

The Jews, the Holocaust, and the Presence of God

by Ray Comfort

Ray Comfort's sermon addresses the misconceptions surrounding salvation and the importance of preaching the Gospel over seeking emotional experiences of God's presence.

Scripture: John 14:6, Acts 4:12, Romans 10:14, 1 Corinthians 1:21, 2 Timothy 4:2

Topics: "Salvation Through Faith", "Gospel Evangelism"

Description

Ray Comfort addresses the implications of a well-known ex-televangelist's belief that all who died in the Holocaust went to Heaven, questioning if salvation is limited to specific groups or circumstances, and emphasizing the exclusivity of salvation through Jesus Christ alone. He challenges the idea of seeking God's presence as the primary focus of evangelism, highlighting the importance of preaching the Gospel and leading sinners to repentance through the power of God's Word rather than relying on emotional experiences.

Transcript

In January of 2000 a well-known ex-televangelist said on CNN's Larry King Live, "I believe that every person who died in the Holocaust went to Heaven." He was very sincere, and if he was seeking the commendation of the world, he surely got it with that statement. Who in the world wouldn't see what he said as being utterly compassionate? Let's however, take a look at the implications of his heartfelt beliefs. His statement did seem to limit salvation to the Jews who died in the Holocaust, because he added "their blood laid a foundation for the nation of Israel." If the slaughtered Jews made it to Heaven, did the many Gypsies that died in the holocaust also obtain eternal salvation? If his statement does include gentiles, is the salvation he spoke of limited to those who died at the hands of Nazis? Did the many Frenchmen who met their death at the hands of cruel Nazis go to Heaven also?

Perhaps he was saying that the death of Jesus on the Cross covered all humanity, and that all will eventually be saved--something called "Universalism." That means that salvation will also come to Hitler and the Nazis that killed the Jews. However, I doubt if he was saying that. Such a statement would have brought the scorn of his Jewish host, and of the world whose compassion has definite limits.

If pressed, he probably didn't mean that solely Jews in the camps went to Heaven, because that smacks of racism. He was more than likely saying that those who died were saved because their death came

about in such tragic circumstances. That then means that Jesus was lying when He said, "I am the way the truth and the life, no man comes to the Father but by Me." There is another way to Heaven--death in a Nazi concentration camp. Does that mean that the many Jews who died under Communism went to Heaven? Or is salvation limited to German concentration camps?

If their salvation came because of the grim circumstances surrounding their death, does a Jew therefore enter Heaven after suffering for hours and then dying in a car wreck . . . if he was killed by a drunk driver who happened to be German? Bear in mind that his suffering may have been much greater than someone who died in minutes in a Nazi gas chamber.

Many of the unsaved think that we can merit entrance into Heaven by our own suffering. Their error was confirmed on Larry King Live by the sincere, compassionate man of God. They may now disregard "Neither is there salvation in any other. There is no other Name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." They can now save themselves by the means of their own death . . . if they suffer enough.

The ex-televangelist was concerned that his indiscretions of the 80's brought discredit to the Kingdom of God. However, those actions fade into history compared to the damage done by saying that there is another means of salvation outside of Jesus Christ, on a program watched by untold millions around the world. Who on earth needs to repent and trust in Jesus, if millions entered the Kingdom without being born again? No one.

The Presence of God

Some ministries exist solely to correct the doctrines of those they consider who don't conform to what they believe the Word of God teaches. I don't qualify for that club. Other than the essentials of salvation, there are many things in the Word of God about which I still haven't formed an opinion. However, when it comes to evangelism I do have some convictions. I believe in biblical evangelism. It concerns me when I hear of Christians who crave "the presence of God." Nothing else matters but what they perceive to be His presence. They believe that the world will be reached when we are able to bring down the manifest presence of God. It sounds good, but is it biblical? Is it New Testament evangelism? Did the disciples (after the Day of Pentecost) bring down the presence of God into a building and wait for the world to come and see what was happening. Or did they take the Gospel to sinners?

The same people who preach the presence of God speak of masses of sinners falling down under conviction of sin. They cite ministries such as Finney and John Wesley to justify that they did so because they sensed God's holiness. But I believe that people broke because of what these men preached. It was the knowledge of sin that came via the Law that made them fall down with a sense of their sinfulness. I may be wrong, but why would God tell us that He has "chosen the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," ask "How will they hear without a preacher?" then do something different from what He has said in His Word?

It would be an unspeakable blessing if the presence of God fell on this sinful world, but I would like to see it happen in the open air, rather than be confined to a building filled with Christians. I would like sinners to be converted by the power of the Gospel, rather than have them feel something that is said to be the presence of God. There have been times that I have felt unspeakable joy in the midst of God's people during worship. I have also felt unspeakable joy with the roar of a crowd during a football game. I have learned not to live by what I feel, but by the Word of God.

Sadly, the quality of converts who come through the door of feeling the presence of God, produces the type of people who say that there is another way of salvation outside of the Savior. The doctrine they preach is as shallow as the doctrine they came in on.

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