

# Hated By All

When Jesus prepared His disciples to go to Israel preaching, He said, “And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake” (Matt. 10:22). Why?

The reason they were hated is because they taught the truth. The Jews generally did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. They rejected teaching on the kingdom; it was heavenly and spiritual, not earthly and physical. Their hypocrisy concerning the Law was exposed too. Thus, they hated the disciples.

If we teach in the name of Jesus, we should expect no less today. Men and sin have not changed. Corrupt religious practices still exist. Men continue to reject the true Jesus and His Kingdom. If we are not hated, facing resistance, opposition, and rejection, then we are probably not teaching the truth (2 Tim. 3:12).

Though rejected and despised by men, the faithful will be accepted by the Lord. He made this promise: “But he who endures to the end will be saved” (Matt. 10:22).

- Steven F. Deaton



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## Power In The Word

Paul wrote that the gospel is God’s power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). Many people in modern religions deny this. It is obvious the Jew, Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist reject the gospel altogether. However, it just as true that denominations do not believe the gospel is the power unto salvation. There may be exceptions, but they are very few.

Some believe the gospel is totally unnecessary to salvation. Their belief is that the Holy Spirit works directly on the heart of a sinner. In some mysterious way the Spirit is supposed to awaken a person to his or her sin and bring them to faith in the Lord. Each person has a different and unique experience that confirms the Spirit’s work. In other words, it is all subjective and based on feelings and emotions.

Others believe the gospel is only partly needed. They would agree that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God, but deny that all the word is necessary (Rom. 10:17). The teaching usually goes something like this: “Believe on Jesus as the Christ and accept Him into your heart as your personal Savior and you will be saved.” For them, belief alone is sufficient for salvation, and once you are saved you are always saved. Some say no sin can be committed by the child of God; others that sin is wiped away as it is being committed. So, anything beyond the gospels is not needed. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are the basis for believing Jesus is the Christ, the rest of the New Testament is overkill.

The truth is, the gospel is God’s power unto salvation. The gospel is not just Matthew,

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Church of Christ  
3221 E. Hebron Ln.  
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40165-8959

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Sunday Evening 5:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 7:30 p.m.

### Elders

Tom Brown  
Laymon Byers  
John Smith

### Evangelists

Ron Halbrook  
halbrook@insightbb.com

Steven Deaton  
steven@hebronchurchofchrist.com

502-957-5115

[www.HebronChurchofChrist.com](http://www.HebronChurchofChrist.com)

Mark, Luke, and John. It includes all of the New Testament. Paul wanted to preach the “gospel” to the saints in Rome (Rom. 1:7, 15). Did he want to tell them about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus? No. He had other things to teach them; things he termed as the “gospel.”

Further, notice that men are saved when they obey “the faith” (Acts 6:7). “The faith” is the gospel and the gospel is the faith. There is one faith, one body of divine truth and it is found exclusively in the New Testament (Eph. 4:5; Gal. 1:8, 9).

The gospel saves a man initially as he hears, believes, and obeys. It also keeps him saved as he follows it. Paul said, “I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you” (1 Cor. 15:1, 2). He also said that we will be presented as holy, blameless, and above reproach “if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard” (Col. 1:23).

Back to the need for the gospel, not direct divine action separate from the word.

If there ever was a case for salvation by direct divine action, it was the case of Saul of Tarsus. On his way to Damascus the Lord appeared to him (Acts 9). Saul believed and asked the Lord, “Lord, what do You want me to do?” Then the Lord said, ‘Arise, and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do’” (Acts 9:6). After spending three days as a penitent, prayerful man, Ananias came to see him (Acts 9:9, 11, 17). Paul later revealed that Ananias said, “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins” (Acts 22:16). In other words, Saul was not saved by the experience on the road to Damascus. He was not saved directly by the Lord on that day, nor by the prayers he offered for three days. Rather, he had to hear the commands as given by Ananias. When he obeyed, he was saved.

There is power in the word. It is the power to save a soul, and if we are going to be saved we need to spend time in the word. If we are going to help save others, we must know the word.

- Steven F. Deaton

## Jesus, A Community Organizer?

I know of no national politician that understands and practices the true religion of Jesus Christ. Both of the two big parties are woefully lacking in people who really take religion seriously, attend worship, have clean moral lives, and put God first. I am not sure if such a person could rise to the top. So, understand that this is not a politically motivated article; this is about a slur against the Lord.

You have likely heard Jesus compared to a community organizer (such as one candidate used to be). This is symptomatic of a larger problem in America: people molding the Lord in their own image.

Jesus was not a “community organizer.” He was the Messiah, God in the Flesh, Immanuel, Savior, Lord (Acts 2:36; Jn. 1:1, 14; Matt. 1:23). He is King of kings, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession (1 Tim. 6:15; Heb. 3:1). To equate Him with a social agitator who airs grievances through litigation and has friendly connections to men convicted of fraud and/or self-acclaimed enemies of the state is blasphemy.

This is just the latest attempt by men to elevate a man to God’s level or bring God down to man’s level. The Roman Catholic Church has done this for centuries by having popes and priests who supposedly possess the power to forgive sin and sacrifice anew the Lord in the Eucharist. Denominations have done it by referring to their preachers as “Reverend,” a term that ought to be reserved for God (Psa. 111:9).

We need to be careful how we picture Jesus. If we view Him through our standards, feelings, and opinions, then we are apt to stray. However, if we allow the Bible to shape our understanding, we will be awe stricken and hold Him in the highly esteemed position He deserves.

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And His name will be called  
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

- Isa. 9:6