

THE CHALLENGE!

If you could preach a message that would save everyone who believed it, would you preach it? If you could preach a message with a guarantee that everyone who believed it would be so completely transformed that Christ would be “glorified in them,” and “admired in everyone who believed it” II Thessalonians 1:10, **would you preach it?** If you could preach a message that the same message would work in every nation, every culture, among every race, and every religion, everywhere in the entire world, bringing the same “radical salvation” in every place, to everyone who believed it Colossians 1:6, **would you preach it?** Finally, if you could preach a message that is so simple it can be contained in only four words, yet it guarantees that everyone who understands it will be “born of God” I John 5:1, and “overcome the world” I John 5:4, **WOULD YOU PREACH IT?**

The “message” I speak of is that which was first revealed to Peter concerning Jesus of Nazareth; “*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*” Matthew 16:16. It is the same message revealed to Saul of Tarsus when he heard the voice from heaven saying, “*I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest*” Acts 9:5. Only days later, Saul was preaching Christ in the synagogues of Damascus, “...that He is the Son of God” Acts 9:20, and “...this (Jesus) is very Christ” Acts 9:22.

Twenty years later, as the Apostle Paul, he is still preaching the same message in the synagogue of Thessalonica; “...opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and **that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ**” Acts 17:3. Paul had to flee by night after only three Sabbaths because of the uproar caused by the unbelieving Jews, yet the scripture tells us a “great multitude” of the devout Greeks believed. A great church was established in that city. It was to these believers Paul said Christ would come “...to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed)...” II Thessalonians 1:10.

The “simplicity of Christ” which Paul feared the church would be moved away from, is simply stated in only four words, “*Jesus is the Christ.*” In order to preach it, however, the minister must understand who “the Christ” is. John said, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*” John 1:1. This “Word” is “the Christ.” John continued, “*And the Word was made flesh and*

dwelt among us...” John 1:14. This “Word, made flesh” is Jesus, the only begotten Son of God.

Christ came into the world as “the seed of the woman” to “bruise the head of the serpent” Genesis 3:15. He died on the cross as “the Lamb of God,” which Abraham prophetically declared “*God will provide...*” Genesis 22:8. John the Baptist told us this Lamb of God would “take away the sin of the world” John 1:29. Those who “believe” and “trust in Him” are “freed from sin” Romans 6:22, with all sin washed out of their hearts at the moment of saving faith. Acts 15:9

Christ is “Immanuel” (God with us) who was born of a virgin Isaiah 7:14. He is “the holy arm of the Lord” Isaiah 52:10, 53:1, and “the servant of the Lord” whose “visage (face) was so marred more than any man, and his form (body) more than the sons of men” Isaiah 52:14. Isaiah explains why, saying, “*So shall He sprinkle many nations...*” verse 15.

Christ is “the redeemer” whom God promised to “come unto Zion” Isaiah 59:20. Of most importance, He is “the Messiah, the Prince,” whom God promised to send into the world “to make an end of sins” and “bring in everlasting righteousness” Daniel 9:24-25. Both David Psalms 22 and Isaiah 53 reveal how He accomplished all this through His death on the cross.

Jesus said, “*It is finished!*” Satan has been destroyed Hebrews 2:14; sin has been “put away” Hebrews 9:26; and everyone who believes this truth goes free from sin to live their lives in “righteousness, peace, and joy” Romans 14:17. Stop the foolishness! Preach “*Jesus is the Christ,*” understanding who Christ is, and what He came into the world to do. The world was not “turned upside down” in the first century by those who “raised an army,” or by those who built “super-churches.” Instead, these words were spoken about two men, Paul and Silas, who went everywhere preaching “*Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world*” John 11:27. Often they

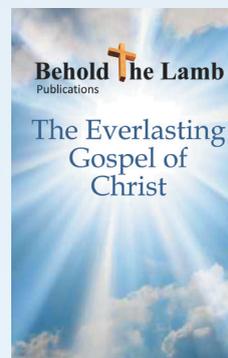
were driven out by angry mobs after a very few services, but wherever they went, churches sprung up from the incorruptible seed they planted.

We can “turn the world upside down” in our generation if we will preach the same message Paul and Silas preached. It is the only message that comes with a “guarantee” that it will work for everyone who believes it Romans 1:16.

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