“The Kingdom Of God Is Not Eating And Drinking”

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday September 30th, 2018

Text: Rom. 14:17

### Intro

1. Rom. 14:17: “For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”
	1. Paul states the goal of the church isn’t for man’s physical needs but the spiritual.
2. Yet there are those who teach and defend “The Social Gospel.”
3. ***What is the Social Gospel?*** (Popular among religious world even if they don’t know it!)
4. Herbert Wallace Schneiber (*Religion In The 20th Century*, 1952): “The central idea of the Social Gospel is that the redemption or salvation of mankind collectively, the regeneration of the social order, is the ultimate goal of religion.”
	1. What this means is that the social gospel focuses attention on the whole group or society, not the individual.
	2. It is a concept that emphasizes the “social needs” of man.
	3. It is a message that does not want to “offend” so it doesn’t really deal with sin, so it does not call on people to obey God in all things!
	4. It seeks to make people’s lives better here on earth than prepare them for life after death, gives way to those who seek after the “Prosperity Gospel” (Materialism).
	5. Simply put, it seeks to make man comfortable; it doesn’t attack sin!
5. *The Gospel Anchor*, Feb. 1986, Gene Frost wrote: “The work of the social gospeler, is not directed toward the individual, to convict and convince him of personal guilt, to change him and make him anew. Oh no, the legitimate role of religion is social. It is the work of the churches to build gymnasiums, to organize ball clubs, etc., to prevent juvenile delinquency; to build kitchens, and dining halls to enlist the secular-minded who otherwise would not be attracted by spirituality; to build and operate industries to help solve the problem of unemployment; to build and maintain benevolent homes to care for the needy. And so the religious organization substitutes for individual responsibility, leaves its spiritual efforts to achieve temporal and physical goals.”
	1. The social gospel teaches that it is the work of the churches to build gymnasiums, to organize ball clubs, to prevent juvenile delinquency; to build kitchens, and dining halls, to build and operate industries to help solve the problem of unemployment; to build and maintain benevolent homes to care for the needy.
	2. Some use Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs to prove the church must meet man’s physical needs 1st then attempt to solve man’s spiritual needs! *(Mt. 9:2-6: Jesus looked to the spiritual needs first; forgave sins of paralytic then healed him!)*
6. Example: Intoxication & drunkenness are works of the flesh – Gal. 5:21
	1. Social Gospel: Fund an alcoholic recovery program, call it a disease, and blame society.
	2. Gospel of Christ: Call it a sin, blame the sinner and call upon the drunk to repent.
	3. In their heaps of programs, somewhere they lost the reason for the gospel, and count their many attendees as growth of the church!
	4. **READ: *Parable of the Life-Saving Station***
7. The church is not for “eating and drinking” but for “righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit!”

#### The Social Gospel of 5 Loaves and 2 Fish

* 1. *Jn. 6:1-15*
		1. Jesus fed 5,000 with 5 loaves of barley bread & 2 fish.
		2. He 1st told His apostles, “You give them something to eat!” (Mt. 14:16) – many people have taken that as the church’s authority to feed the world! Jesus said that to His apostles and didn’t intend for them to do it but to see they couldn’t do it! He was going to perform a miracle!
		3. *Vss. 14-15:* Because of this the people decided He was the true Messiah, and He was afraid they would try to make him king by force so He withdrew.
	2. *Jn. 6:22-40*
		1. The next day the people were looking for Jesus and went to Capernaum to find Him.
		2. Vss. 26-27: Jesus told them they only looked for Him because He fed them, not because of who He was. He said not to work for food that perishes but for eternal food. He told them they needed the “Bread of Life” (6:30-35)
			1. They flocked after Him for the loaves and fishes!
			2. Jesus didn’t bribe His listeners with earthly rewards to convert them!
		3. Vs. 30: They asked Him what sign He performs to prove who He is!
		4. The same people who almost made him king the day before wanted another sign!
		5. Vs. 36: He told them they saw Him (saw the signs) but didn’t believe in Him!
	3. *Jn. 6:41-51, 52-58*
		1. After feeding 5,000 Jesus took opportunity to teach them about the true “bread of life.”
		2. His purpose in feeding the 5,000 wasn’t a “bait and switch” but to confirm He is the Son of God!
		3. Vss. 41-42: The Jews grumbled at Him in disbelief saying they knew His family so how could He be from Heaven?
	4. *Jn. 6:59-71*
		1. Vss. 60, 66: Because of this many of His own disciples balked at Him and left Him.
			1. When they left Jesus didn’t tell His apostles, “Well the gospel alone won’t convert so we need to keep offering earthly rewards!”
		2. After all that happened, they wouldn’t be His flock because they followed Him for the wrong reasons, didn’t know or truly believe in Him, but were in it for what they could get out of it!
			1. Man needs the salvation found only in Jesus! (“Bread of Heaven”)
			2. The gospel, not loaves of bread, will convert souls (Rom. 1:16)
		3. Jn. 6:67-68: He then turned to His apostles still there and asked if they would leave too. Peter gave the right answer (the one the others couldn’t stand): “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.”
	5. Those that teach the work of the church is to house the homeless, educate the illiterate, and feed the hungry fail miserably at teaching Christ!
		1. Jesus fed the 5,000 (huge numbers of followers) then they left Him when He called upon them to work for God *(Jn. 6:27).*
		2. Jn. 6:35: “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.”
		3. Jn. 6:63: Flesh profits nothing, Spirit gives life!
	6. Christians as individuals should be interested in helping those less fortunate (Gal. 6:10), but it is not the work of the church!
		1. *I Tim. 3:15:* The church is “the pillar and ground of the truth.”
		2. *Eph. 3:8:* Paul’s mission was to “preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ…”
		3. *Acts 8:35; I Cor. 2:2:* Jesus is to be the focal point of our teaching!
	7. Jesus emphasized the spiritual over the physical and it turned people away from Him!

