

The Gospel and Interfaith Dialogue

by Art Katz

The gospel message is the only message of salvation, and it must be proclaimed to all nations, beginning with the Jewish people.

Scripture: Matthew 28:19, John 14:6, Acts 4:12, Romans 1:16

Topics: "The Exclusivity of Christ", "Interfaith Dialogue"

Description

Art Katz addresses the complexities of interfaith dialogue, particularly between Christianity and Judaism, arguing that acknowledging the validity of rabbinical Judaism as equal to Christianity undermines the apostolic foundations of the Christian faith. He emphasizes that there is only one true faith, and any attempt to equate Christianity with other religions dilutes the urgency and absoluteness of the Gospel message. Katz warns against the dangers of pluralism and the necessity of proclaiming the singularity of Christ as the only way to salvation, urging Christians to engage with love and truth, even at the risk of offense. He reflects on the historical rejection of Jesus by the Jewish community and the implications for contemporary interfaith relations, advocating for a compassionate yet uncompromising approach to sharing the Gospel. Ultimately, Katz calls for a return to the apostolic character of the church, which is marked by urgency and a commitment to the truth of the Gospel.

Transcript

This will be some expression of my response to things that have been expressed through Marvin in his presentations to us centering an interfaith relationship which has every sound of something to be desired, but I hope to indicate that I think that in essence it's deadly to everything that's apostolic. So I'm writing, interfaith relationship is predicated upon and requires not only a respect, but the acknowledgement of the validity of rabbinical Judaism as being equal to or comparable to that of Christianity.

This is in my opinion a deadly condescension that in one fell swoop destroys the apostolic foundations of the one faith that is along the basis and provision for the one God for the redemption of mankind and that of Israel itself. It destroys the faith that is the faith. The world talks about the three great faiths, I have never acknowledged three great faiths there's only one great faith. Any faith after that is devious, deceptive, a distraction, an alternative that has its origin from below and above.

So Christian faith is not another competitive alternative to other faith postures whose tenets are as deserving of respect, but the one redemptive act of God was proclamation to the ends of the earth to make the disciples of all nations we are enjoined to obey the signs and wonders following. "Go ye into all

the world and proclaim this gospel to all creatures; those that believe and are baptized shall be saved; those who believe not shall perish." That language now sounds so antique, so archaic, more than that it sounds offensive.

One of the great scandals of the faith is the absoluteness of the insistence of that solitary message as if there were no other. "Go you into all the world." And that's why the North American Indian if you embrace Christianity is accused of embracing white man's religion whether Jew would become Gentilized. It's as if who has the presumption to think that your faith is the only absolute standard to which all mankind subscribes. Well that's just the name of the game, sorry about that I myself was offended when I picked up a New Testament for the first time in my 34th year and read of a Jesus who said "no man comes to the Father but by Me."

"If any man comes any other way he is a thief and robber." Hey that's what running right across the grain of my whole relativistic upbringing many paths the truth it sounds of honorific everything has its own distinction and appropriate one way, one man, one faith, one salvation. That the whole of our myth of our present civilization is antithetical to the absolute insistence of God one way. Question is are we uncomfortable with that are we aware of how much that jangles the nerves of the world and how impolite to insist upon Jews that they should somehow subscribe to our quote Christian faith as if it's one of three or other faiths deserving of equal consideration.

A pox on democracy if you will. So this uncompromising absoluteness is integral to the whole apostolic character of the faith from its inception though it is today embarrassingly out of place in the pluralism of a relativistic world of quote many paths truth. If the apostolic faith is not absolute it's not apostolic. There's an absolute necessity singularity. Well touch this as I go on, so this is embarrassingly out of place in the pluralism of a road to the relativistic world with many paths to proof.

I believe that we ourselves have opened the door, that is Christianity in its present disposition, typically in its interphase mentality has opened the door to this destructive pluralism that neither Jesus nor Paul would for a moment of countenance by our condescension to the Christ-rejecting Jewish community. Whose Judaism was birthed out of the rejection of the Crucified one and yet atonement obtained through His death. So this sounds on the face of it like a very hard indictment against Judaism.

It's only stating the facts. That present rabbinical Judaism was born out of the rejection of the Christ event followed by the destruction of the temple and the priesthood and sacrificed the constituted the foundation of the then biblical Judaism. So that we have opened the door once we have acknowledged the validity of any other faith we have opened the door to a plurality of faith. The whole world now is written with these faiths all contending all claiming their right to contend one with the other as if they have valid grounds there's only one valid ground.

That's the presumption of our faith and it's more than embarrassment. It's a ground for persecution. Of the atonement obtained through His death unwilling and unable to recognize that the Gentile Centurion that "this is the son of God." Remember that acknowledgement of this professional murderer watching this man on the cross dying with such magnanimity forgiving His murderers, but lay not this sin to their charge forgive them they know not what they do. "This is the son of God."

Something was revealed of the ultimate nature of that victim who forged a confession and acknowledgement out of a gentile centurion that the nation Israel was unwilling or unable to make, except for the numbers that became believers. And following that by bribing those who guarded the tomb to tell

the story that His body had been stolen by His disciples denying the testimony in power and miracles, the post Pentecost Church refusing the corroborating destruction of Jerusalem, its temple prophesied by Jesus that took place in 70 AD.

