Clips from Psalms

Psalms 105:12-15

Jehovah's Wonderful Works in Behalf of Israel

"When they were but a few men in number, Yea, very few, and sojourners in it. And they went about from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people. He suffered no man to do them wrong; Yea, he reproved kings for their sakes. Saying, Touch not my anointed ones, and do my prophets no harm."

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Varying Responses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ

The book of Acts records various responses to the gospel of Jesus Christ. When the Apostles of Jesus Christ preached the gospel, some illustrated a genuine interest (see Acts 2:12-13; 13:42-43). Many heard the gospel and "believed" (see Acts 4:4; 8:12; 13:48; 16:30-33; 17:34 and 18:8). The same gospel that brought joy to some caused others to be sore troubled (Acts 4:2) and jealous (Acts 13:45). When Felix and Drusilla heard the gospel, they replied to Paul saying, "Go your way for this time and when I have a convenient season I will call for you" (Acts 24:24-25). Festus, after hearing the gospel message of Christ being resurrected from the dead and man's responsibilities to obey him, said that Paul's much learning had driven him mad (Acts 26:24-25). King Agrippa heard Paul's sermon on Christ and said, "Almost you persuade me to become a Christian" (KJV - Acts 26:28). Though there were varying responses, many did hear, believe, confess, repent, and be baptized for forgiveness and added to the Lord's church. The Church grew exponentially during these early days (see Acts 4:4; 5:14; 6:1 etc.).

The consequences of the gospel message upon the messenger often had horrid results. Stephen was murdered because of his preaching (Acts 7:54-56). Paul was often stoned and beaten for the words he preached (see Acts 14:19 and 2 Corinthians 11:22ff). He also was imprisoned for five years (two years in Caesarea and three years while traveling to Rome and in Rome as a prisoner). One thing that rises out of the depths of rejection, jealousy, murder, and people being sore troubled over the gospel message was that no matter how angry the gospel caused some, its progress would in no way be impeded (see Daniel 2:44-45 and Acts 26:14).
Many heard the gospel and did “believe” (see Acts 4:4; 8:12; 13:48; 17:34; 18:8). When the Philippian jailor asked Paul what he needed to do to be saved Paul answered saying, “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your house” (Acts 16:31). What is fascinating about the book of Acts is that it sets out early to document the requirements of salvation. Acts 2:38 stands as a thesis statement of the book in relation to salvation. Men heard, believed, confessed, repented, were baptized, and encouraged to live faithfully all the days of their lives. Each case of conversion, after the initial sermon at Pentecost in Acts 2, must take into account the words of Peter. The book of Acts proves that “believing” is more than just making a mental decision to accept that Jesus is the Christ. Believing involves the hearing, confessing, repenting, being baptized, and purposing to live faithfully. The Apostle Paul, while preaching to those of Antioch, connects “belief” with “justification and the forgiveness of sins” (see Acts 13:38-39). To believe is to be justified of sins. Man is justified, according to Peter’s Acts 2 sermon, by being baptized into Christ.

The book of Acts is a clear and concise work that exposes the reality of Christ, the existence of the kingdom of God (the church), and detailed instructions regarding what one must do to be added to this kingdom. Some accepted the gospel message and the terms of admission into the kingdom of God but many did not. Though majority of people throughout history, including today, reject Christ his kingdom continues to grow. How will you respond to the gospel message of salvation?

I. Do you Value Truth?

A. Roy E Disney said, “It’s not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are.”

B. First, do an honest assessment of yourself. The foolish experience trouble, destruction, mischief, and calamity in life because of the poor decisions they make. The fool will have evil companions (Proverbs 1:10-14; 4:14-19; 13:20; 20:19; 24:1-2; 28:9), participate in sexual immorality (Proverbs 5:7-9; 9:14-15; etc.), be too lazy to work (Proverbs 6:6-11; etc.), use filthy language (Proverbs 4:24-27; 8:7-9), hunger and thirst for riches (Proverbs 11:4-6, 27-28; 12:7-8, 11; 18:11, 23; 23:4-5; etc.), angry (Proverbs 19:19; 29:11), bear false witness (Proverbs 19:5, 28; 25:18), seek revenge (Proverbs 20:22), scoff, make fun of, and laugh at others (Proverbs 21:24; 22:10; 24:9; 29:8), and hinder their hearts against God’s laws (Proverbs 28:1). All such foolishness brings regret, troubles, and sorrows now and forevermore.

B. Decisions made early in life determine what you will be latter in life: Our teenagers are bombarded with peer pressure.

II. Foolish decisions always have consequences:

A. A prudent man sees the evil, and hides himself; But the simple pass on, and suffer for it (Proverbs 16:17).

B. Whoso loves wisdom rejoices his father; But he that keeps company with harlots wastes his substance (29:3).

C. Why do some young people make foolish decisions and others wise decisions? Again, it goes back to values doesn’t it?

D. Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-8 and 1 John 3:11-12)

E. Noah’s three sons (Genesis 9:20-27)

F. Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25:27-34)

G. Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-6)

H. Eli’s sons (1 Samuel 2:12)


Conclusion:

Throughout your life you will be faced with decisions. The quicker you figure out your values the quicker you will begin a life of joy and hope in eternal salvation. Those who value godliness will use wisdom to make their decisions while those who value sin in the form of lust, pride, drinking, smoking, cursing, thirst for fame and fortune will be foolish and thrust through with many heart aches. Value truth above all other things and life will be well now and forevermore.