

## Obeying The Gospel III By Greg Rangel

We have seen in past articles on how it is the calling and duty of a pastor to preach the Word of God without compromise because one day pastors will give an account unto the Lord for every word they said in His name (James 3:1). But we have also seen that every individual who hears will also give an account for what they heard. It has been said by many that knowledge brings responsibility. But unfortunately we do know that not everyone who hears will be obedient to the things that they heard.

Lest we get discouraged, we must also face the fact that the way people respond to the gospel of Jesus today is the same way that they responded when Jesus walked this earth. John 12:37-40 says, *“But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: Lord, who ahs believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.”*

It would be so easy for anyone to say today that if they had been there at the time of Jesus, no doubt they would have believed. But in reality there is no difference today than it was at the time of Jesus because Jesus is alive and He is still with us as He promised He would. People will come up with many excuses in why they don't want to believe in Jesus. You ask anyone this day as to what is keeping them from receiving Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and you will get many different excuses. But that is all that they are, excuses.

The real reason why people do not want to receive Jesus today is found in His own words in John 3:19-20. Jesus said, *“And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.”* So in these words of Jesus, people refuse to walk with Him because of their wicked deeds. They would rather continue to walk in their sin than repent from it and receive Him as Lord and Savior.

It has been said that people must make a choice as to receive Jesus or not. But the reality of it is that, people have already made their choice, for to not be walking with Jesus this day is to deny Him. To refuse to receive Him is to reject Him. Jesus said in Mat 10:32-33 *“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.”* Jesus also said that, *“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad”* (Matt. 12:30).

It is an unfortunate thing that people live for the now, for today's earthly pleasures without fully realizing that it will cost them an eternity apart from God. How many people are dying today without Jesus? And how many of them come to a full realization

that they messed up because they failed to give their life to Jesus while they were still alive? All of them I would dare say. There is an example of this in Luke 16 when the rich man died and went to hell. There he realized that he had messed up and it was too late. Therefore he wanted Abraham to send someone from the dead to preach to his family so that they too would not end up there. But Abraham told him that his family had Moses and the Prophets, but that even if someone was to come back from the dead they would not believe. How true is that because Jesus came back from the dead and people today still do not believe in Him!

If you know that you don't have peace with God and have not been forgiven because of your lifestyle, receive Jesus today.