



If the World Would Turn to Christ

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Our world is certainly in a mess. Many of us look at our own lives, and we have mighty problems of our own to deal with. What are the answers to these issues that we are grappling with? Let's see what we can glean from these two passages of scripture.

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

John 8:12 "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Jesus invites us to come to Him for rest and He says *I am the light in this sin-darkened world*. Many years ago, during World War II, the story is told that Sir Winston Churchill had the weight of the world seemingly upon his shoulders. Things were looking very grim and uncertain for the Allies at that point in the war. One day, Mr. Churchill invited a minister in, to seek his spiritual counsel and advice, and perhaps whatever comfort he could lend him. This minister spent a good deal of time with Mr. Churchill, and later recounted that interestingly, several times in their conversation, Winston Churchill said that all of the problems that were then being faced in the world, or that would ever face the world, would never really be solved until Jesus Christ comes again.

It's very true that we live in a sin-cursed world and we will until the Lord takes us out of this world, to a new world where there is no sin. It is true that until we reach heaven—by the grace of God—that we will grapple with all of the difficulties and problems that sin has introduced into the world. But it is NOT true that the present problems and dilemmas that we face are not without answers or solutions. The fact of the matter is, Jesus is the answer for the problems that we face today.

Isaiah 57:20-21 “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.”

Well, when we refuse to turn to Jesus Christ, we are asking for trouble. I want to ask you a hypothetical question today: What if the world would turn to Christ? Have you ever thought about that? I know realistically that the whole world is never going to turn to Jesus, because the Bible tells us that people are going to be lost in the day of judgment. In fact, we’re told that the majority of people are going to be lost (**Matthew 7:21-24**). But think with me for a little while today, what IF the whole world would turn to Christ? What difference would that make in our world?

It seems like everywhere we turn today, we face major crises and problems: problems on the world stage, in Washington D.C., in the State House, in the church house and even in our own houses and lives. All of these problems really boil down to ONE problem. We don’t usually look at it that way, but it is true that the problems that we face as a society and as individuals boil down to ONE problem and it is the elephant in the room, so to speak: SIN. We don’t have a political problem; we have a sin problem. We really don’t have a financial problem; what we have is a sin problem. We don’t have a terrorism problem; we have a problem with sin, is what we have. We don’t have religious problems or divisions; we have a problem with sin. We don’t have a divorce problem; we have a sin problem. All of these things are the result of sin. It’s not that we have a dearth of honesty, or a problem with lying, dishonesty, extortion, embezzlement...people defrauding one another, etc...; what we have is a problem with sin. I am not dismissing these things as real challenges and problems; they certainly ARE. What I’m saying is this: every single one of them, in one way or another, goes back to the problem that we as mankind face, and that is the problem of sin. Nobody seems to want to address that. That’s why Jesus came to the earth two thousand years ago. He came to be our solution to sin.

In our modern time, people have characterized Jesus as being some sort of a social justice warrior, who came to earth to make it a better, fairer, happier, brighter place; to make us all be nice to one another and get along with each other. It is certainly true that He was the epitome of kindness, fairness, compassion and love, and that He taught us to do the same. It is true that Jesus was a friend to sinners and the poor and those who were marginalized in society. It is true that He showed compassion to the downtrodden and lent a helping hand to those who it seems were beaten down by life. He extended His hand to those who were oftentimes discriminated against and even castigated from society. But the overarching purpose for which Jesus came to earth was to deal with the problem that few are willing to acknowledge today: the problem of sin.

Luke 19:10 “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

The point is, if we would let Jesus solve our sin problem, all of these challenges we’ve talked about as well as any others you can think of would vanish. *What if the world would turn to Christ?* We already conceded that that is not going to happen; that the majority of people will be lost on the day of judgment. So, it is unrealistic to suggest that the whole world is going to turn to Christ. But let’s consider it hypothetically. Doing so will help us to understand that Jesus does have the answer to our problems. He has the answer to our societal problems. Every time we’re in an election year, it seems to get worse and worse. The candidates line up and give us their best pitch or stump speech, telling us how they’re going to spend this much money on this or that program, and they will enact this program and cut that money from that program over there...usually all of that leads to the expansion and creation of more programs. That’s the political history of our country, particularly throughout the twentieth century, and where has it gotten us? I’m not here to debate politics or make a political statement. Government

certainly has its place in the world and people can fairly debate what that place is and how extensive it is, how it is best run or operated. What I'm saying is this: if men lived by the principles of the Lord Jesus Christ, what a difference it would make in our society.

But we're not doing that. We are rejecting Jesus and the principles of God's word, and writing off the Bible as if it is irrelevant to our modern lives, and we suffer the consequences because instead of embracing righteousness, we rejected it and ran away from righteousness. Think about the moral problems that are proliferating in our society. Did you know that the CDC says that excessive drinking and alcoholism cost the United States \$249 billion per year? That's just the economic cost; it doesn't even take into consideration the cost of human lives lost, perhaps through drunk driving or diseases associated with alcohol, the lives shattered and torn apart, the dreams destroyed, the futures that vanish—all because of the abuse of alcohol.

Does Jesus have the answer to that problem? Well, the Bible tells us to stay away from it all together.

Proverbs 20:1 "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

Over the decade of 2000-2010, Americans spent \$1 trillion on illegal drugs, such as cocaine, heroin, marijuana, meth, and so on. Yes, we pay lip service to a supposed "war on drugs," but what are we seeing in our country today? We see the proliferation of the drug culture, even the move to embrace and legalize drug use in many states across the country.

