

HOW IS YOUR HEART IN THE SIGHT OF GOD?

Acts 8:1-25

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Every Christian ought to give some serious thought as to just exactly how God sees him/her. People can fool one another by acting, pretending, etc. as to how they really feel and what they are really thinking and so many times a false impression is given. However with God there is no way to fool Him or deceive Him into thinking that one is better than he/she really is. God sees through all pretense. So, how is your heart as God sees it?

I. PEOPLE ARE OFFENDED BY THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST (vv1-4)

1. Christians often forget or are not aware of the fact that not very many really care about the Gospel and many are actually offended by it.
 - Those who don't believe, the cross and Jesus as a substitute is just foolishness and often makes them mad to be witnessed to.
2. Any person who witnesses that mankind was ruined by Adam's fall, that redemption is by the blood of Jesus Christ, that one can be saved and made alive spiritually by the Holy Spirit will meet strong opposition from those who don't believe.

II. AMONG ALL LOST, THERE ARE SOME WHO WILL BE SAVED (vv5-12)

1. Human opinion and religious tradition have always been opposed to the message of God's free and eternal grace in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Most people who hear the gospel preached in the power of the Holy Spirit never believe and go on to Hell as if they had never heard the gospel.
2. Regardless of those who refuse to believe, God does not quit for there are those who will believe in His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - There are people scattered among all nations in all generations who will be saved.
 - God will gather His own to Himself and not a one of those who will believe will be lost in the end.

III. THOSE WHO ARE TO BE SAVED WILL SOMEHOW HEAR THE GOSPEL (v4)

1. The preaching of the Gospel is as necessary for the salvation of sinners as redemption and regeneration.
 - Somehow the Holy Spirit gets the gospel message to people who will hear the message and believe.
2. God has allowed His Church to be persecuted and scattered so that those scattered believers would carry the Word, the Gospel to other places where there are those who would believe.

IV. THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT CANNOT BE PASSED ALONG (vv14-17)

1. Only the Apostles of the early Church could pass on the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 - When the Apostles were all gone, the gifts seemed to cease.
 - After the Apostles, the gifts were no longer needed for the gifts had been proof that the Apostles were indeed appointed messengers of Jesus Christ.
2. Today God's Church has the written Word of God, the Bible and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit therefore there seems to be no need for the gifts the Apostles had.

V. WHEREVER THE GOSPEL IS PREACHED THERE WILL BE A MIXED ATTITUDE (VV12, 13, 20, 21)

1. Every Church is a mixed group of true believers and false professors of belief.
 - Wherever the Gospel is planted, Satan plants His falsehoods, etc.
 - Wherever the Lord gathers His sheep, Satan gathers his goats.
 - Along with those who were truly born again by the Spirit of God, Simon Magus professed to believe, but Peter recognized the unbelief and told him that he had no part in the matter for his heart was not right with God.
2. This man Simon Magus believed the same doctrine the others believed and he was baptized like the rest and he saw the power of the Holy Spirit, but his heart was false.
 - His heart was not right in the sight of God.
 - He was a hypocrite at heart.
 - By profession, he was a believer, but in his heart he was still lost.

CONCLUSION:

1. How is YOUR heart? Is it right in the sight of God?
 - It's not enough to say one believes the truth, to worship in the correct manner, and to obey God's commands.
 - One's faith, worship and obedience must come out of a true heart, one that is right with God.
2. Above all things God requires from believers, it is the heart.
 - Being a Christian is a heart thing.
 - People are by nature satisfied with an outward form of religion, moral codes, good works, rituals, ceremonies, and emotions, but God requires HEART worship, HEART obedience.
 - The condition of a person's soul depends upon the condition of his/her heart.
 - God looks at a person's heart, not his/her religious works.
3. Salvation is a heart work and by nature people have an evil heart of unbelief.
4. Only God through the Holy Spirit can make a person's heart right.
5. So, how is YOUR heart in the sight of God?