Its a system predicated upon repentance this was the new innovation in Jaffna in that city by a particular rabbi who was celebrated as being the founder of present with pinnacle Judaism predicated on repentance. And as I wrote that somewhere about 4 or 5 a.m. this morning I put the word "sick" in parentheses after the word repentance. Which means what? It's predicated on repentance and you've watched the crucifixion of the Son of God very God and have dismissed that and you saw to it that a guard was put around his tomb, because there was the outrageous possibility that is that His body would be stolen and that true mischief of His disappearance would be worse than what began it.

And yet His body was not in the tomb and we know what happened. There was a resurrection and power and the remarkable paintings of these Roman gods being shoveled, the helmets falling off the heads being cast in every direction in the power by which Jesus was raised from his death by the glory of God the Father. Well they went and told the story and they were bribed by the Jewish authorities to say that His disciples came at night and stole His body. Then the gospel says and this account is believed to this day.

I'm just going back and reviewing the Melancholy elements that led to the rejection of Jesus and the formation of the present Judaism with which we hope to be in some kind of constructive interfaith dialog. With whom are you dialoguing? Your dialoguing with the descendants who refused the testimony of Jesus. If you'll not believe that I am He you shall die in your sins. Who refused to receive the testimony of the Centurion that they had as much opportunity to see the glory of God revealed in the ultimate suffering and death of the Son of God.

And the lost body that they knew was resurrected because these guards gave the true account of what happened. You say this hereafter and they bribed them, when I read that I am just staggered, if ever men had an opportunity to repent and say boy we really missed it. We thought this guy was a presumer and that His miracles were some kind of magic and He was leading Israel astray down another path contrary to what we understood Judaism to be. But now that He has been resurrected by the power of God the Father, this evidently is the statement of Father's approval for what was performed at the cross through Him and we've got to go back to square one to the drawing board and acknowledge repentantly before the nation we have missed it and have been even the perpetrators of His death.

But instead of that they swallowed down the evidence of the resurrection, bribed the guards to tell the story. And of course the veil that was rent from top to bottom by the power of God when Jesus gave up His ghost, which I think I say was 9 inches thick, had to be sewed together. So that they could continue in the normative practices until the temple itself was destroyed according to the prophecy of Jesus forty years later, 40 being the number of judgment. This is a remarkable indictment of that generation, but the point that I'm making is that that whole rejection constitutes the foundation of what's today called normative Judaism with whom we hope to be in some kind of constructive dialog.

Well Art you're really laying it on strong and this sounds like it has all of the earmarks of anti-semitic indictment. No, the truth can be born in another way; it doesn't have to be an incentive for anger irritation. Jesus said "they don't know what they do", but now that we know it what to affect the way in which we relate to them not bristling with anger and in the day indignation, but a greater heart of compassion for the tragedy that was ensued by the rejection of Him who God the Father sent.

And so it gives us a different handle, a different disposition and our relatedness with them. So we're not condescending that they have a faith, however time honored and attended by the sages of Israel and the commentaries of rabbis. I know how beguiling and impressive that weight of tradition is. I'm now being faced with it for the first time in my Jewish life in my 74th year with a wonderful rabbi. Mark and I went to a session at the at the the babakov seiderman book and our jaws were gaped at the beauty and insight of the things were being shared, nevertheless despite the impressiveness of the erudition intellectuality scholarship that marks this Jewish people we have to recognize the group fact of the one event that has come in point of time and once it has come everything is changed.

Nothing can after that be honored have your chooses to acknowledge, recognize and make that the predicate of all faith, reality and being. To ignore that and then find Judaism on repentance and good works is a frightening reality. You're going to have a Judaism based on repentance and not repent of your repentance. What kind of repentance is that? That's the only religious, that's only play-acting, that's all that's unreality and you're condemned in generations - an alternative to God's redemptive provision and consigning them to perdition.

For what could be a substitute for the blood of the Lamb? What kind of religious practice? What kind of good deeds can be good that issue for men who are not good and can only be made good in Messiah alone? For God alone is God. So there's a whole ideological conflict of love fundamental kind that if we do not face it and bring it up as an issue we do them to service and consign this generation to the same perdition to which generations have preceded them, because they go into death not believing.

If you'll not believe that I am He you shall die in your sins. I can't say I know what that means, but I shudder only to quote it and evidently God knows what it means. And thought it's so significant that He didn't spare my mother after 38 and 39 years of resisting me to my teeth though we brought before her every saint who has ever crossed these grounds and she heard and saw everything that should have been sufficient to win her acceptance of the Lord. She was a stubborn Jewish hold out till ten days before her death.

Nothing that we could say, demonstrate or plead could ever persuade her. Her son was transformed before her sight. The world was coming to this door, her son was being honored in nations around the world, but my mother was unwilling to then acknowledge or concede. Until she was given a vision of hell. I don't know if you've got that when Crystal was sharing the other night. My mother was terrified, stark terror, the Lord did not spare her so much so she was beside herself in a frenzy and I had to be called the two or three in the morning, to come to my mother's bedside and at twenty minutes she was falling a prayer to receive the Lord taking like taking candy from the proverbial baby.

