**“How the World Misses the Gospel”**

(Matt. 7:15-23)

**Thesis:** The world misses the gospel because of how **we** confuse their concept of who God is and what God has done.

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The title of this message is, **“How the World Misses the Gospel”**.

2. The book, *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes* (2012).

a. The book explores *cultural blinders* that have arisen from within our

‘Western worldview’ as the primary *lenses* through which we have *read* and

*interpreted* the Scriptures.

b. The most common concept is that the Bible was written **to us** and that

everything found within the Scriptures applies to our lives **personally**.

1) For **just** $139.00 *Your Personalized Bible* will insert your first name,

last name, into over 7,000 verses where the pronoun “I” or “My” occurs

in the text, (eg. “The Lord is LARRY’S Shepherd…” (Psa. 23:1). Your

Word is a light to LARRY’S path and a light to LARRY’S feet” (Psa.

119:105).

2) This is a “feel good” approach that makes **everything** personal as though God is talking **directly** to me…

c. The problem is that this concept is **foreign** to the Scriptures.

d. The Bible was **not** written **to us**, but rather it was written **for us**.

3. As the authors of this book relate, *cultural bias* is quite problematic and

therefore, it is vital that we ‘rethink’ how we **read**, **study**, and **understand**,

the Word of God.

4. After 2,000 years, the *gospel* has become hidden by various *presuppositions*

and *misconceptions*.

**WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

1. The present war in the Middle East that is raging between Israel and Hamas

is ample evidence that people are missing the point of what the Bible actually

teaches.

2. Since October 7, 2023, hundreds of organized “protests” have been organized

and have taken place all over the world either in support of Israel or in

support of Hamas--disagreement exists even among *believers* who are

‘choosing’ one side over the other.

a. The establishment of the “modern” State of Israel in 1948 came along with

the rise of Zionism and the belief that this would somehow be the

**fulfillment** of Bible prophecy--that a “new” temple will be rebuilt,

followed by a period of ‘great tribulation’ and conversion of Israel into the

acceptance of Jesus as their *Messiah*, after a **physical** ‘rapture’ of the

church, and the ‘second coming’ of Christ and a **literal** ‘thousand years’

Millennium…followed by a ‘forever happily ever after’ eternity.

b. Hamas--is defined as the *“Islamic Resistance Movement”* and there are

many living in Palestine that see the events that began on October 7th as

the means of “liberation” for the Palestinian people.

c. This *political tension* in the region has existed for decades and people on

both sides have suffered untold atrocities.

**NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL**

1. The vast majority of Christendom has ‘bought into’ the Zionist notion and

belief that the Israeli “State” that now exists is **identical** to what is

considered **Biblical Israel** in the Scriptures.

a. The gospel becomes convoluted in the midst of the *political* and *Zionist*

notions and the result is that people have taken their eyes **off** of the

central intent and focus of God’s “purpose of the ages” (Eph. 3:11).

2. The Bible is simply divided into two categories, “natural” and “spiritual” (I

Cor. 15:46).

a. The OT was the time of the “promises made to the fathers” (Rom. 15:8).

b. The “natural” aspect of Scripture covers the period of time from Adam to

Christ (Gen. 3:15; 12:1-3).

c. God established the twelve tribes of Israel for a **specific** purpose to be

accomplished--to bring Christ into the world of humanity to bring about

**redemption**, **reconciliation**, and **restoration** of the RELATIONSHIP

that had been lost “in Adam”

3. The “gospel of Christ” (Rom. 1:16) is the “message of the cross” (I Cor. 1:18),

His “death of the cross” (Phil. 2:8)--the GOAL of which was bring the

“believing” (Heb. 11) out of the “natural” aspect and into the “spiritual” as the

ultimate fulfillment of what had been promised.

a. The Old Covenant was a “parenthesis” in time when God used His people

(**natural** Israel) to demonstrate that man simply **cannot** perform enough

“good works” to somehow deserve restoration of relationship with God

(Rom. 3:19-24).

b. The purpose of God was to break down the wall of division that existed

between Jew/Gentile (Eph. 2:13-19).

1) Those who enter, through the “message of the cross” (I Cor. 1:18) into

the New Covenant by “the faith” are made ONE “in Christ” (Gal. 3:26-

29).

2) The **nation** and **natural** “seed” of Israel in whatever form it takes has

nothing whatsoever to do with what God has accomplished through

Christ.

3) All of this “end of the world” preaching and teaching that is going on

today simply **confuses** and **obscures** what Christ came to accomplish.

c. Jesus is **not** going to show up any day now to rescue humanity, rapture the

church, and transform the modern State of Israel--it is a concept that is

foreign to the Scriptures and only takes away our focus from who Christ is

and all that He has done.

**RESURRECTION-LIFE NOW**

1. Those who come to Christ upon the basis of faith and obedience to the true

*gospel* experience the reality of resurrection-life right here and right now.

2. The gospel is **not** about **physical** bodies in **physical** graves coming out and

going up to meet Him in the air.

a. When we **hear** and **respond** to the gospel of Christ we, at that very

moment in time pass “out of death” and “into life” (John 5:24).

b. At the moment of baptism “into Christ” we are “raised to walk in newness

of life” (Rom. 6:3-5).

1) People want to **divide** “resurrection” into two separate events,

**spiritual** now, and **physical** later.

2) Jesus said “I am **the** resurrection and **the** life” (John 11:25).--

SINGULAR

b. The “general resurrection” to bring the dead “in Adam” out of Sheol/Hades

took place at the “end of the age” (Matt. 24:3) in the first century.

c. Resurrection-life continues as we participate in what Christ accomplished

(II Cor. 5:17, 21).

3. The world needs to hear the truth in order to take their eyes off of the **physical** and to focus instead of the **spiritual realities** of all that God has

done for us in Christ.

**CONCLUSION**

1. It is human nature to allow *cultural bias* to have a negative effect on how we

**read**, **study** and **understand** the Scriptures.

2. There is a certain aspect of “excitement” that goes along with what we used to

refer to as “newspaper exegesis”--looking at the latest news story and looking

to see how close we are to the “end of the world”

3. If you want to sell a million books, just sit down and write about an Antichrist

that now is lurking in the bushes waiting to appear and deceive the whole

world (plenty of Hollywood movies about this sinister character).

4. Only when we accept and understand the difference between the **natural**

and the **spiritual** as it relates to the Scriptures will the world come to fully

appreciate the reality of who God is and what He has done.