



October 12, 2008

Whosoever Will

There are many ways in which Satan exerts an influence in the world to cause humans to doubt, not believe or accept false doctrine. Generally we talk about the existence of the errors in religion that teach doctrines not found in the scriptures, but there are other more subtle and prevalent influences than these that are more pervasive. One of the more prevalent of these influences on a global scale, is the idea that Christianity is a Western phenomenon and as such is equal, but not superior to “spiritual” traditions from the Middle East and Orient. The Scriptures tell us that the word of God is for all mankind. We find that revelation of the gospel from Zion would be the foundation of the “*joy of the whole earth*” (**Psm 48.2**). The eternal kingdom spoken of by Isaiah, would be for all nations who are invited to be part of the kingdom of God (**Isa 2.2**) as was also stated by the prophet Micah (**Mic 4.1-3**). The spread of the gospel to the gentiles, beginning with the household of Cornelius, reveals that the word of God, and thus his kingdom is for all of every nation who will serve and obey him (**Acts 10.34-35**). Paul told the Athenian philosophers that God commanded all men everywhere to repent in the present age (**Acts 17.30**). These statements reveal that the word of God is not of human origin and is not restricted to any single culture or ethnic bias. Another misconception is that the gospel is an outgrowth of the Jewish culture and reflects the teachings of Christ who is regarded as a great teacher but not the son of God. Once again this denies the facts. The church, initially at peace with the Jews of Jerusalem, was eventually persecuted as the teachings of the faithful conflicted with the traditions that were being held to on the part of the Jewish leadership and others. With the death of Steven (**Acts 7**) the door was opened for the persecution of the church. Christians were forced to flee Jerusalem but taught the word everywhere they went (**Acts 8.1-4**). It is true that many movements have been made stronger when faced with deadly opposition but such ideas remain the product of their culture of origin. As we examine the teachings of the gospel we find that there are no boundaries along ethnic, racial, social or even

geographic lines. Are we witnessing the most unique social phenomenon in the history of the world, or, are we seeing the power of God at work to influence the nations, as the Bible states? To me it is clear that the Bible is exactly what it claims to be, as impossible as that might sound to some people. The Bible is the inspired revelation of the creator to instruct and warn us so that we can be prepared for life beyond this existence. A third misconception is that the teachings of Christ reflect the wisdom of a great teacher who was influential during his day and time but is no more or less than others who have influenced religious thinking in the world’s history. Comparing the story of Christ with that of other religious thinkers we find that only Jesus had hundreds of years of prophecy preparing the way for his entrance into the world. No other religious or spiritual figure can match this. Other religious figures are surrounded by mystery, complicated myth, legends and obscure histories that are rife with misinformation. There are many today who are working to discredit Christ, insinuating that there is a hidden history that has been closely guarded so that we cannot discover that the stories of his life are fraudulent. If that is the case then the Bible is the most skilled lie the world has ever known and creates such a void that we will never be able to understand where the idea of God and his son came from, or how humans came to fabricate such a story to begin with. This is the nature of the working of Satan however as he attempts to throw enough dust in the air that we cannot see a clear view of what God wants us to know. If we reject the ideas of man and turn our attention to the scriptures we can see that the things revealed not only contradict their culture of origin, but speak of a character that could only have originated somewhere besides the realm of man.

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