What happened to that backbone of Jewish resistance and stubborn opposition that could not even name the name of Christ. And taking my hand and following word for word in a prayer to receive Jesus as Messiah. Not by any expertise of mine or it was the Lord who out of fear and terror an anticipation of an eternal hell was willing to consider and even to speak that name in which he had grown so hard even to utter it. And the moment she spoke it "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

The Lord did for her what he did for me. Hey I could no more get the name of Jesus out of my mouth 38 years ago than she was able in her 96 th year to do. We were so schooled against that name and the only way it could be spoken even passively was blasphemously. To call upon that name with any kind of respect and reverence was actually beyond our ability to do. Do you know that's a grace to call upon the

name of the Lord? Do you think it's a vocalization? That anyone could perform at will that's how little.

You know it's a grace to call upon the name of the Lord. As I saw performed through my mother and through myself. It was given, it's not a faith of our own it's a gift lest any man boast. And that this new creditor foundation of rabbinical Judaism synagogue attendance prayer good deeds as determined by rabbis is supposed to be an acceptable alternative to the Levitical requirement for the shedding of blood in the absence of temple, priesthood, and sacrifice. When what Jesus prophesied took place the temple was destroyed, Jerusalem was destroyed, the priesthood dispersed, even the records of the priesthood so there could not even be a resuscitation of priesthood, because it was this first and gone with it the ability to perform sacrifice.

That was a tragic impasse that requires one kind of radical response or another. Either you have to rethink about this Jesus who bled at the cross as the eternal Lamb of God without spot who gave himself by the Eternal Spirit or you have to find a kind of cunning equivalent and assume that God finds it acceptable. Because if He doesn't you're an eternally dead duck. So the millions who have followed this have been sent into eternal perdition and its perpetrators not willing themselves to enter have kept back generations by their continuing hostility to the gospel.

I'm paraphrasing that famous scripture, "not willing themselves to enter, they prevented others from entering." Any condescension to the above necessarily diminish the Apostolic distinctives of insistence on the singularity of the church's message, its absoluteness and urgency. A church that is not urgent is not the church. A church that lacks absolute apostolic absoluteness about the primacy of its message is not apostolic. To lose that distinction, that urgency, and that insistence is to lose the church as the church.

I'm saying that we're risking very great loss in this ecumenical dialogue and interfaith relationship with the Jewish community, because of necessity it brings a toning down and an equivocation, and a compromise from the absoluteness that is intrinsic to the true faith. The church that has become bland and nondescript ironically must fail the Jewish people itself and its mandate to them and bring corresponding loss to the Greek by a diminished gospel which by its very nature is always a divinely calculated scandal and offense.

We prayed about that this morning and even thank God the gospel is an offensive, is a scandal, and not an easy to communicate message. It does not commend us of the human intellect; it's as if God has gone out of His way purposely to calculate a message of such a kind that no man can entertain or receive on the basis of his own intelligence. It defies intelligence, it defies every human thing by which men can endorse something. It can only come as a gift an understanding imparted by revelation in conjunction with the unsparing and uncompromising word of its absoluteness, but if we bring an equivocation word by which we retreat either in content or in tone the Spirit of God, the anointing of God will not be there to bless.

It will bounce off our hearer like, "how nice for you" or "You believe that ,oh nice for you" , "you're happier, good". It would not be the kind of message like "woe as me I'm undone", God anoints what He appoints, but He's not going to anoint a diluted message that has suffered compromised in order to find some kind of accommodation, acquiescence with our Jewish kinsman. If we really love them we will not spare them and will not spare ourselves, because you don't know the gospel you cannot know it in its character and that's shameful scandalous nature until you bring it to a Jew.

Widely to a Jewish theologian Jacob Jocc, whose brother Yeats the anglicized in Oakland California in one of his books I think "Jesus and Judaism" he says "nothing reveals the radical character of the gospel

then bringing it to the Jew. And this was God's intention to the Jew first, before you go anyplace else to begin at Jerusalem and Samaritan goes together, begin with the Jew first. Come and bring the message of My birth, My Divine origin by coming down from heaven by laying aside My deity, My 30 years of obscurity, My three and a half year public ministry, My rejection, My crucifixion, My suffering, My death, My resurrection, My ascension, My seated on the right hand of glory and begin with the same people who crucified Me.

Begin in the same city where the prophets were stoned. Don't take it to Connecticut first to the little places in the country and see if it'll if you can hoist that flag up or if it will go over. The way Broadway productions are first begun in Connecticut and Rhode Island place and then if they find some sympathetic tender then bring it to Broadway, but God says begin it in Broadway. Again where I was crucified. So I respect even our admiration for Judaism's erudition, scholarship, gentility and charm, even the unrecognized design for the approval of the Jewish community has resulted in an incalculable loss to the purity or authority and power of contemporary Christianity.

Because Paul was not ashamed of this gospel with our biggest scandal for it is the very power of God unto salvation to the Jew first and also to the Greek. We are diminishing what the Greek gets if we have not gone to the Jew first. This is not an invitation in saying all these things to resume again the unhappy, if not tragic triumphalism and arrogant disdain of the early church's issues with the Jew. Do we get mad at them now and put a number on them? This is what has been implied or actually stated these days.

