

“WORKS” AND “GOOD WORKS”.

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Somewhere along the line, the churches are producing “converts” and “followers” who act irresponsibly, not only within their own lives, but also within the society in which they live. They can read in Proverbs 14:34 that “*Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people*”, and yet their part in national concerns means little in practical terms to them. They have been made into “apathetic Christians”. They know in their heads that any people without a vision will perish, but in their hearts they do not “know” it in practical terms. They may know the story about the sin of Achan, which shows how personal sins can affect national life, but they think that it does not apply to them.

When it comes to evil within society, most show no responsibility in speaking out against the evil. They come to the place where they think that they can do nothing about the amorality and immorality in society. It is not just that the giants in the land are too big; it is that they have been given to understand that it is not part of their responsibility. Non-believers may even think of Christians as being lily-livered, and because the Christian’s convictions do not show, there would be no point in joining them. Why should they want to know what Jesus has done for them? Why should they ask what Jesus demands of them? And so abortion on demand, humanism in education, easy divorce, pornography and corruption are allowed to flourish unchallenged, to some degree in their own lives, but almost totally in society. For example, when the Sunday trading law was proposed, the record shows that not one single Christian church submitted a submission objecting to the proposal. Maybe they do not know about, or understand, the place of the precepts and the judgements and about sin as still being the transgression of this Law. [1 John 3:4 *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law*].

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

We have to ask if this neglect is “wickedness”. In what circumstances can God’s people become wicked? And what happens to these “wicked servants? We find an answer in the parable of the talents we find two types of servants; one is “*good and faithful*” and the other is “*wicked and slothful*”, as we see below.

*Matthew 25:23 His lord said unto him, Well done, **good and faithful servant**; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

*Matthew 25:26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou **wicked and slothful servant**, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:*

We can note that both are called servants and that both were given talents given by the same Lord. We can see that goodness relates to faithfulness and that wickedness relates to slothfulness. But, we can also see two different destinies.

Matthew 25:28,29,30 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The whole concept of this verse telling of Christians being cast into outer darkness is not popular with the modern churches because it does not ‘fit’ in with their false concept of “eternal security”. Matters such as Esau and his descendants being unable to find repentance, even with tears, is not taught. Likewise what happens to those who have no oil for their lamps and Scriptures like Hebrews 6:4,5,6,7,8 is usually avoided

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

In the parable of the talents, the increase was made by “trading” [KJV]. For this word Strongs gives: *to work, labour, do work, to trade, to make gains by trading, do business, to do, work out, exercise, perform, commit, to cause to exist, produce, to work for, earn by working, to acquire*. So this is the level of activity that is acceptable to God There is not a trace of ‘easy believism’ here. The concept of labouring in the vineyard is opposed because that is supposed to be “works” which are presented as being something bad. The doctrine usually presented is a twist of Scripture.

Galatians 2:16,17 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

Not being justified by the works of the Law is about justification. No one can be justified by the Law, but **after** we have become justified, we cannot ignore what the “God forbid” is about, that is, that we can no longer transgress the Law as it applies to us.

Romans 3:31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law. To “establish” means “to cause or make to stand, to place, put, set, to uphold or sustain the authority or force of anything”, according to Strong. The problem after being justified is about the attitude to the unfulfilled part of the eternal law of God. It is the wrong attitude to the law that promotes the thought that Christians do not have to be responsible, and indeed, are not responsible for the state of the nation.

Through Scripture we are not short of examples of God’s people being involved in national affairs. Through Scripture, political matters are represented by masculine terms, whereas spiritual things are indicated by female symbols and objects. The Scriptures teach that “we are workers together with God”[-2 Cor.6:1]. It is not a case of “Jesus has done it all, so we no longer have to do anything”, as so many try to say. That is the position **before** conversion, but not after. Responsibility with God’s help is taught through Scripture.

Let us look at a curiously worded verse.

2 Samuel 10:12 Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the LORD do that which seemeth him good.

Here “play the people” is given by Strong as meaning, “to strengthen, prevail, harden, be strong, become strong, be courageous, be firm, grow firm, be resolute”. The story in which it occurs is about fighting battles with an enemy, in the context of fighting enemies at a national level. It can be seen that it is for the well-being of the “cities”.

