

When You Made Yourself A Christian You Reserved Your Spot in Hell

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We live in a day, friends, where there is a famine for hearing the word of God. We live in a day, friends, when the vast majority of the churches in America preach a compromised gospel that is centered around man and his happiness. We live in a day, friends, where our nation is morally bankrupt and spinning out of control and the church rests asleep unaware of her great spiritual declension. And we live in a day, friends, where your average church member has never experienced the new birth through the supernatural act of regeneration upon the heart. We live in a day when most people make themselves Christians but listen, friend, when you made yourself a Christian, you reserved your spot in hell and that's the title of my message today, "When You Made Yourself A Christian You Reserved Your Spot in Hell."

We live in a day, friends, when the church for the most part, preaches error rather than truth. We live in a day where if you get to the point where you want to be a Christian and you go to church to find out how to be a Christian, the church will more than likely point you in the wrong direction, send you on your way to hell because we have another gospel today, different from the biblical one. A perverted gospel which the Apostle Paul warned about in Galatians, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel which is not another but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ." And that's where we are today, friends, with the doctrines of "God loves you. God loves you. Just accept Jesus as your personal Savior and you will go to heaven," and people walk an aisle in response of that invitation and they join our churches and our churches are full of false converts who made themselves Christians but the sad thing is, they are on their way to hell. That's how bad its gotten in this once-great land called America, a nation that once honored God and once feared God and now hates God and sins recklessly against him. America, the land of the free is now the land of the lost and the sad thing is that many of these lost people in this land are good church members who really believe they will go to heaven when they die. They believe that because their church told them that. They made themselves Christians but the trouble is, God never saved them.

You see, friends, God gives the grace of saving faith, man can't manufacture it. God is the one who turns the heart from a heart of stone to a heart of flesh. The New Testament declares in Titus, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to

his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”
And the Lord Jesus Christ lost his crowd when he began to preach the following message,

“65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?”

You see, friends, when you start preaching that salvation is all of God, that God has to draw you before you will come to Christ, then you lose your crowd as well.

Listen, friends, man lies in a spiritual grave. He cannot raise himself to life. Man lies in the spiritual grave and only one voice can come along with authority and majesty to quicken that soul and make it alive unto God. When Lazarus lay in his tomb bound in his graveclothes, let's say if his sister, Martha, came along, stood outside the tomb and cried, “Lazarus, wake up and come forth,” the old boy still would be laying there. If his sister, Mary, came along and said, “Lazarus, come forth,” he'd not move at her voice either. And if the Apostle Peter and James and John had stood outside that tomb and yelled at the top of their lungs, “Lazarus, come forth!” nothing would have happened either. But here comes Jesus. Here comes Jesus and the text in John says, “He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.”

That, friends, is a picture of the sinful depraved heart of man full of corruption like a rotten corpse and unable to do anything about it. When Jesus said, “except it be given him of my Father,” that shows that God draws souls by giving them grace and life and a heart to come which without, the moral impotency of man is dead in trespasses and sins and he cannot come. He cannot come. But when a lost sinner hears the gospel call, it is then a dead soul is brought out of the grave of sin. When Christ calls, his voice is attended with power, majesty and authority and dead men are brought to life. Now, you can fight me on that one if you want to and many do, but you've got a real fight on your hands, friends, if you strive against the God of the Bible and what he says about how he saves a man from sin. I repeat: men live in spiritual graves and there is only one voice that can raise them and that is the voice of God through saving faith.

You see, friends, the problem with many in our churches today is they have heard a diluted gospel which has been so watered down to make it more palatable to sinful men. It has no saving power. The modern gospel of your day and mine that can't save a flea, much less a lost sinner on his way to hell, and the trouble is, untold thousands have swallowed this perverted gospel hook, line and sinker and they are sunk: sunk in sin, unchanged in heart and on their way to a terrible place of misery called hell. What they did was make themselves a Christian. They did it. But you can't make yourself a Christian, friend, no matter how hard you try. You cannot raise yourself from the dead, only God can perform the supernatural work of regeneration upon the heart.

We quit preaching the gospel in this country years ago. We preach today that God has done his part and now it's up to man to do his part in his own salvation. That's what's taught today. It's taught today that way back yonder in the Garden of Eden, man just bruised himself up a little when he fell but he did not die spiritually. He still has the ability to make the choice to become a Christian and it's entirely up to him and in his power to accept or reject Christ when he is good and ready. And we preach an impotent Christ standing at the door of the heart, unable to come in on his own accord; it's up to the individual to decide to let him in or not. But the gospel of the glory of God, the old gospel which used to be preached in this once-great land, the old gospel of our Puritan and New England fathers, that gospel proclaimed that it was not man's power to be saved through Christ but rather the old gospel that God seemed so pleased to attend with revival and spiritual awakenings proclaimed the themes of man's natural inability to believe, God's free election being the ultimate cause of salvation and it spoke of a Christ who on a bloody cross because of sin, died specifically for his sheep.