That the only alternative to speaking this kind of hard truth is to be gentle to understand the cross cultural elements and the function in a kind of interfaith dialogue. As if the only alternative to interfaith dialogue is to laps again into the kind of harshness and triumphalism arrogance that characterizes the church in previous generations. I'm saying no. I'm saying no. We need every lesson that we've been given these days on how to understand our Jewish kinsmen and how to speak in the right way and knowingly, but not sparingly.

To spear is to allow to destroy, to love is to take the risks of offense and even of rejection, but the placate came to condescend that one scene in the film that that we saw that fiercely through was this Irish Rabbi Rosen. I'll never forget it with his Van Dyck beard and real evident assurance and having it all together polished and obeying. I don't read a mediator, I already have a relationship with God and then another reference to the Messiah. Well whatever the issue is of who the Messiah is in no way diminishes what I already have as a relationship with God.

Well can you have that? When Jesus said "no man comes to the Father but by Me." How then can you have a relationship? One of two things is right: either your relationship is more imagined than it is real or our confidence in what Jesus said needs to be reconsidered. There's an absolute in the Gospel, that says "you cannot come, no man can come to Me unless the Father draws Him." There is an absolute clarity in that word. So what do you do when a rabbi who gives every appearance not only civility, not only our audition, but a moral tone to this life.

That that just makes us gasp and look up with admiration says that he has a relationship with God. That our knowledge of New Testament Scripture says He cannot have. We're faced with a conundrum. Either we're wrong in our assumption predicated on those New Testament verses out of the very mouth of Jesus and that he has it without Jesus. That means the gospel itself is an irrelevancy, not only for Jews, but for anyone. Or this man is deceived and thinks that his culture and refinement and ethicality is somehow a

relationship with God.

He cannot know. So what do we do when we are in the presence of a Jew like that he makes a statement and we are silent. Our silence validates that statement, our silence is applying "yes we're in agreement with your contention that you have such a relationship." What we really ought to do if we love the man is to say "I'm sorry dear sir I don't care what your subjective impression may be, but if the scriptures and the New Testament out of the mouth of Jesus Himself be true it's impossible for you to enjoy the relationship in which you're boasting, you're a deceived man or we're deceived, but we're not going to be silent so as to condone and validate your presumption and you're the spiritual leader of a Jewish community and communicating that and encouraging others that the same kind of assumed relationship that cannot exist short of the acknowledgment of the blood and the forgiveness of sins.

For My arm is not shortened that it cannot save nor is My ear delicate that I cannot hear, but your sins, God says have separated you from Me." What greater sin than the sinner presumption about spiritual pride that boast in a relationship that is non-existent and puts greater confidence in the subjectivity of what is feeling than in the stated Word of God, the Son of God, who alone is righteous and not a man that He should lie. You understand? Yes. There's a conflict here, there's something struck and it's not a happenstance or inadvertent, it's absolutely calculated by God from the beginning, we're joined into a remarkable issue with the Jewish community.

How we relate to them in that issue is the whole thing that we're about in these things by which the age is concluded. So to move in the direction of interfaith dialogue and acknowledgement and endorsement that you guys may not have Jesus, but what you do have is impressive and we don't want to be ungainly and a sore thumb or a bull in the china shop. Interesting that you have to share Jesus all the more when in His name you have suffered persecution for 2000 years. What kind of love is that?

What kind of respect is that? Shouldn't you back off and not be insistent on your gospel, there are many paths of truth or is there one path. And if we buckle before the Jew in their seeming civility and refinement as if they have no need of that path. We're opening the doors for many paths none of which lead to heaven and all of which lead to provision which Satan is quite handy to provide for the deceived millions in the world. The issue of the Jew is the issue of the gospel.

Amen. Is the issue of the gospel to the Greek. It's an issue of the church. And so I'm sharing my burden as it has been triggered by listening to my dear brother Marvin and someone said they're happy that I'm seeing this, because they worried for me in New York. Is Art himself being taken in? Is he being seduced by the impressive scholarship and erudition and refinement of these precious Talmudic men fifth generation, while were like Klotz next to these men and their remarkable knowledge not only of Hebrew, but the other Semitic language Aramaic.

And so you know they asked questions and were stunned and stupefied we can't give answers. They seem to have all the answers. The effrontery of insisting upon our faith in view of all that is either colossal egoism and arrogance or absolute humility. One or the other, the rabbi can't understand why by now I've not thrown in the towel hasn't he called me enough to show me how fraudulent this whole Greek myth is about Jesus. And how it was a common place in the ancient world of us of a godly son born mystically from the heavens and lives and dies and then is resurrected and Jesus is only a take-off on that mythical pagan origin.

How can you continue Art to be a Jewish man and subscribe to that nonsense? Haven't you seen the light yet? Why do you keep hanging on? I'm hanging on for your sake dear rabbi, that somehow when at one point in our five six hours together on a particular Wednesday in some moment when I think I'm not at all succeeding and I'm ready to throw in the towel one last word a look at gesture, the word has come light from heaven a key turn and a man gasps falls on his face and cries out "my Lord and my God."

