

Why Men Will Not Come To Christ

By Henry Mahan

"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life..." (John 5:40)

THROUGHOUT THE WORD OF GOD THERE IS A clear-cut message of redemption through the blood of Calvary's Cross. There is absolutely no salvation from sin except through the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Men may state their belief in a supreme being, in a Divinely inspired Bible, and even in an eternal heaven and burning hell, yet perish in their sins without hope and without God. For the Word of God clearly says, "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission" of sins (Heb 9:22).

Christ is "the way," men without Him are lost, wandering in the wilderness of sin. Christ is "the light," men without Him are in darkness. Christ is "the truth," men without Him live a lie. Christ is "the vine," men without Him are withered branches to be cast into the fire. Christ is "the rock," men without Him are carried away by the flood of judgment. Christ is "the bread" and "water of life," men without Him will hunger and thirst throughout eternity.

When these truths are so plainly written, and clearly recorded in the Word of God, and when they are faithfully preached day after day from the pulpit, the radio and the printed page, it causes us to ask the question, Why do men not come to Christ? Why do they continue to live in unrest, unhappiness and sin, when to come to Christ means rest, joy and salvation from sin? To find the answer to this question, we must go to the Scriptures.

I. Sinners Spiritually Blind. Men do not come to Christ because they are spiritually blind and the Gospel is hid from them. Paul says, "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them" (II Cor 4:3,4). A blind man will have no appreciation for the beautiful mountain scenery of the Smokies. A deaf man will have no appreciation for the glorious music of the symphony orchestra; neither will a blinded sinner who has no spiritual eyes receive and rejoice in the spiritual things of God. All mankind are in a lost and perishing condition through sin; though some will be redeemed from every tribe, tongue and nation for God hath chosen them, the Spirit hath called them, and Christ hath redeemed them, yet the rest will be lost forever, never seeing the truth for their eyes are blind, and they are given over to a reprobate mind to continue in those things that are not convenient (Rom 1:28).

The Church must not cease from its labor until it has preached the Gospel to every creature! We must give ourselves to missions, evangelism, and witnessing, thereby fulfilling the great commission of our Saviour. But, *all of our tricks, methods, pleadings and begging lost men to make decisions and professions is useless unless the Spirit of God performs a Divine operation on their blinded minds, and opens their eyes to receive God's truth.* It is only the Holy Spirit who can "lead men to Christ." Only the Father can "draw men to the Son." Sinners will not and *cannot* come to Christ of their own accord because they are blinded and *cannot* see their condition and their need of Christ. Natural men do not see that they are wicked and that "God is angry with the wicked every day" (Psa 7:11). They cannot understand that salvation is in the blood of Christ, but rather the preaching of the cross is foolishness to them. All of these glorious truths can only be revealed by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Word. We must preach, yes, but *we must wait upon the Spirit to convict and convert.* The emphasis today is not upon the faithful preaching of all the Word of God, but it is placed upon "enlisting the unsaved," and pressing men to "accept Christ"; terms that never appear in the Word of God. Nowhere in the Bible do we find god's preachers going around begging the wicked to "decide for Christ," and "accept Jesus," but rather they condemned sin, preached the Word, held the sinners feet to the fire until, Smarting under the pricks of the Spirit, they cried: "What must we do to be saved?"

The knowledge of these truths does not lead to fatalism nor to an antievangelistic spirit, but will lead us to properly emphasize "all" Bible doctrines and will correct our unscriptural methods so often used to enlist great numbers of unsaved Church members, who have made a decision for Christ but who have never been born of the Spirit. In the mad race for numbers and praise from men one Church in the South gave a gold

watch to the person who “won the most souls to Jesus” last year! Another leading Church in another State gives the pastor a ten dollar bill everytime a person joins the Church! Recently a leading southern evangelist in a morning service asked for five volunteers to walk down the Church aisle during the invitation that night to get “the ball rolling” and encourage sinners to step out for Jesus. As a result of all this unscriptural vaudeville our churches are filled with sinners who are trying to live the Christian life without Christ; who are trying to refrain from certain worldly amusements without having a hatred of them; and who are “the blind” trying to “lead the blind.”

Oh, my preacher brethren, let us be fair to God. It is a sin against God and the sinner to trick and talk men into professions without faith, and decisions without regeneration. Jesus said, “No man *can* come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him,” and “all that the Father giveth me *will* come to me” (John 6:44,37).

