**BIBLE TALK Radio Broadcast**

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**Why Am I Not A Christian? Part 1**

The Bible tells us that if we are to enter the kingdom of God and go heaven we must obey the Lord. No sinner will be saved from his sins and go to heaven without obedience. Jesus said in Matthew 7:21, *“Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”* The Hebrew writer says, *“And having been perfected, He* [that is Jesus] *became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”* (Heb. 5:9) Jesus has provided eternal salvation, but it is only for those who obey Him. Paul says in 2 Thess. 1:7-9, *“and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.”* Can’t we see then the importance of obedience?

But many people do not obey. It may be that some to whom I am speaking this morning have chosen not to obey the gospel of Christ. Why is that? Why are you not a Christian?

This morning, and next Sunday, the Lord willing, I want to look at some reasons people give why they are not Christians, why they have not obeyed the gospel of Christ. And if you are one of those who have given any of these as reasons why you have not obeyed, we hope we will say something that will help you to make the decision to obey the gospel today.

First, someone may say, “I don’t know enough yet.” Well, it is true one cannot obey until he knows what he must do. But it doesn’t take long for one to learn what he needs to know and do to be saved. A person doesn’t have to know everything in the Bible before he can become a Christian and be saved. And what he does need to know can be learned fairly quickly. In Acts 2 we read of about 3000 people obeying the gospel. This was on the day of Pentecost, a Jewish feast. Many of the Jews had gathered in Jerusalem for this feast. We read that the apostles began preaching the gospel to the people. We have recorded the sermon of Peter in which he proves that the Jesus they had crucified about 50 days earlier is both Lord and Christ. It says in verse 37, *“Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’”* Peter then tells them what to do. He said, *“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* (v. 38) Verses 40 and 41 says, *“And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”* They heard the truth about Jesus, understood it, were told what to do to be saved, and obeyed it, all in one day.

Also in Acts 16 we read of the conversion of the Philippian jailor and his household. In verse 30 the jailor asked Paul and Silas, *“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”* Verses 31 and following says, *“So they said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.’ Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.”* That very night the jailor and his household heard the truth about Jesus and what they must do to be saved, and they obeyed.

It doesn’t take long to learn all you need to know to be saved and become a Christian. You need to know that you are a sinner and in need of salvation from sin. You need to know that Jesus is the Son of God who died on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins, that He was buried and rose again the third day, and that He is now Lord and King. You need to believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior. You need to repent of your sins and turn to God. Repentance is a determination of heart to stop sinning and to start serving Jesus. You must confess your faith in Christ, and you must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins. That’s it. It doesn’t take long to learn this. It can all be done in one day.

Another person may say as a reason why he hasn’t become a Christian, “I’m waiting for something to let me know I should act.” He may be waiting on an audible call from God. But, God calls us through the gospel. 2 Thessalonians 2:14 says, *“to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* When you hear the gospel preached, or when you are reading the Bible, God is calling you. We must not expect another call from God. Or he may be waiting on a direct operation of the Holy Spirit on his heart to give him the faith that saves. But the Bible teaches that *“faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* (Rom. 10:17) Jesus said in John 17:20, *“I do not pray for these alone,* [that is, the apostles] *but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;”* Anyone who believes in Jesus, believes in Him through the words of the apostles. That is how faith comes, through the preaching of the word. The Holy Spirit works in conversion, but He works through the word He has revealed. His word is sufficient to convict and convert our hearts. Don’t wait on something else to call you.

And then someone else says as a reason why he has not become a Christian, “I’m not that bad a person.” “I’m a good citizen, husband, father.” This person doesn’t see any need to become a Christian. He is already good. But the fact is, no matter how good a person he is, he has sinned. Romans 3:23 says, *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”* 1 John 1:8 says, *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”* All have sinned, and therefore, are in need of salvation by God’s grace. You may not have committed murder, or robbed a bank, or committed adultery, but you have sinned. Sin is transgression of God’s law (1 John 3:4). Have you ever told a lie? Have you been jealous of another? Have you lost your temper and said unkind words? Have you had hatred and ill will in your heart toward another? 1 John 3:15 says, *“Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”* And so, all have sinned. Those who are guilty of sin are in need of salvation from sin.

In Acts 10 we read of a man by the name of Cornelius. Cornelius was a Gentile, but he was good, morally upright man. He is described as *“a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.”* (Acts 10:2) But Cornelius was not saved. An angel told him to send men to Joppa and *“call for Simon whose surname is Peter, who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.”* (read Acts 11:13-14) This implies that Cornelius was lost and in need of salvation. Even though he was a good man in many ways, he was still a sinner in need of the grace of God. He needed to hear the gospel and obey it. No matter how good you may be, you have sinned and are in need of obeying the gospel of Christ.

Someone else may say, “I’m too evil. I’m not good enough to become a Christian.” Paul says in Romans 5:20, *“Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.”* The grace of God is sufficient to bring about the cleansing of any sin, and any amount of sins. No one is too evil to come to Christ and be saved. Consider Saul of Tarsus. He was a persecutor of Christians. He consented unto the death of Steven, the Lord’s faithful servant. He was a blasphemer and an insolent man. But He learned the truth and obeyed the gospel and the Lord saved him. As a matter of fact the Lord made him one of His apostles. This is the apostle Paul. Listen to how Paul put it in 1 Timothy 1:12-15, *“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”* You may think of yourself as a chief of sinners, but Paul says he was a chief of sinners. The Lord saved him, and the Lord will save you. Dear listener, it doesn’t matter what you have done, God will forgive you if you will come to Him with a penitent, believing heart and obey Him.

And then someone else says as a reason why he doesn’t become a Christian, “I couldn’t be faithful anyway.” In other words, “Why try? I can’t live it.” Let me ask you, would Jesus die for your salvation and then not give you all you need to be saved? Paul says in Romans 8:31-32, *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”* The Lord has provided all we need to remain faithful and be saved. One thing He says is that He will not allow Satan to tempt us beyond what we are able to bear. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, *“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”*

In Ephesians 6 we are told how we can be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His power when we battle against Satan and his forces. Paul says, *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”* (vs. 10-11). The power is available for us to remain faithful if we will choose to access it. This does not mean we will never sin, but when we do sin we can repent and find God’s forgiveness. 1 John 1:8,9 says, *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

Dear listener, you can be faithful to the Lord if you want to be. You can be saved because the Lord has made it possible for you to be saved.

There is no justifiable reason why one should refuse to obey the gospel of Christ. We want to talk more about this next week as we look at other reasons people give as to why they do not become Christians.

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