Proverbs 25:5 Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

A king is a symbol of the head of a nation, and hence this verse involves national affairs.

Haggai 2:4 Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, **and work**: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts:

Here again is the word “work”. This is always used in the constructive sense of doing something. After becoming justified, “good works” are essential works for the Christian. There are about 200 references to “work”, “works” and “workers” in the New Testament.

John 10:32 Jesus answered them, Many **good works** have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

Jesus demonstrated “good works”. ‘Works’ when linked with “good” here has the meaning, “become of good constitution or nature, useful, salutary, good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy, excellent, distinguished, upright and honourable”.

HIGHLIGHTING GOOD WORKS.

Today in doctrine, one might almost be stoned for highlighting “good works”, but Jesus said,.

Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your **good works**, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Paul agrees,

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto **good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Heb.10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to **good works**:

Titus 3:8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain **good works**. These things are good and profitable unto men.

Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of **good works**.

Titus 2:7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of **good works**: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.

1 Timothy 6:18 *That they do good, that they be rich in **good works**, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;*

Peter agrees,

1 Peter 2:12 *Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your **good works**, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

WHERE THE PROBLEM IN THE CHURCHES ARISES FROM.

Eph. 2:8-9 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto **good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

Here Paul is telling of what we were, [i.e..we, *who were dead in trespasses and sins*] and what we are now [i.e. *hath he quickened*]. There is a change from “before” to “after” as seen in the words, “were” and “hath”. There are two different things, “works” and “good works” in these verses. We are redeemed without the first “works” but when we are redeemed we do the second “good works” with the empowerment of God.

So we have “works” and “good works”, which are not the same thing. “Works” are done without God, and “good works” can only be done by those who have exercised faith in Jesus, and who have received the gift of God.

The qualifying word ‘good’ as in “good works” is *agathos* which is usually translated as a “good” something that makes the works become- [See Strongs]:

1. *Of good constitution or nature.*
2. *Useful, salutary.*
3. *Good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy.*
4. *Excellent, distinguished.*
5. *Upright, honourable.*

To be able to do “good works” the way the Bible uses the words, one must first have the ability. This is not a native ability. We see in the verses below that it is an ability received following preaching “*peace by Jesus Christ*”, i.e. repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Acts chapter 10

35 *But in every nation he that feareth him, and **worketh righteousness**, is accepted with him.*

36 *The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, **preaching peace by Jesus Christ**: (he is Lord of all:)*

37 *That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;*

38 *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about **doing good**, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.*

The righteousness what is to be worked is the Greek word *dikaiosune* which Strong gives as:

1. *In a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God*
2. *The doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking feeling, and acting in a narrower sense, justice or the virtue which gives each his due.*

The “*way in which man may attain a state approved of God*” must be attained before “works” can become “good works”. We see also in the verses above how Jesus went about “doing good” because He was “*anointed with the Holy Ghost*”. Likewise Jesus tells us, “*Without me ye can do nothing*”. So Jesus has to be confessed and believed in first.

Without belief in what is presented by the Gospel, all our works cannot produce righteousness.

Acts 24:25, *And as he reasoned **of righteousness**, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.*

With present believing we find righteousness, and can act righteously.

1 Corinthians 1:30 *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and **righteousness**, and sanctification, and redemption:*

2 Corinthians 5:21 *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the **righteousness** of God in him.*

The overall position is clearly presented in the book of Titus.

*Titus 3:4,5,6,7,8 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 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; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that **they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works**. These things are good and profitable unto men.*

It is necessary to believe in God before “works” can become “good works”. To be able to do “good works”, we must first have the Holy Ghost ‘renewed’. It then becomes a case of God working in us, because we “have believed” first. So it is possible to have the unconverted in the churches who are attempting to do “good works” or works of righteousness that avail nothing..

WHAT HAPPENS TO CHRISTIANS WHO ARE “UNPROFITABLE”?

This paper started about a servant who was “wicked and slothful”. A servant here, as defined by Strong, is one who:

1. *Gives himself up to another's will.*
2. *Those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing His cause among men.*
3. *He is devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests.*

We saw that the servant who has become “wicked” had the talent taken from him, and “*And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*”.

