

# Why Are People Afraid of the Gospel?

Compiled by Paul R. Blake

## Introduction:

- A. All created beings appear to enjoy comfort.
  - 1. Horse rolling in the grass, cats sitting in the sun, pigs scratching their backs on the barn door, dogs wading in the creek
  - 2. We prefer comfort to its alternative: comfortable seats, comfortable weather, comfortable clothes
  - 3. We also enjoy comfortable life patterns and relationships
- B. In America, comfort is exalted to the position of a right; legislation is often written to provide mental and emotional comfort to people
- C. People especially like their religion comfortable
  - 1. Faith is designed to be a source of comfort
  - 2. However, most take that premise and modify it by seeking a comfortable religion
  - 3. Many look for comfortable Christianity where everything is peace, love, and acceptance, where few demands must be met, and everything is positive and happy
- D. Jesus did not come to deliver a comfortable religion; He instead died to validate a faith that gives comfort
  - 1. Matt. 10:34

## I. THE GOSPEL OFFERS COMFORT

- A. God wills to comfort the suffering and discouraged - 2Cor. 1:3-7
- B. However, there is a difference between God providing comfort and believers being comfortable
  - 1. The same God who sought to comfort His people in Isaiah 40:1-2 also condemned "those at ease in Zion" in Amos 6:1
  - 2. When God's people have difficulties, they need the comfort of God to survive the trial intact, but this is not justification for Christians pursuing comfort as if it was the greatest virtue
- C. How then can God who comforts us want people to be uncomfortable with where they are in life?

## II. AND THE GOSPEL CAUSES FEAR

- A. The Gospel addresses our sins
  - 1. Heb. 12:1; Rom. 3:23, 6:23; 1John 1:8
  - 2. The Gospel forbids sin - 1John 2:1, 3:4-6
  - 3. The Gospel says that sin was the cause of Jesus' suffering
    - a. Rom. 5:6-8; 1Peter 2:24
- B. The Gospel addresses the sins of others dear to us
  - 1. Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 1:16
  - 2. Men cringe over the reality that hundreds of people they love are destined for Perdition - 2Thes. 1:6-9
- C. The Gospel dispels ignorance
  - 1. Men love the gray areas of ignorance or partial knowledge - John 3:19

2. 2Peter 3:15-18 - It is easy to get comfortable with one's level of understanding, but to stand still is to fall back
3. Men fear to learn, because learning brings responsibility - 2Tim. 2:15
- D. The Gospel makes one righteous - 1Peter 1:14-16
  1. People are afraid to be clean; they are afraid of the pressure, the restraints, and the effort required by righteousness
  2. People in sin are afraid to face their own image. The mirror of the Gospel exposes their own dirt to themselves. They are really afraid of their own self-loathing, the disgust they feel about their sins at the innermost level. The Gospel shines a light on that level.
- E. The Gospel makes this world irrelevant - Phil. 3:18-21
  1. Sin has deceived most people into believing this world is comfortable.
    - a. Heb. 11:9-10, 14-16
  2. Most appear comfortable with the sin and violence all around them, because it helps mask their own sins
  3. Case study of a child raised in a closet and fed from the floor. Taken from that home, she was placed in a loving foster home where she had her own room and could eat at a nice table. She put a blanket in the closet, took her food in there, dumped it on the floor, and shut the door.
  4. The world would prefer the hog mire of sin and dog vomit of evil than the blessings in Christ. That's what long term sin does to one.
  5. The world is afraid of the Gospel because it separates the world from its comfort zone - 1John 2:15-17

### **III. FEAR SHOULD DRIVE ONE TOWARD THE GOSPEL**

- A. The same Gospel that comforts the saved, generates fear in the lost; when, in truth, the fear should drive the lost toward the Gospel, not away from it.
  1. Fear should not press one further into sin, but instead move him against sin - 2Cor. 7:9-11
  2. Fear of the eternal fate of others should not cause one to despair, but motivate him to press them toward the Gospel
  3. Fear of knowledge should not drive one away from learning, but motivate him to rise above himself by accepting the challenge of the responsibility knowledge brings
    - a. Guess what? You are going to be responsible and accountable for the Gospel, whether you know the truth or not
  4. Fear of being clean should not move one to cower in the muck of sin, but move him to be more self-aware and to do something about it.
  5. Fear of losing one's place in this wicked world is not designed to isolate him, but to keep him longing for a better place

#### **Conclusion:**

- A. Discomfort and fear are not pleasant, but they are necessary motivators if one wishes to be saved in heaven and escape hellfire
- B. Don't get too comfortable, as a sinner or as a Christian - Rev. 3:17-19