christ. It is “Not of works, lest anyone should boast (Ephesians 2:9).”

The following are a few of the terms commonly mis-used in an evangelistic framework. They are, in the context of gospel preaching, anti-gospel. Some of these terms are expressions which may be helpful as they relate to the Christian life ... but not to salvation by grace. To add these requirements to the unsaved, joins self-effort to salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). However, we must never look to ourselves to find reasons for God's Grace.

Here then are a few terms to be avoided.

1. **“Commit your life to Jesus and He will save you”** This is not salvation by what Christ has DONE. This is far from resting in Christ alone. Notice the emphasis is upon what you do ... you are to commit. This is salvation by works.

2. **“Surrender your life to Christ and He will save.”** This implies you are going to have to live a surrendered life for Christ to be enabled to save. The implication is, if you surrender, you'll get saved, if you don't, you'll be lost. So much for resting in the doing, dying and rising of Christ alone. So much for His surrendered life on our behalf!

3. **“Give your heart and life to Jesus.”** Salvation is not by giving anything, it is by receiving (see John 1:12). Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep." (John 10:11). Notice Who does the giving!

4. **“Make Jesus Lord and Master and He will save you.”** Again, listen to the Do! Do! Do! This implies that works are necessary to be saved. But Salvation is God's gift, not His reward.

5. **“Invite Jesus into your heart.”** This term should never be used in collaboration with gospel preaching. Your hearer must look away from themselves and REST in Christ alone.

6. **“You have broken God's laws. Are you now ready to repent, change your way of life and receive Christ, and follow Him, no matter what the cost?”**

Wait a minute! Jesus Christ paid the cost of salvation in full on the cross of Calvary. Of course, we are law breakers, but Jesus died for our lawbreaking, filthy souls. We are not saved by any pledge to change our lives. As Spurgeon said, 'Repentance' is a grace. Some people preach it as a condition of salvation. Condition of nonsense! There are no conditions of salvation. God gives the salvation Himself.”

7 **"Confess your sins and you will be saved."** This again makes salvation something of us (once more see Ephesians 2:8). Of course, we believe in the confession of sins, but not for salvation. Salvation is by resting in Christ alone.

8. **"You must keep the Ten Commandments."** No one can be saved by keeping the commandments (Romans 3:20) for no one can keep them. However, the sinner's substitute, Jesus Christ, has kept them perfectly. Rest in Him as your law keeper.

9. **"You must do the will of God to be saved."** God's will for salvation is that we REST on Christ, not on various schemes (John 6:40).

10. **"Turn over your life to Christ and He will save you."** Again, this is talking about salvation by works. The emphasis is on what you do, not on what He has done.

11. **"Put Jesus on the throne of your life and you'll be saved."** Again, this implies that we are saved by something we do. Christ on the Throne of our life is a wonderful truth for believers, but not a truth to get us Justified (*acquitted*) before God.

12. **"Promise to live for Jesus, turn your life around and He will save you."** This again makes works a part of salvation.

Here's why we don't use any of the above terms to bring an invitation,

- A. Eternal life is free! Romans 5:15-16
- B. Eternal life is God's gift! Romans 6:23
- C. Eternal life is not of works! Ephesians 2:8-9
- D. Eternal life is received by faith! Romans 4:5

I like what Thomas Brooks (1608-1680) said on this matter. He wrote, "There is no other name, no other nature, no other blood, no other merits, no other person to be justified and saved by, but Jesus Christ. All remission is only by the blood of Jesus Christ." Remember, when it comes to salvation, Christ +Anything =Nothing.

And that's the Gospel Truth!