II. Sinners Spiritually Dead. Men do not come to Christ because they are dead in trespasses and sins and must be quickened by God's Spirit. In the heart of man, there dwelleth no good thing. In the soul of man there is no spiritual life. In the mind of man there is no longing or seeking after God. Men out of Christ are dead men. They are just as dead and helpless spiritually as a corpse is helpless physically. I would as soon expect a dead man to get out of his casket, go into the kitchen and get himself a drink of water as for a sinner to rise out of his sins and go to Christ who is the water of life, without the quickening and regenerating work of the Spirit. If a man is ever saved from sin, he will first be effectually quickened by the Spirit of God. Paul in writing to the Ephesians calls their attention to the fact that they were “quickened” to life (Eph. 2:1) by the Spirit. God does not perform this effectual work of the Spirit in the hearts of all men, but only in the hearts of whom He has purposed to save. “Salvation is of the *Lord*” (Jonah 2:9) from the beginning to end. He saves men on purpose, there are no accidents with God. This talk of “God has done His part, now you must do your part” completely destroys salvation by pure grace and allows it to depend on the works of man which is no more of grace, but of deeds and works. Man made his decision in Eden, he chose to disobey God and serve Satan. That decision still controls the hearts of unregenerated men. Now God is calling out His people from every nation under heaven and redeeming them through the blood of His Son. He did not tell us that the destiny of men rested upon our talking them into Church membership, but He did commission us to preach the Gospel to every creature and leave the work of regeneration in the proper hands, that of the Spirit.

Every preacher in the country has a sermon on the words of Pilate, “What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?” (Matt 27:22). They use it to try and prove to the sinner that the salvation of his soul rests entirely in *his* deciding for or against Jesus. But very few preachers ever are fair enough to preach on the *reply* Jesus made to these words of Pilate. Jesus said to Pilate, “Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above” (John 19:10). There you have it, sinner, you are in the hands of a God who does as He pleases, when He pleases, and to whom He pleases and He is responsible to no man for His actions. He said to Moses, “I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy” (Exo 33:19). Charles Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers since Paul, said, “The preaching of election, the effectual call and particular redemption will either make a man so angry that he goes home, and cannot sleep for very hatred, or else they bring him down into lowliness of thought, feeling the immensity of the things which he has heard. Either way it excites and stirs him up not temporarily, but in a lasting manner. These doctrines haunt him, and he kicks against the pricks and full often the Word forces its way into his soul. I know that more men have gained by being made angry under a sermon than by being pleased by it. For being angry they have turned the truth over and over and it has burned its way into their hearts.”

III. Sinners Opposed to God's Terms of Salvation. Men do not come to Christ because of His terms of Salvation. God's have been, are, and always will be repentance and faith. Repentance from sin and faith in the shed blood of Christ are necessary and should never be left out of our messages. Unsaved men and women love their sins and hate God's law and His righteousness. The average man would be willing to accept a salvation from the fire if he could have it and keep his sins. It is sin that has separated between you and your God. It is sin that God hates and sin that man loves. Men do not go to hell for rejecting Jesus, they go to hell to pay for their sins. We have the unscriptural statements making the rounds today, tell a sinner that it is “no longer the sin question now but the son question,” and “the only sin that will send a man to

hell is rejecting Jesus.” Both of these statements have not a word of truth in them. There are multiplied millions of people in hell today and millions of others going there who have never one time heard the name of Jesus Christ, much less the story of His death on the Cross. These people did not go to hell for rejecting someone of whom they have never heard, they went to hell and are going there by the thousands daily to pay for their sins. God sends men to hell to punish them for sin. It is still the wages of sin that is death. The Word still declares the soul that sinneth shall surely die. If the only sin that will send a man to hell is rejecting Jesus, then the heathen who has never heard is not lost and God is obligated to take him into heaven. Let's come back to the Bible, preachers, men are not going to receive halftruths, they must have the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

John the Baptist, came crying out against sin. I pray that God will give us some men like John the Baptist, for that is the need of this generation. Men hate God, they hate His holy laws, they hate His commandments, and they love sin. They will not come to Christ because they hate His terms and will not submit to them. They will not lay down their weapons of warfare and their arms of rebellion until the Spirit of God has laid bare their hearts, stripped them of their self-righteous rags, and destroyed all their false foundations. God give us preachers today who will rout the sinners out of their refuge of lies and exalt the God of the Bible.