**THE GOSPEL IS FOR ALL**

***All Lives Matter***

Whatever you think about the title, this is not a political statement. It is a Biblical statement. Period. I am a gospel preacher and a shepherd of the flock of God in New Hope Minnesota. I’ve spent the past 46 years of my life trying to teach God’s Word to anyone and everyone who would listen. From childhood, living in the deep south in Memphis Tennessee, I was thoroughly trained by godly parents to be respectful to all authority, and to all people, regardless of age, gender or skin color. It is coded into my DNA to look at every human being as a soul that will spend eternity in either heaven or hell, then try to help them find the former and avoid the latter.

John McCaleb was also a gospel preacher in the Lord’s church, having been born in 1861 and born again in 1875. In 1891 at the age of 30 he was invited to move with a few other families to the nation of Japan to evangelize the lost. He labored in the Far East, seeking the lost, until 1940 when he had to return to America because of the threat of war with Japan. This means he was a soul-seeker and soul-saver in a foreign land for almost 50 years. He died in 1953 at the age of 92.

At the age of 60, after having evangelized Japan for three decades, he wrote the lyrics to a hymn that has played a huge role in my life. That hymn is called *The Gospel Is For All*. As a young man the words haunted me until I did something about it at the age of 30, traveling to the Far East to preach in the Philippines. Then, when a door of opportunity was opened to go to China in 1993, I jumped at the chance. I’ve been blessed to go back many times ever since. It has been one of the great joys of my life to teach God’s saving grace not only in the Philippines and China, but also Fiji, New Zealand, Singapore and Hong Kong. McCaleb’s hymn has left a mark on my life. Read the words and see why:

 *THE GOSPEL IS FOR ALL*

1. Of one the Lord has made the race, Thro’ one has come the fall;
Where sin has gone must go His grace, The gospel is for all.
2. Say not the heathen are at home, Beyond we have no call;
For why should we be blest alone, The gospel is for all.
3. Received ye freely, freely give, From every land they call;
Unless they hear they cannot live, The gospel is for all.

 *Chorus*: The blessed gospel is for all, The gospel is for all,
Where sin has gone must go His grace, The gospel is for all.

It’s that first line in the first stanza that I wish to emphasize here. “Of one the Lord has made the race.” If I am related to Adam (“Thro’ one has come the fall”), and you are related to Adam, then I am related to you. If Eve was “*the mother of all living*” (Gen. 3:20), then she is Grandma to all of us. If DNA blood tests could be taken from Adam and Eve and compared with yours and mine, we would all be determined to be from the same genetic code. As Paul told the Athenian citizens at Mars Hill, God “*gives to all life, breath and all things, and has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth*” (Acts 17:25-26).

When I see a European, an Arab, an Asian, an African, an Aborigine, or an American (North, South, Central, or Native), I see my relatives! I see my brothers and sisters with the same value, the same equality, that I possess. But why is it that I don’t see *RACE*, but *RELATIONSHIP*? From my study of scripture “*race*” is not a Biblical term. Look it up, it’s not in the scriptures except in reference to physical running (Psa 19:5; Eccl 9:11; Ac 20:24; I Cor. 9:24; 2 Tim. 4:7; Heb. 12:1). It’s never in reference to a group of people. (Note: Someone might argue Zech. 9:6 uses *race* for people but the word in Hebrew is *MAMZER* and denotes “an illegitimate child, a bastard, a child of incest, a mongrel”).

Yes, there are certainly nations of people. The gospel was to be preached to “*all nations*” (Matt. 28:19; Luke 24:47), and to “*all creation*” (Mark 16:15 ESV, NASB). But we have already established that “*every* ***nation*** *of men on all the face of the earth*” came from “*one blood*” (Ac 17:26).

The whole concept of race is born of evolutionary theory. Charles Darwin believed some “races” were superior to other “races.” Men like Adolph Hitler bought into that theory and sought to weed out and eliminate what he called the “inferior” blood (i.e. Gypsies, Jews, etc) in favor of the “superior” Aryan or Master race (i.e. Germanic). His program of genocide was born from Darwin’s theory. It is evolutionists who see distinctions of “superior” and “inferior” races which they have termed “survival of the fittest.”

Jesus Christ came into this world to break down all barriers between peoples (Gal. 3:28-29; Eph. 2:14-16). The Great Commission is *great* because:

* Jesus died for “*the whole world*” (I Jn. 2:2)
* “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved*” (Rom. 10:13)
* God now “*commands all men everywhere to repent*” (Ac 17:30)
* God’s grace that brings salvation has “*appeared to all men*” (Tit. 2:11)
* God “*is not willing any perish but all come to repentance*” (2 Pet 3:9)
* God “*desires all men be saved”* and come to the truth (I Tim. 2:4)

If everyone was converted to Jesus Christ it would bring to an end all racism on earth. Christ, and true Christians who follow Him, do not judge others by social, economic, intellectual, national, gender, language or skin color. Our Lord came, not to be served, but to serve and give His life a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28). We who follow Him are transformed from the prejudice world to also serve all mankind.

When I say these three words – *All Lives Matter* – you now know what I mean. It is not a political statement, it is but an echo of what Jesus Christ came to say to the world. His movement – Christianity – was the greatest revolution in history. It did not last for a day, or a decade, but for two millenniums and counting. I’m proud to say to you, and all people of every nation, *I Am A Christian* *and I hope you will become my brother*!

I love you because He first loved me. – Rick Lanning