The National Council on Problem Gambling says that gambling addictions cost the United States about \$6.7 billion per year. Other experts say that number is far too conservative, placing it at more like \$40-50 billion per year. Are we running away from this scourge on our society that leaves people in debt, tears families apart and destroys futures? No, we see it spreading and proliferating. Casino gambling, the lottery, and on and on. We as a culture are not getting away from gambling; we are expanding it. What about sexual immorality? The CDC says that 110 million Americans—that's 1/3 of us—have some form of sexually transmitted disease (STD). That's a staggering statistic. In fact, there are 20 million new cases diagnosed every year in this country, and those new cases alone cost our country \$16 billion per year in medical costs. Yet, again, we live in a culture of people who say that anything goes, however you want to live, whatever makes you happy or makes you feel good... Jesus has the answer to these problems. People just don't want Jesus or His answer.

Hebrews 13:4 "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

We're also told by Jesus that marriage was designed by God in the very beginning of time as a union, a contract between a man and a woman for life (**Matthew 19:3-9**). The apostle Paul shows that a man and woman are joined together by marriage until death do they part (**Romans 7:1-3**). What if everybody lived by that principle? If two people live throughout their lives in a monogamous marriage, like the Bible teaches, you wouldn't have the spread of STDs that we see in this country today. If you keep yourself for marriage and you marry someone who has kept themselves for you, and you live in a monogamous relationship until death you part, I can pretty well tell you that you're not going to get gonorrhea or any other STD. If you never touch a glass of alcohol, I can promise you that you will never have your life destroyed by alcoholism. If you never touch an illegal narcotic, I promise you that your life

is never going to be destroyed by your drug use. If you never go to a casino or buy a lottery ticket, I promise you that you'll never lose your shirt in a bad gambling deal. That is just not going to happen. You see, Jesus has the answer. But instead of embracing righteousness, holiness and purity, we laugh at those things and reject Jesus who came to bring peace to the hearts of men.

Isaiah 57:20 "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."

It's always that way for the wicked because they don't turn to the Lord. Instead they remain in sin and in wickedness. Jesus, my friend, is the answer.

Next, Jesus is the answer to the religious division that we see in the world today. It is a real problem that we have as a society, this confusion in religion.

I Corinthians 14:33 "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

There is a lot of confusion in religion today. I don't know too many things that have made more infidels than religion. I don't know of too many things that have turned people off from Christianity, other than perversions of Christianity. There are people out in the world who don't understand the theological implications of various issues, and they turn to seek for the real answers in life and eternal verities, and what do they see? They see a religious community that is segmented and divided into hundreds upon hundreds of denominations, sects and factions, all wearing different names, worshipping different ways and preaching different doctrines. People get discouraged with that. They get so overwhelmed by all of that that they throw up their hands and say, *there's no use in trying to untangle that mess. If that's what it is, then I don't need that in my life.*

You see, the devil has used religious division to drive people away from the Lord Jesus Christ. But instead of searching for the answer, what we've done is to merely continue to expand the division that has existed for a long time in religion. We've been telling people now for a long time that *one church is as good as another; it doesn't matter what you believe or what your authority in religion is. That the Bible is not a pattern in religion or for Christianity.* You know, whenever you don't look to an objective standard of authority, then division, error and apostasy are going to be the result.

I've illustrated it this way before, but let me remind you of it. The Bible teaches something called *the seed principle*. Jesus, when He taught the parable of the sower (**Luke 8:1-15**), taught that just as a farmer goes out and sows seed in the field, so the word of God is sown in the hearts of men. It is intended to produce fruit when it falls on good and fertile soil. He says in His explanation of the parable to His disciples that *the seed is the word of God.*

Now, let's suppose you have a corn seed and you go out and plant that seed of corn in a field. What's it going to produce? Corn, right? Could I take a handful of corn seed and scatter it in a patch of soil and go out in the summertime and reap an ear of corn, then maybe some squash and a head of lettuce and a tomato off the vine and a watermelon off the ground? Could all of that come from that corn seed that is cast into the soil? No, that would be silly. If you plant corn seed, it's going to produce one thing and one thing only: corn and nothing else.

Jesus said that the seed is the word of God. Friend, all of the division that we have today is not produced by the Bible. I can tell you that. It takes something besides the Bible to produce the religious division that we have in the world today. We have religious division today because men have come along with their doctrines, ideas, practices and traditions that are foreign to the word of God, and they have employed them in Christianity. Whenever man gets involved and becomes the authority or standard, then you're going to have division. You're going to have problems.

Jesus is the answer, friend. I know it sounds idealistic that everyone in the world would forsake all of the traditions of men that characterize so-called Christianity today, and all come together under the banner of God's word. But what I do want to tell you is that YOU can do that, and I can do that. You may not convince your neighbor or the people in the church down the road to do that, but you know what you and I can do? We can lay aside human creeds, catechisms, confessions of faith, manuals and all of those things that create division, and we can resolve to simply obey and follow the teachings of the New Testament. When we do that, like a seed planted in the earth, it's going to produce one kind of fruit only, and it will be the same kind of fruit that was produced 2,000 years ago when the seed was originally produced and sown; that is, a Christian just like you read about in your New Testament. The New Testament produces New Testament Christians—nothing more and nothing less. Jesus is the answer to the problem of division in religion.

Lastly, Jesus is the answer to broken lives. He wants to take your life, broken apart by sin and perhaps rebellion to Him and to His word, and He wants to piece it back together again. I recall the prophesy of Jeremiah to Israel (**Jeremiah 18**). Jeremiah was told to go down to the potter's house and watch the potter work, and when he did, he saw a vessel that was marred, as our lives are oftentimes marred by sin. The potter put that vessel on his wheel and he reshaped and remade it into a new vessel. That's what the Lord Jesus can do with your life today.

Maybe you've been going the wrong way, ignoring the Lord's will and His instructions for your life. I want to tell you today that Jesus is the answer for you.

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