

Is Something Wrong With The Gospel We Preach?

By Tony Melton

Why don't people in the United States respond to the gospel as they once did? Is our message different from the message of those in days gone by? Have Christians lost the ability to convert the lost? These questions often dominate the thoughts of Christians after being rejected again and again by those outside the body of Christ.

However, as I examine the word of God, I find that the rejection of the gospel by nations is not restricted to the United States alone. In fact, the apostle Paul had much to say concerning the nation of Israel's rejection of the gospel. Israel was very similar to the people in our country, having a great zeal of God but not according to knowledge. Rather than endeavoring to follow God's righteousness, many of the Israelites established their own righteousness and would not submit to God.

The apostle Paul, like Christians in the United States, wanted to see his kinsmen according to the flesh saved. His heart's desire and prayer to God was for the salvation of Israel. Also, Paul showed his desire to save Israel by preaching the gospel to them even at the risk of losing his own life. Nevertheless, quoting from Isaiah, Paul declared, "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved" ([Ro 9:27](#)). Even though just a few Israelites were being saved in Paul's day, he did not say the gospel was insufficient, nor did he try to make it more appealing to man by watering it down as many have done today. But what was Paul's reactions to Israel's rejection of the gospel? To the unbelieving Jews at Antioch, Paul boldly proclaimed, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we, turn to the Gentiles" ([Acts 13:46](#)). Paul gave them a chance to hear the gospel, but when they rejected it, he let them know that they had judged themselves unworthy of eternal life. Paul had great confidence in the gospel knowing it was the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believed.

Consequently, Paul wanted to know how men could believe on Christ if they had not heard of him, and how could they hear without a preacher. Then he concluded saying, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" ([Ro 10:16](#)). In this verse, Paul placed obedience on the same plane as **belief**. By this I mean, Paul knew that Israel had not believed the report of the gospel because they had not obeyed.

Likewise, as we preach the gospel to the lost today, we might ask, "Who hath believed our report?" Certainly, if men and women will not submit to the terms of the gospel, it is not the gospel's fault; it is probably not the preacher's fault; but it is simply the people's fault, because they do not believe the gospel.

If Paul, one of the most powerful preachers that ever lived, could only convert a few Israelites with the gospel, how can we believe that because people of our nation reject it, that something is wrong with the preacher or the gospel? Paul informed us that all Israel had heard the gospel; therefore, what was their problem? Why did they not obey? They were a "disobedient and gainsaying people" (Ro 10:21b). The problem was not with the gospel, nor with the preacher, but with the people!

In our country, people have their conscience seared with a hot iron by seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. Their hearts have been infected by modern day Hymeneus' and Philetus' whose words have eaten as gangrene upon their souls. They--having ears--hear not. Like sheep going to the slaughter, they are being led by their "pastors" down the Broadway toward the eternal fires of Gehenna.

Since we are surrounded by wickedness on every side, and the majority of our friends and neighbors have bowed the knee to Baal, shall we lay aside our armor? Shall we throw down our sword and surrender to the adversary? Shall we look for a more appealing gospel? Absolutely not! We must continually preach the truth and pray, never giving up hope that the light of the gospel might one day shine unto those who are blinded and ensnared by the devil.