The argument presented by most churches against this is the “*Not by works of righteousness which we have done*” as in Titus 3:4 and “*not of works, lest any man should boast*” as in Ephesians 2:9. On their own the verses may appear to say something like what is claimed, but they are a classic examples of using part of a section out of context. The consequence of this is the production of a majority of irresponsible christians. It is the foundation of common religionism, and the inference often heard in preaching that obedience is somehow optional and that the talent that is taken away is the reward but not the salvation. The Scripture usually used is:

1. *Cor. 3: 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

What is not considered are the very next two verses. These show that a condition is involved, and that something important has been missed out.

2. *Cor. 3:16-17 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, **him shall God destroy**; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*

The reward and the inheritance of eternal life are connected.

- Colossians 3:24 *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive **the reward of the inheritance**: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

IS “ALTAR CALL SALVATION” ALWAYS THE REAL THING?

Today we have what some call “*Altar Call Salvation*”. “Born-againism” has become almost like a cult that is used even in the secular world to suggest enthusiasm or membership. It percolates fundamentalist denominations like yeast in dough and is claimed to be evidence of ‘revival’. Joining a club may provide fellowship the soul craves for, but it may not be God’s salvation, even if it satisfies a need for that fellowship. They have become subject to the consequence of psychological pressure such as is often used by evangelists. The evangelist has done his thing whereas God may have done nothing. We see this in the churches where ‘converts’ have had no fundamental change from death to life. In other words they have not ‘died’ that they might ‘live’. Flesh can only reproduce flesh. The “*Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts*” is missing.. This is the work of God that impels a person to turn from his sins and repent from the heart. God’s people are “*born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*”-[John 1:13].

‘Altar-call salvation’ is sometimes called, “*making a decision for Christ*” or “*praying the sinner's prayer*”, “*accepting Jesus into your heart*” and talk about a “*plan of salvation*” in a way that is not found in the Bible. Entry into life is not about saying the right words to “join the club”. As Jesus said in John 10:1 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber*. So there must be thieves and robbers within the churches.

“Making a decision”, “accepting Jesus” etc. can be done outside of :

Acts 5:31 *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*

Acts 26:18 *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*

To suggest that people can “accept Jesus”, “be saved” etc. outside of repentance and an active turning from darkness to light is to be presenting another gospel. The Bible has no place for “professing His Name but remaining the same”. It is about change from one thing to another, from an old creation to a new creation. People who climb over the fence this way cannot ever please God and do “good works”.

Titus 1:16 *They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*

Profession is meaningless without godly sorrow with repentance and the other necessary features as shown in the verses below.

2 Corinthians 7:10-11 *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

If the gate is made one little bit wider than this, it is not coming in through the “*straight [or narrow] gate*”. Otherwise there is a false security being presented. This false security induces the slothfulness we find almost universally. Godly repentance points to obedience. Jesus says in John 14:15, “*If ye love me, keep my commandments*”. This chapter very simply tells us how spiritual experience follows obedience. As soon as obedience is considered to be “works”, then the convert is led astray. So along the line somewhere, the church service that promotes feelings through worship alone has gone astray. People in many churches realise that something is missing, or that there is “something wrong”, but they are seldom pointed to the solution. The ability to worship follows obedience because feelings and the presence of God follow obedience. Confirming that one believes in God may not be the same as believing what God says. It is possible to be a hearer, but not a doer; the hearer only receiving no blessing..

James 1:25 *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF CHRISTIANS HATED SIN?

If all the Churchgoers in New Zealand were real Christians, there would be enough of them to completely change the country, but so-called “Christians” do not hate sin enough, regardless of where it is found, yes, even if it is found within themselves.. In Jude 23, “*hating even the garment spotted by the flesh*”, the word, “*hate*” here is active and meaning *to hate, pursue with hatred, detest*. Churchgoers are seldom taught or are able to do this. For Jesus to be “Lord” means that Jesus must be Lord of everything, including the home, politics and things concerning society. Apathetic Christianity is the root cause of the bad un-blessed state of the nation and the rising tide of wickedness. Apart from repentance there is nothing in sight but national condemnation and judgment, which begins at the House of God.

1 Peter 4:17 *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?*

Ezekiel 9:6 *Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.*

Matthew 7:14 *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

2 Timothy 2:11 *It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.*

It follows then that if we be not dead with Him, we will not live with Him. There can be no resurrection life without death first. This is what Christianity is really about. There can be no “good works” without death first.