#### Drawn By the Gospel or Entertainment?

* 1. The Social Gospel teaches its message through entertainment where all can be invited!
		1. *Concerts of praise, food drives where they can feed the community, etc.*
		2. Jesus did not “seek to entertain” but to “seek and save the lost!” – Lk. 19:10
		3. The gospel is not God’s “power to entertain”, but “the power of God unto salvation” – Rom. 1:16
		4. The mission of the church is not to “go into all the world to entertain every creature” but to “preach the gospel” to the lost – Mk. 16:15
	2. Churches engulfed in the social gospel will do just about anything to get people to come.
		1. Seminars (and other programs) are held by churches that have nothing to do with Christ, His death, His resurrection, nor the salvation He offers.
		2. Gimmicks & prizes offered to get people in the doors (free daycare, attendance prizes, gas cards, etc.)
		3. Buildings are built to accommodate social clubs, athletic programs, and other forms of entertainment & recreation (concerts, comedy routines, etc.).
			1. Buildings should be constructed for the purpose of assembling, worship, & teaching.
	3. Jn. 12:32: Jesus said He would draw all men to Himself – entertainment not needed!
	4. Phil. 3:18-20
		1. When one substitutes food for the stomach for food for the soul; music & laughter for study & prayer, they drift away and are enemies of the cross!
	5. God’s kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, not physical *(Rom. 14:17; Jn. 18:36).*
	6. Must be careful as to what draws people in – social events or the gospel?

## Conclusion

1. Those who practice the social gospel and think they can keep those they “draw in” would have to call Jesus a “failure” for He lost many even after feeding 5,000! *(Jn. 6:66)*
2. Those that do not practice the social gospel but rather teach the gospel of Christ are in minority.
	1. In following after God so was Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Gideon, Elijah, Daniel, and the apostles!
	2. Doesn’t matter if majority or minority, but that we abide in doctrine of Christ! *(II Jn. 9)*
3. The church is “not for eating and drinking” *(Rom. 14:17)* but for teaching the gospel *(Rom. 1:17)* and standing for the truth *(I Tim. 3:15).*
4. Let us be those that seek after Christ as the “Bread of Heaven;” not those that seek after the 5 loaves and 2 fishes!
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized!
6. If a Christian in sin, don’t wait till it’s too late! Repent!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!

**Parable of the Life-Saving Station**

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur there was a once a crude little life-saving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought for themselves, they went out day or night tirelessly searching for the lost.

Many lives were saved by this wonderful little station, so that it became famous. Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding areas, wanted to become associated with the station and give of their time and money and effort for the support of its work. New boats were bought and new crews were trained. The little life-saving station grew.

Some of the new members of the life-saving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and so poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those saved from the sea.

So they replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in an enlarged building. Now the life-saving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they re-decorated it beautifully and furnished it as a sort of club.

Fewer of the members were now interested in going to sea on life-saving missions, so they hired life boat crews to do this work. The mission of life-saving was still given lip-service but most were too busy or lacked the necessary commitment to take part in the life-saving activities personally.

About this time a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boat loads of cold, wet, and half-drowned people. The victims were dirty and sick and thus made a mess in the beautiful new clubhouse. The property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where victims of shipwreck could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's life-saving activities on account of it being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal life pattern of the club. But some members insisted that life-saving was their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a life-saving station. They were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save the life of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own life-saving station. They did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. They evolved into a club and yet another life-saving station was founded. If you visit the seacoast today you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are still frequent in those waters, only now most of the people drown.

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<http://www.bible.ca/evangelism/e-parable-life-saving.htm>

<http://www.ecfvp.org/vestrypapers/death-and-resurrection/parable-of-the-lifesaving-station/>

<http://www.allsaintslindfield.org/blog/the-parable-of-the-lifeboat-station>