That's what we're waiting for. That's what we're praying for. It has not to do with my cleverness, my learning, where do I come even to begin to match notes with such men, but trusting a word. A word will come that will unlock his soul and breathe life and all that he already knows, but has not come to Him as revelation. But to know it would cost him to surrender to that revelation: his wife, his family, his place in the Jewish community, his forebears 5th generation Talmudic scholar is nothing less than the death sentence for such a man to believe in Jesus.

Because if he believes he will equally proclaim being Jewish the cost of everything, but will be the key to life. So when this is not an invitation to resume again the unhappy if not tragic triumphalism and arrogant disdain of the early church's history with the Jew. The church was pricked and provoked by Jews who were saying that you claimed that you found the Messiah. You're a bunch of Gentile dum-dums you don't even know our language and that's how you're interpreting it.

You're all wrong and you've missed it and beside that we're coming again, the Scriptures speak of our restoration. God is going to honor us; we will be exalted above all nations. Can you imagine men like Chrysostom and other of the early church leaders in print and chased by that kind of Jewish boasting or Luther himself at a later generation. The church has failed and this relationship with the Jew has allowed itself to be provoked and irritated until resentment, rather than absorbing like a pin cushion this necessary refutation and bearing it and loving them even in it.

I know from my own experience speaking at university campuses from Harvard, Yale, University of California, wherever I've been in the world and spoke at universities. Why do I speak to them? Because that's where you're likely to find a Jewish audience if you can't get into the synagogues. And variably when you come into a crowd of Jewish students the anger. Because what do you represent? You're a paid flunky. You're some kind of missionary with a goyishe Bible under your arm to persuade them to forsake being Jewish and speaking that name by which we have been persecuted historically and boom they let you have it.

And you like a pin cushion, you just have to absorb all of their accusations, all their indictment and you can say no no no no that's not me I'm not related to the Crusaders .Well I'm not with that institution. They don't know the difference. For them it's all Christianity. You're coming in that name, you're indicted with them and before you can get a word in edgewise you have got to allow them to express their spleen. Give off their invective of all of their anger and then when it's spent you might get in a word.

Well the church has not been willing to do that. So by all of the things that I'm reviewing I'm not inviting the church to pick up again and be to the Jews a hostile arrogant entity, but to know the truth of the situation and to bear that truth. And yet come to them and relate to them in the love that knows and will not be invective. It does not require our arrogance it's a realistic affirmation of indisputable centrality of the Cross does not imply a corresponding contempt, but a path of identification with our Jewish kinsmen who have been ignored to the saving faith by a time-honored religious culture commendable and attractive in many ways, but Christ rejecting at its heart enhanced without the saving faith.

That's a tremendous statement. Not bad for four am. A realistic affirmation of things is putting before you the indisputable centrality of the cross as the only one faith is the only one saving faith does not reply to a corresponding contempt. I had a chance to ask a question last night in which Marvin mentioned Abraham Heschel. I would have asked "could you please enlarge on Heschel's concept of pathos in his two volumes on the prophets, because the Lord Himself quickened that word for us last summer.

That the church needed to come into a pathos of identification with the Jew, is the root of the same word as sympathy. Pathos. If you can have a pathos out of a knowledge of the truth of that one, not out of a naivety or unwillingness to see the truth, but knowing the truth knowing the rejection, knowing the hostility, knowing the Antichrist propensity of this community, and its leadership and still have a pathos and still have an identification and still have a profound sympathy not just the vast sentimental kind, but of a kind for which you would lay down your life.

So I could say to my rabbi as he drove me to get my car and I had to leave it across the river in New Jersey to be repaired we were alone in the car together I said "has any men ever love you as I, who do you know who could match the affection that issues from me for you from anyone that out of your own Judaism till you have abused me, call me names, and acted with anger and insulted me, who asked else do you know within your Jewish framework who has loved you as I." He did not answer me a word.

He knew it. It's the love of God, it's the pathos of God, and so I'm saying the knowledge of the truth does not require us to be arrogant or hostile to them. It's one thing to be innocent and not know and then to be blithe in your conduct, but to be knowing and to have pathos is a statement of uttermost spirituality, in fact it's coming close to the very character of God Himself. Remember what is being waited for: the deliverer might come out of Zion and take transgression from Jacob when my servant shall have compassion on her stones and pity upon her dust, when my church will have pathos for the Jewish community.

And know how long did they have suffered their rejection of Me and how hostile they've come in their framework and how they oppose themselves in their own ignorance and bleed in sympathy for that condition on pray for the lifting of the veil then the Deliverer shall come out of Zion. Why then? Because His purpose for the church has been fulfilled. He has a bride for the bridegroom that's just like Him, adorn for Him, because she shares the pathos of God Himself. Now He can deliver Israel, for the whole object of Israel was inculcating on providing an incentive for the church to come into that condition.

That which is not of this faith is still sin, well that scripture that which is not the faith is sin. And I'm just enlarging it to say that which is not of this faith is sin the faith by which salvation is obtained, because all of the so-called great faiths employ the word "faith", but what does it mean? A compendium of doctrinal statements of the distinctives of Islam or Judaism whatever it is, but the faith that is the faith is (not sure the word here?) and that which is not of that faith is still sin.

