

DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE FREE OFFER OF THE GOSPEL?

By Mike McInnis

The answer to this question is sure to raise the hackles of those who have never pondered the full meaning of what they are generally asking. The simple answer is that the scriptures do not speak of the gospel being "offered" as if it had been put on sale or set forth for the passersby to handle and taste and see if it is to their liking. For one to consider the gospel as an offer to be accepted or rejected is either to misunderstand the condition man is in by nature or to disregard the scriptural teaching of the operation of the SPIRIT of GOD in quickening dead sinners and drawing them irresistibly and inevitably to believe it. The gospel is not an offer but it is a declaration of what JESUS CHRIST has done to save sinners. There is no "offer" involved in the preaching of it, it is in no way contingent upon anything but the shed blood and absolute righteousness of JESUS CHRIST the LORD of glory.

A thorough study of the scripture reveals that HE came in to the world for a particular purpose which was revealed to Joseph, in Matthew's gospel, *"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."* (Mat 1:21) He was not told that JESUS would "offer" to save HIS people, try to save HIS people, or even hope to save HIS people. He that is, to rest in the hope that HE has given.

The gospel is a continual word of reconciliation whereby the believing sons of GOD are reminded that HE has indeed forgiven them, and they can find comfort in this hope which HE has given them.

All of this is the operation of grace wrought in HIS own children by the work of HIS SPIRIT and involves no "offers", "invitations" or "trial basis".

Does this mean then that we are unconcerned for the lost estate of men in general or that we do not care for them? No, but we are not so presumptuous as to think that we have a remedy which GOD HIMSELF has not been pleased to apply. We are indeed moved for our fellow men even as the apostle Paul was for the nation of his birth when he said, *"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:"* (Rom 9:1-3) We cannot help but weep for our children and grandchildren, but we know of no other to whom we can apply for mercy than to HIM who alone is able to melt the heart of stone and grant repentance, to open the eyes of the blind and give the dead new life in CHRIST JESUS. Some seem to imagine that their mercy is wider than God's but I think they are deceived.

We are made in all situations to fall upon our faces and confess as Peter did, *"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."* (John 6:68)

**In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,
And stopped my wild career.
I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed his languid eyes on me,
As near his cross I stood.
Sure never till my latest breath
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with his death,
Though not a word he spoke.
My conscience felt and owned the guilt,**

**And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins his blood had spilt,
And helped to nail him there.
A second look he gave, which said,
"I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom paid;
I die that thou may'st live."**

— John Newton