

THE “PARADOX” GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN MACARTHUR

The following are excerpts from *The Gospel/According to Jesus*, by John MacArthur. 1988 (emphasis has been added)

Eternal life is a free gift... but that does not mean there is no cost in terms of **salvation's impact** on the sinner's life. This **paradox** may be difficult, but it is nevertheless true; **salvation is both free and costly**. (Chap. 12, p. 140)

It [salvation] **is free but costs everything**. And though it is appropriated by faith, **it cannot fail to produce the fruit of true righteousness** in the life and the behavior of the believer. (Appendix I, p. 220)

The point is not that God guarantees security to everyone who will say he accepts Christ, but rather that those **whose faith is genuine will prove their salvation is secure by persevering to the end in the way of righteousness... True believers will persevere**. (Chap. 8, p. 97)

He commanded those who sought eternal life to **deny themselves, forsake all, and follow Him**. He never held forth the hope of **salvation** to anyone who refused to submit to His sovereign lordship. (Chap 12, p.134)

Faith, as He characterized it, is **nothing less than a complete exchange of all that we are for all that He is**,... They show the incomparable worth of the kingdom of heaven [salvation] and the **sacrificial commitment required** of everyone who would enter. (Chap. 12, p.135)

...the kingdom of heaven [salvation] is only for those who perceive its immeasurable value and are then **willing to sacrifice everything else to acquire it**. (Chap. 12, p. 138)

...saving faith retains no privileges. It clings to **no** cherished sins, **no** treasured possessions, **no** secret self-indulgences. It is an **unconditional surrender, a willingness to do anything the Lord demands**. (Chap. 12, p.139)

It is an **exchange of all that we are for all that Christ is**. And it denotes **implicit** obedience, **full** surrender to the lordship of Christ. **Nothing less** can qualify as **saving faith**. (Chap. 12, p.140)

Some worked only the last hour, and others worked all day, but **everyone worked. That is the way salvation is**. Faith is shown by works. (Chap. 13, p. 147)

He had made a **complete turn-around**. His demeanor was one of **unconditional surrender, a complete resignation of self, and absolute submission** to His father. **That is the essence of saving faith**. (Chap. 14, p.153)

Here, in the culmination of all He has said **in the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord demands that each person choose between following the world on the easy, well traveled road, or following Him on the difficult road**. You will not find a plainer statement of the **gospel according to Jesus** anywhere in the Scriptures. (Chap. 17, p.180)

Let me say again, **unequivocally, that Jesus' summons to deny self and follow Him was an invitation to salvation**, not an offer of a "higher life", or a second step of faith following salvation. (Chap. 19, p.196) The call to Christian discipleship [salvation] **explicitly demands just that kind of total dedication**. It is **full commitment, with nothing knowingly or deliberately held back**. **No one can come to Christ on any other terms**. (Chap. 19, p.197)

...[saving] **faith** is ...a lifelong commitment. It means taking up the cross daily, **giving all for Christ each day** with **no** reservations, **no** uncertainty, **no** hesitation. It means **nothing** is knowingly held back, **nothing** purposely shielded from His lordship, **nothing** stubbornly kept from His control. (Chap 19, p.202)

JOHN'S OMITTED VERSES

It is amazing that anyone with John MacArthur's working knowledge of the Bible would make such statements as previously listed. These sound more like "Works To You" than "Grace To You." No one in all history has ever met those absolute requirements for salvation, including John himself. In the back of John's book is the "Scripture Index" of all the verses he comments on. Almost all verses that clearly show the error of his theology are not commented on. The verses he left out will be in **bold** and underlined in the following paragraphs.

The Bible makes it clear that true born-again Christians can practice sin, live in sin, and even die in their sins. It is the sinning Christian, not the unbeliever, who is put out of the church with church discipline (**Mat. 18:15-17; Luk. 17:3-4; I Cor. 5:3-6, 8-10, 12; Heb. 12:3-9;**). It is sinning Christians who are warned not to be like the Israelites who came out of Egypt (**I Cor. 10:6-11; Heb. 3:12-13**). It is the sinning Christians who were disciplined with death (**Act. 5:1-10; I Cor. 11:27-32; I Joh. 5:16,17**). It is the sinning Christian who is delivered over to Satan (**I Cor. 5:5;** I Tim. 1:20).

It is the sinning Christian who "suffers loss," is "recompensed for bad deeds," and "receives the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality" at the Judgment Seat of Christ (**Rom. 14:10-12; I Cor. 3:10-15; II Cor. 5:9-11; Col. 3:23-25; Heb. 6:4-8; 10:29-31**). It is sinning Christians whose faith is useless to anyone else, and their useless faith will not save them at the judgment seat of Christ (**Jam. 2:12**). It is the sinning Christian who is warned that he could lose his inheritance (I Cor. 6:8-10; **I Cor. 10:1-11;** Gal. 5:15-21; Eph. 5:1-6; Col. 3:5,6). It is sinning Christians who

are rebuked, and warned to “repent or...” in the letters to the churches (**Rev. 2:1 through 3:22**), and it is sinning Christians who lose their right to the tree of life and the holy city (**Rev. 2:7; 22:12-15, 18-19**).

Eternal life is a free gift; rewards must be earned, and there are those Christians who will have no rewards. Works do not prove we are saved; we are saved by what we believe. Believing sound gospel doctrine proves our salvation (**Joh. 5:24; Act. 11:14-17;; 15:9,11; 16:30-31**; Rom. 4:5; I Cor.15:1-4; **Eph. 1:13; II Tim. 4:1-4**).

In **Acts 15:1-12**, the Apostle Paul has to deal with some lordship salvation people. In his letter to the Galatians, he refers to them as "false brethren". (**Gal. 2:4**) He asks some of the Galatians who have the same problem; "Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain--if indeed it was in vain?" (**Gal. 3:3-4**) When you mix obedience to Christ with the gospel -- the good news about the (absolutely) "free gift" (no strings attached) of "eternal life,"-- the gospel is nullified. "Christ will be of no benefit to you." "You have been severed from Christ.... you have fallen from grace" according to **Gal. 5:2-4**. In other words, you are LOST. If John MacArthur believes the "***paradox***... [that] **salvation** is both free and costly," he is LOST.

The information from MacArthur's book The Gospel According to the Apostles, published in 1993, shows that he still maintains the “work to prove you are saved” gospel that he declared in The Gospel According to Jesus, published in 1988. This false gospel makes perfect sense to John since he is a Calvinist and believes that the elect will [P]ersevere to the end to prove they are saved. He never considers or tells us how committed to Christ one has to be before he can be sure he is saved. In fact, some Calvinists such as R. C. Sproul and John Piper maintain that you cannot be sure that you are saved as one of the “elect” until the “end.”

For questions or comments call or write:
GOOD NEWS MESSENGERS CHURCH
1436 W. Arthur Ave., Milwaukee WI 53215 Ph. 414 383 6522
or call toll free 1-877-YRU-REAL or www.gnmc.us