What good deeds can issue from those who have not come through that faith and see their own quote "faith" as or viable alternatives. We are not called to denigrate nor boast, but proclaiming the truth in love. This does not mean kinda condescending sentimentally avoidance of your principal offense, but being cruel in order to be kind and being firm or being insistent. My mother "Arthur, I don't want to hear another word of this, not another word." I said "look, the day will come in eternity when your cry and regret will be not that I have said too much but I've not said enough."

Is that a nice way for a son to talk to his mother? Well what's nice when an aged lady's eternal destiny is at stake and one must be cruel to her in order to be kind to her, but not sparing. I'm such an enemy of

sentiment, I can't tell you, I see sentiment as the most devious thing that has ever issue from the bowels of hell that is disguised as being somehow attractive and commendable and nice to receive and fear and express, but destructive of truth and keeping people from the kinds of issues that will affect them eternally.

A pox on sentiment. If those by the way our kindness will be construed as cruelty, you call that love, you call that being a Christian? That's the retort that will get, yes that is being a Christian whether or not you understand it. And if you don't understand, I don't wait for your understanding in order to speak the truth. Your understanding will come, because I've spoken it. To precipitate a crisis of faith can only be justified in the light of eternity. I mean why stir an old lady up?

Why kidnap her from West Palm Beach where she's lived for the last thirty years in her condominium with all of our adorable little Gitchee goo on the walls and her honorary plaques from Hadassah Hospital and all of the Jewish claims to which she has contributed. And her husband who was a bed atheist was the vice president of the Jewish congregation and take her away on that environment that is so sentimental, so condescending to the flesh in December and bring her the northern Minnesota, because it was the only interlude when they had some free time on my schedule to effect that kidnapping.

If I had waited until I came back from my next trip my mother would have been dead. So we hastily constructed that little place with her near my house and packed her bags, got her goods moved and sold and disposed and she was walking. We always had to take her with her chair out of a house into the airport and muttering and complaining all the way. And when she finally got here complaints. "If I had known that you were going to be making all these trips I would not have come(Art's Mom)."

Oh what do you think I do? I'm a minister, I have a call, trying to explain that to an unsaved Jewish woman. The only time she ever changed the tune and bless my going was after she had called on the name of the Lord. Because on the second day she said as we were told "what about the others the way is narrow" and now that I was going on a trip that would further this message, I've established places of refuge for Jews in flight in the nation's, she sent me with blessing. And what do you think happens? 10 days after my departure she dies and then I'm in Scotland well.

What do I do? Do I continue in the work here? Do I go home? Why do I go to West Palm Beach where her body has been brought back to be buried alongside her unbelieving deceased husband and John Parsons white work that are the economic wonderful package door to door from Aberdeen, Scotland to West Palm Beach and then to London. I would just don't have to miss about seven or eight days of ministry. And so I'm putting it before the Lord and finally felt my mother herself was encouraging me to go on and that more than my physical presence at her tomb site she wanted me to continue in that work that would bring salvation deliverance to her kinsman.

I said "Lord if that's true let the very next meeting in Scotland bear unquestioning evidence that You have promoted something by my being presence that would not have taken place otherwise. It has to do with Jewish flight rescue salvation. And in the next place up in the Highlands of Scotland where at the base of the Highlands where cattle are brought down after the winter and then they are fed in that place and kept in the kind of ambient condition and then sent to Margaret.

The Lord gave me the sense Jews will be coming down from those passes from those high places, they'll be thin and stretched out and physically exhausted and they'll have a place here, where you are speaking. Because of your speaking this Christian body will anticipate their coming, will have prepared for them, they will be fed, they will be rested and they'll not go to market their go to Zion. So to precipitate a crisis of faith

can only be justified in the light of eternity.

Why cut raised excruciating issues for those who are already comfortable in their Judaism. Can we allow them to die like that? Only eternity justifies striking that crisis. This is the issue of what lies beyond this life. And anyone who knows anything about Jews knows that we have very little consideration of what lies beyond this life. We are this world, this life oriented, the life to come is not part of the general understanding that we found in Judaism. In fact it's a subject that's not encouraged and not developed, because what knowledge can they have for what lies beyond death?

And that's why so much attention and energy is given to succeeding in this life. That's why we're so successful, that's why we have to amass a fortune, win a Nobel Prize, leave behind the name of legacy, because there's no life beyond this life. So one of us is terribly wrong. We have that medieval notion as Christians that this life is only preparation. It's a veil of tears, it's a formative time for that which is to come which is eternal. Paul seeing the things that are invisible and eternal saw his present afflictions as both momentary and light, either he's all screwed up or he's all right.

When he had a view of that which is invisible and eternal that affected his present profoundly which is totally absent from Jewish consideration. So I'm saying this, if you eternity it is eternity the issue of eternal hell and anguish of soul without remedy without relief we have a justification for promoting an anguish of soul presently and the crisis that comes through our word and our witness it will set in motion those things that we down to eternal salvation. But do we ourselves believe that?