Hebrews 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

“Dead works” are what are done by a dead person. “Dead” here is quite a different word to that found in “If we be dead with Him” !! We have to become crucified with Christ in order to come alive.

Earlier comment was made about hatred of evil. We are told that the fear of the Lord is to hate evil.

Psalm 97:10 Ye that love the LORD, **hate evil.**

Proverbs 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to **hate evil.**

Instead of hating evil, it seems that more often churchgoers are encouraged to be tolerant of evil doers, both in the churches, in open society and in government, as if this was some sort of virtue. And they say as an excuse, “God loves the sinner but hates the sin”. Really? David in Psalm 139:21 says, “Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee”? And in Psalm 7:11 we read, “God is angry with the wicked every day”. There are few enough Pastors who hate sin enough to cry, “Flee from the wrath to come” or say, “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand”. Most want to be well thought of forgetting, “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets”. These prophets were often found speaking in the seat of government.

Because of wrong doctrine, apathy and irresponsibility is the name of the game in the Churches. Our Bible tells us about things like national government, and the patterns this is to follow. Government of the land [and the churches] from the top is taking over contrary to Scripture but God’s way does not interest churchgoers. The end result of this will be loss of all our God-given freedoms and world dictatorship. There is another reason too.

Habakkuk 1:4 Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.

“Slacked” means “become feeble”, that is, not authoritative. Right judgement is seldom an issue in the churches.

Isaiah 59:12-15 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them; In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.

As long as this attitude the “not of works” being made in Christians’ minds to mean ‘be irresponsible and do nothing’ continues, and as long as good men keep on doing nothing, national evils and moral standards will continue to deteriorate. And, it will bring woe upon woe.

Ezekiel 2:7,8,9 And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious. But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; And he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.

Jeremiah 6:6,7,8, For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her. As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness: violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is grief and wounds. Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

Jeremiah 6:9,10 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets. To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

Jeremiah 23:1,2 Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed

my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.

CONCLUSION.

These Scriptures show that part of the problem is with the Pastors and leaders, and because of this, the peoples' ears are *uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken*; and *behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it*. Our Bible tells us not only things that are fleshly errors, but it includes national things like inflation, foreign affairs, education, economics, education, business affairs and even philosophy. Elders who qualify must be able to teach these things. But, do they or can they? Effectively, the Bible says that every area of life is to be ruled by God's principles, if not, no one can say in truth that “*Jesus is Lord*”. It seems that almost all of the churches have abandoned their responsibility in a way that allows the government of the land to be structured after the humanist model. Because in the past we have seen times of theocracy that have resulted in evil, the subject is avoided. Any theocracy modeled after the humanist model is wrong, that is, if it allows power to be held from the top. In the Bible model government starts from the bottom as seen in the words, “*rulers of tens, rulers of fifties, rulers of hundreds*”, etc.. In other words, true Biblical theocracy destroys dependence upon an elite group at the top. Self government is seen also in what might be called a court system in the church [1 Corinthians 6:4 *If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.*]. This simply is not carried out in practice anywhere today. Similarly, in the selection of deacons, who usually selects these? [Acts 6:3 *Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business*]. The selection is done by the people, but the appointment is done by the apostles. Once the churches clean up their own act, then only could they speak with authority.

If the pulpit is irresponsible, then so will be the pew. Irresponsible people have no diligence. If the pew is encouraged by the pulpit to deny the necessity for *good works* through wrong doctrine or wrong application of doctrine, then all we will have are churches full of apathetic and unresponsive “Christians” who will allow the country to “go to pot”. The last verse above speaks about, “*the evil of your doings*”. The parable of the talents still applies. Those who do not use their talents are “wicked” and will still end in “outer darkness”.

In the Book of Acts, we see that there was something demonstrated, and that with it they “preached” something the churches do not preach today. And, look at what they did with their talents.

Acts 4:2 +9+10 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole..

What they had to support their message was the evidence in the form of a healed person in their midst. Without the evidence, we cannot preach through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. So, it is popular to preach another gospel instead. Without the “evidence” the churches cannot make any contribution towards “*Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people*”.