Now many today will tear their hair out when they hear that kind of preaching because it's too shattering to our self-esteem; our pride just can't take that one. We must have a part in our salvation. We view God as an absolute monster. That's how people think today. Our many seminaries train pastors to preach that a man's salvation depends ultimately on man himself, that men make themselves Christians by deciding for Jesus like their casting a vote or they reject him altogether and salvation ultimately is in the hands of man. But that's not true, friends, salvation today has been taken out of the hands of God and placed in the hands of men in your day and mine but Jesus said, "You cannot. You will not. You never, ever will, come to God on your own accord unless the Father draws you." Jesus said, "No man can come unto me except it was given unto him of my Father." And Jesus lost his crowd over that doctrine and you'll lose your crowd today, Brother Preacher, if that's your message to this lost generation of self-willed, hell-bound, unconverted church members. The gospel of our day brings dishonor to the sovereignty of Christ and it takes salvation out of the hands of God. It makes man the master of his fate. It's up to man whether he goes to heaven or hell. But the old gospel stresses that faith is man's duty but faith is not in man's power.

Listen, friends, God gives what he commands "for by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." The old gospel overthrows the self-confidence of man and informs man that salvation is out of his hands, rather, he must shut himself up in a self-despairing dependence upon the grace of a sovereign Savior. The good news is, friends, that the Father and the Spirit draw sinners to Christ and Christ is the Savior for sinners.

Let me ask you a question: would you rather make yourself a Christian with the modern gospel and still go to hell? Or would you rather hear the truth and be warned of your false profession and have the knowledge that you admit yourself to be a sinner and you need to look to Christ who died for sinners? You need to abandon all self-righteousness, abandon all self-confidence and cast yourself entirely and completely upon Christ for the pardon of sin and the peace which salvation brings. Become a seeker, friend, beg the Lord for mercy. We are told in our Bible to do this very thing, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be

found. Call ye upon him while he is near.” That's what old Isaiah says to do. Listen to old Jeremiah, “And ye shall seek me and find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

Listen, friend, when you get to the place where you know you are lost, where you know you are a wretched sinner in need of a Savior, when you start seeking the Lord for pardon and peace and ask Christ to take away your evil heart of unbelief and continue to seek the Lord until he speaks peace to you, then God Almighty will reveal Christ in you, friend, and you will be saved. Jesus declares in the gospel of Luke, “All things are delivered to me and my Father and no man knoweth who the Son is but the Father and who the Father is but the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal him.”

Dear friend, Jesus is not standing outside the door of your heart, helpless and passively waiting for you to let him in like an insurance salesman stands knocking at your door with his hat in his hand waiting for you to let him in or not. No sir, when God calls, Christ comes in with majesty and power and authority and you hear his voice. Jesus is actively working to bring his people to faith and when we preach this old gospel which has power and Christ is set before men's eyes as the pearl of great price, the Lord is not standing idly by in impotence and helplessness but, rather, God is doing the work of salvation through his word and by his Spirit, awakening men to faith and drawing them in mercy to himself. We need more preachers today to preach the old gospel of ruin, redemption, repentance and regeneration and proclaim Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost. We need to warn men that they have broken the law of God through sin and one day they will be held up against a strict and severe law of God and they cannot stand on their own merits against that holy law and pass that test because God requires perfection to get into his heaven. But all mankind is a guilty rebel who's broken the strict law of God and the sentence of the law must be carried out.

I know I'm a sinner and I need a sin-substitute in the person of Jesus Christ and so do you, friend, so do you. We need to be honest with folks today and warn them of their danger and just maybe when we start to preach the true gospel in this country again, the Holy Spirit will be pleased to attend it in power and then you'll start having people tugging on your coat-sleeve begging and asking saying, “What must I do to be saved?” when there is a God-consciousness back in our sanctuaries again. Listen, Christ came into this world to save sinners but you first have to get lost before you can get saved. When God saves a person, he saves them completely and for all eternity. Listen, friend, when you made yourself a Christian, you just reserved your spot in hell. Self-reliance, self-righteousness and good works won't get you into heaven, you must experience change through the new birth. God must perform a work of grace upon the heart. Look away from yourself, friend, to the one who hung on a bloody cross for sin. He is the Savior of all who believe and there is not one thing you can do, friend, to save yourself, even if that is what the church of today tells you.

There are many in our churches today who have made themselves Christians. They've walked an aisle, decided for Christ, repeated a prayer and joined the church but they've never been awakened to their lost condition, never been convicted of sin by the Holy

Spirit and have never had a work of grace upon the heart in the supernatural act of regeneration which is the new birth. Wouldn't you want a preacher to be honest with you, friend, and tell you the truth about yourself and the truth about the gospel of the Son of God? Wouldn't you want your false foundations broken up now before you find out about them in hell, how deceived you really were by the modern gospel of this day of great spiritual decay? Wouldn't you like to hear the true good news of the real gospel whereby God promises that all who know themselves to be a sinner and put their complete and utter confidence in Christ shall be received in favor and "none, no not one, shall be cast out." John 6:37 promises, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Listen, friend, the good news of the gospel is that all who know themselves to be sinners and put their faith in Christ shall be received. He will never, ever be cast out. That's really good news, friends. Christ is a perfect Savior for sinners. Admit you're a sinner and look away from yourself and look unto him. Put your confidence in him, friend, rest in him, roll yourself unto him and ask God to perform a miracle in you and reveal Christ in you. And I repeat this truth that all, every man, every woman, every young person, every boy, every girl, that knows themselves to be a sinner and puts their faith in Christ will be received by Christ, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

That's the real gospel, friend. Aren't you glad you heard it before you died? I will leave you with these promises of the gospel.

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."