Have we retained a sense of that which is eternal? Finney said "when the church loses its sense of hell it will have lost its reality as Church." The willingness of that loss in the land of that eternity is the very definition of love. What loss? The loss of losing their friendship, the relationship that we cherish, because we have said something in an ungainly way or raised the question that has exacerbated and wounded and caused upset. The fact that we're willing to suffer that loss might be the greatest testimony about what we are about is so persuasively real.

Do you understand that? They know that we love them, they know that we cherish that relationship, but we're willing even to risk its loss and the offense that comes by raising the question of eternal life and salvation through Jesus, for there is no other. And when they see their willingness to risk the loss of that relationship with themselves they might think this guy's not just bluffing, he's not just speaking out of his doctrinal cap evidently the issue of eternity for him is unmistakably real and that he is persuading me in a knowledge of something that I could not have except that he communicates it and is willing to do so at the risk of the loss of my love and my friendship.

There must be something saying or he would not take that risk. That's being a witness unto the Lord, to hear the voice of Rabbi Rosen in the video shows us that he has an unquestioned relationship to God and has no need of a mediator. For only one of the other can be true as I've said the word of Jesus "that no man comes to the Father, but by Me." Whether Rabbis have subjective confidence in the face of it. To be silent as Christians when such boasts are made is to confirm or validate the one when he makes it and turn the word of Christ into a lie.

And gives that Judaism a validity that Paul's cry in Romans 9 that he himself would wish himself a curse for his brethren's sake would never have allowed. Why is Paul making that cry? If a Rabbi Rosen can come to a seeming salvation independent of us. Why would he wish himself a curse, we've got to reckon these things. For us to allow the risks of the loss of the soul who makes it and the whole apostolic ruling in

character in the church as church. To be silent when such statements are made is to put the church's theology, its doctrines, its grounding in the word of the Lord in question.

Hence more has been lost in the name of "interfaith relations" than can be understood when we confirm them in their suppositions by our silence. Sometimes one must be cruel in order to be kind and to be cruel in this case is saying to this rabbi "I'm sorry dear sir I don't care what this feels objectively that is a patent no, no, it cannot be true it makes my faith a lie, one of us is in grievous error and so long as there's breath in me I'll contend for my error, because I believe that your eternity at stake by it.

To say that we have a long haul, a phrase that our brother has used often, is to imply unlimited amounts of time as eschatological urgency of time running down as if the lengthened shadows of global anti-semitism do not massage the devastating time of Jacob's trouble in which Jesus Himself spoke in explicit warning. What a long haul? And judgment is that the door, the things that we need are ready to collapse Israel's existence is in greatest peril and Jews worldwide. Now you don't have to be a Zionist then would be an object of attack you have only to the Jewish.

What long haul? Is this the best of all worlds where we will have the luxury of continuing an unbroken relationship and over the course of time maybe something might be worked? Well, if you come into a mentality like that I want you to know it is non-Apostolic. Whether the distinctive of Apostolic Church is the expectancy of some eminent soon to be fulfilled eschatological reality, we're moving to the climax, a last days of evil, a clash of kingdoms, the powers of darkness, antichrist, fearful things, blood, fury, and fire poured out on the earth.

Jerusalem itself will be cleansed by the spirit of burning. So what long haul? It may well be longer than we think, but I think we want to act, I believe on the assumption that is short. The time is short and these things shall shortly come to pass or we have not the luxury to cultivate hopeful long relationships. We need to find a first and early opportunity to speak the word, however jarring, however crisis, bringing that will set in motion those considerations that were made for salvation.

For not to have an attitude of eschatological expectancy is no longer to be the church and that's why I'm saying that if we come into this framework of understanding that is called "interfaith relationship" we are threatening and forfeiting the very character of church as church. And not only have we done disservice to the Jew, but also to the Greek. So the whole of man's eternity might hang upon a present moment when time might again come as was demonstrated during the conversation of the Lord Himself with Nicodemus.

Was only a one-time conversation, not a long-haul and something had to be spoken however jarring that would set in motion those things that make for salvation. While Judaism's definition of the word salvation might differ from our own, the one definition that counts is that giving by God. And the death and resurrection of the Son as the one determinative for all eternity. You don't believe in salvation or you think it means social justice and other conditions that need to be attended.

That's nice, but I want to give you the definitive understanding that salvation is as God Himself sees it, defines it, and by which we ourselves will be held accountable. It's that definition that you need to know, it's not that we respect yours, you need to come into the understanding of God Himself for His salvation is the issue of death, resurrection and newness of life. Utterly supernatural and hinging upon the acknowledgment of Him whom He has sent and what was performed in Him and the calling upon that name.

You may have another concept of salvation, but it doesn't save. This is the one that you need to know, to act upon. So this is not a matter of opinion, but conviction which we are under obligation to share as non-negotiable though it brings this necessary offense. An opinion can be tolerated, even humored maybe even respected, but a conviction requires a yes or no, for or against God. Are we presenting something as an opinion that they can shock off and say "that is nice for you, you believe that sweet", are we saying no, this is a conviction, this is out of God's very heart, this is established in His word, if you'll not believe it you'll perish, it's not something that you can idly dangle and play with as an opinion.

