

## **The Lord Jesus Christ: Persona Non Grata Of The 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

by Keith Keyser

*“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.” John 16:1-3*

Much to the consternation of secular elites, spiritual beliefs continue to thrive in many parts of the world. But then again, not all spiritual ideas are equal. The Bible cautions us: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1.) Just because something emanates from the spiritual world does not automatically ensure that it is from God. Satan is an enemy of human souls who is able to transform himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14.) Sometimes this diabolical deceiver walks in the halls of tyrannical and oppressive powers, sowing discord, violence, and pain. Just as often, however, this traducer is found in temples, churches, synagogues, and mosques, whispering doctrines of demons into the itching ears of religious men and women (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:3.) Everything must be tested in accordance with the Spirit of truth who has revealed His will in the Holy Scriptures (1 Thes. 5:21.)

### **Hirelings Versus The Good Shepherd**

It is astonishing to see the acclaim that is given to some religious leaders in our world today. The Dali Lama, the Pope, and other high level clerics are feted, praised, and consulted by celebrities, politicians, and academics. This world's treatment of Jesus Christ stands in marked contrast to how these religious frauds are received. They are lauded, He was reviled. They preside over great material resources, He had no settled dwelling place, maintaining that, “foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head” (Mat. 8:20.) They are sought out by the princes of this world, He was delivered up for crucifixion by them (1 Cor. 2:8.) Their opinions are carefully analyzed in the halls of academia, yet His Word continues to be ridiculed and excluded from centers of learning and power. In short, this world loves these men because they are part of the same human-exalting, God-denying system (1 John 2:15-16.) They represent idolatry and falsehood; conversely Christ represents His own unshakeable kingdom, which is based upon the truth and accurately reveals the true character of God the Father (Mat. 11:27; John 18:36-37; Heb. 12:28.)

### **The World Loving Its Own**

It should not surprise genuine Christians that this world celebrates all sorts of immoral and perverse individuals. At the same time they reject those whose lives have been transformed by the unparalleled grace of God. Tolerance is the word of the hour and they will tolerate just about any absurd lifestyle or belief system, provided that it does not demand allegiance to the Lord Jesus. Intolerance is only permissible when it comes to Christian living and the preaching of the Word of God. One can speak about ethics, morality, improving the world, saving the environment, stopping war, and many other good causes, and they will find that they are not criticized for doing so (they may even win the Nobel prize!) But let one stand up and say the Lord Jesus Christ is God and is the only way to heaven, and one will be vilified and reckoned to be deluded. The true Gospel asserts that one cannot have eternal life apart from Him. It beseeches people to forsake their religion, their supposed good deeds, and throw themselves upon the mercy of the God who gave His Son to die on the cross; thereby He provided the right redemption price to save people from their sin and the judgment that they deserve. If they receive Christ they will escape an eternal hell and gain life which is of such superior quality that it gives spiritual freedom to serve God as one ought, as well as the assurance of a place in the Father's house for

all the endless ages to come. Such a beautiful message about an Altogether Lovely Savior is repudiated by this world. Furthermore, the notion that one can only be saved by the grace of God in Christ and His sacrifice – all of which is vouchsafed by His historic physical resurrection – is thoroughly ridiculed by modern people. Like their Master, Christians are held up to scorn and opprobrium by the religious and irreligious alike. Dear believer, get used to it, you are not going to win any popularity contests down here – not at least if you are faithful to the Lord who called you (Gal. 6:14.)

Thankfully, sinful humanity does not have the last word on the Lord Jesus and His prospects in this world. The Bible affirms that He is coming again to rule and reign for a thousand years (Rev. 20.) When He has put all enemies under His feet He will bring in His eternal kingdom wherein dwells righteousness in its absolute fullness. The opposition and hatred of this world notwithstanding, the Lord Jesus shall be exalted as King of kings and Lord of lords and God will be all in all (Rev. 19:16; 1 Cor. 15:25, 28.) What is more, according to His grace, His saints who suffer with Him now will reign with Him then (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:3-12.)

*Who shall condemn us now?  
Since Christ has died, and risen, and gone above,  
For us to plead at the right hand of Love,  
Who shall condemn us now?*

*'Tis God that justifies!  
Who shall recall the pardon or the grace,  
Or who the broken chain of guilt replace?  
'Tis God that justifies!*

*The victory is ours!  
For us in might came forth the Mighty One;  
For us He fought the fight, the triumph won ---  
The victory is ours!<sup>1</sup>*

1 Horatius Bonar, "Blessed be God Our God," Found here: <http://stempublishing.com/hymns/ss/89> Accessed on 7/20/11.