

VARIED REACTIONS TO GOSPEL PREACHING

By Keith Greer

“So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.” {Isaiah 55:11}
God’s message is His power to save sinful men, Romans 1:16. Aimed at the hearts of men to accomplish the purpose why He sent it. Whenever and where ever the gospel is preached, there will be a response. Of those who hear the gospel, some will:

Deem it foolishness. *“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.” {1 Corinthians 1:18,21}* This remains true today – some think the gospel is just nonsense. Some also thought this during the time of the early church. *“Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad! But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason.” {Acts 26:24,25}*

Be offended. *“Then His disciples came and said to Him, ‘Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?’ But He answered and said, ‘Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.’” {Matthew 15:12-14}* Some will be offended by the preaching of truth. Why? Calls on them to repent and change their conduct and manner of life. Things have not changed much since the days of old: *“...Is there not still a prophet of the LORD here that we may inquire of Him? So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, ‘There is still one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD; but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.’ And Jehoshaphat said, ‘Let not the king say such things!’” {1 Kings 22:7,8}*

Be indifferent and ignore. *“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” {Matthew 7:26,27}* Some would try to convince folks that the Bible is too difficult to understand and demands what is impossible. Those who believe this lie will remain indifferent and ignore the teaching of understandable truth. Sadly, it will be too late when they realize it was true – in death!

Sadly decline. *“But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.” {Matthew 19:22}* The rich young ruler wanted eternal life. He came to the right person and got the right answer. What happened? The price was too high for him to pay. Such is the case with many today – the cost of discipleship is too high for them!

Gladly accept. *“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.” {Acts 2:41}* Some will answer from honest hearts, see their true condition, and make the needed change.

Continue faithful. *“But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.” {Luke 8:15}* Some will remain faithful to Him during the time they live on earth. Others will not. {1 Timothy 4:1-3}.

Pray your heart will always be tender toward God’s word. He has revealed everything we need to know. What kind of reaction are you displaying? ***