It's a conviction, go ahead either to reject it or receive it, for or against God. That's the issue as the issue of eternity, this is not a matter of opinion. They are a target, not that they are a target is not the issue, some kind of the delight of putting a notch on our belts. We're targeting Jews, hey that's not nice, they don't want to be singled out for this kind of attention. It's not that we get some kind of delight, we wanting to put a notch on belts that we've witnessed to a Jew and we led one to the Lord.

But the testimony of very God for a people who remain the apple of His eye. They are His target, they are the apple of His eye, they are the object of His consideration particularly as we come to the end of the age. And that He's full of compassion, mercy, and will not allow them to perish. He is not slack concerning His promises, but He's not willing that any should perish and of this people especially, for they are the apple of His eye the target of His affection and attention.

There is the Jew who is far off and needs to be made nigh by the blood of Jesus that he might be created in Messiah Jesus for good works which God hath before ordained that we should perform them. You read Ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 to 13 not as it was originally intended as a statement to Gentiles who were far off without God without hope in the world who are now brought nigh, but read it as God's present statement to the Jew who we've come full-circle. It's the Jew who's without God without hope in the world and who is far off and needs to be brought by the blood of his own Messiah into the Commonwealth of His own people that hopes and covenants and promises.

That he might be created anew that's what salvation is, that the blood of Messiah Jesus unto good works not your works not your religious works not the works that issue of conscience or thinking that you can bargain with God and negotiate some much work for so much recognition but the good works which God has before ordained that we should walk with them. For no other work is worth working than that it was established before the foundations of the earth were made. No other work is considered by God as good or acceptable in the sight then that which issues from the faith which is the gift of God and not of ourselves lest any man boast.

This is the conversion which is an issue, who turns a murderer and persecuted into a chief apostle. A Jacob into Israel and must be affected on this side of the grave and is ultimately the issue with Jewish identification itself. To comfort Jews with platitudes that we are all God's children is to do them an eternal disservice. To as many as received Him and gave you the power to become the sons of God had not until then. He who hath the Son hath life and he hath not the Son hath not life and the wrath of God abides upon him.

Jesus did not mince terrifying words in John 8:21 and 8:24 if you will not believe, mostly emphasis, if you will not believe kind of implies you have every right and obligation to believe after what I've said, what I've spoken, what I've done, why do you not believe? If you still persist in willing not to believe you need to know that you will die in your sins. And what is the capstone in the summation of all your sin? Is that

unwillingness to believe. How shall we in superficial deference to men say less?

Read again John 3:15,16, "we believe that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth shall not perish but have everlasting life." The day of our Lord is at hand, brands need to be plucked from the fire and apostolic absolute, singleness of eye, certitude authority, and power needs to be restored to the church. The issue of the Jews is the issue of the church, the issue of the Greek, the coming of the Lord is theocratic rule in the Kingdom.

We need to be governed by this felt sense of eminence, its nearness and not below into non-apostolic casualness that expects and desires the long-haul. This kind of urgency is totally compatible with apostolic faith and need not express itself as frenzied as if the suggestion that if you can have the sense of urgency you're going to be foaming at the mouth, you'll be irrational, you'll come on like gangbusters. No, you can have a sense of urgency and be sober without frenzy and that's so sobriety and the high seriousness of the eschatological faith is that to which we are called.

We walk by faith not fear, especially the fear of falling into extremes, worst extremes by in urgent. Speak the truth of love, but speaketh. To void reference to the world to come, is the void of faith and to confirm the unsuspecting into the greatest of all deceptions that there is no life beyond this life and that this one is all. The shriek and horror that comes in a moment of eternity is incalculable. Rebashingly(not sure the name) said "that in that moment when the day of eternity, when the moment of eternity comes, all values as we have lived them will be totally reversed."

That which we celebrate in the world will be abhorred by God, there'll be a complete reversal all to which we are subscribed in our life, our energy and time and it's too late to remedy anything. There is an eternal shrink without relief. We need ourselves now to hear it by the ear of the Spirit and have that as always a backdrop and our relationship with this people. Eternity is at stake. So it voids the faith and confirms the unsuspecting into the greatest of all deceptions, it is to diffuse the gospel, is to weaken the distinctiveness of the church as church.

And becomes a victory for the powers of darkness in the very name of interfaith relationship. As it is written, "I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed."

So Lord, thank You, blot out anything that I have spoken, read, commented that is a disagreement with Yourself. Allow to remain that which is in perfect agreement that was calculated for our consideration. Let it find a place of deposit and will be brought again and again to our consciousness and especially to stir us if we're faced with a challenging issue with the Jew where we would be tempted humanly to back up, to retreat, to compromise, to go easy, to go soft and make nice. Remind us again of the issues of eternal life and that one must be cruel sometimes in order to be kind and not to withhold the word of truth. Bless this word so much as it was Your own. Let it be factored in as much as the brother wants to respond to it and we just thank You, give You praise for this interfaith dialogue between ourselves which we can afford is luxury, but not with them, not on the basis of the not acknowledgment that is some inherent validity which they already possess independent of Christ. In Jesus' name. His name we pray. Amen

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