

Speaker: John Wright

Reading: Acts Ch 17 v 1-9
1 Thess Ch 1 v 9-10

“I once was a stranger to grace and to God”

This hymn was written by a man who came from Dundee. He was a sick man, named Robert Murray McCheyne, who died before he was 30.

We can all say we were once strangers to grace and to God, but the Holy Spirit can work in our hearts and we can turn to Jehovah Tsidkenu (“The Lord our Righteousness”).

In Acts 17, we have the record of Paul at Thessalonica. He preached a message concerning Jesus, showing that He was the Christ.

“Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matt 1:21).

The Bible has one message concerning one Saviour. Peter preached “Neither is there salvation in any other” (Acts 4:12).

The Lord Jesus Christ said “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)

Men will say that in the same way as “Many rivers lead to the sea”, so “Many roads lead to God”. This is not what the Bible says, so do not believe it.

Paul preached Christ and the resurrection.

Paul writes to the Thessalonians about those “who turned to God from idols”. Paul preached about a “living and true God”. We have a living Saviour and turning to God proof of true faith in Him.

Conversion means a change of direction. It is still true today that we have to turn to God from the idols of our life. We may not worship images, but an idol is anything that takes priority over God in our lives.

We must decide to “serve the living and true God” even Christ Jesus.

The Lord is looking for genuine conversion, not just profession “ This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.” (John 6:29), - Why? Because “The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (1 John 4:14).

Our God lives . The Lord was dead once but He lives now and for ever. The true God is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. In other religions their prophets and Gods are all dead. We preach a living Saviour.

False Gods will only bring false prospects and privileges.

Philip asked the Ethiopian, “Do you understand what you are reading?” (Acts 8:30). The result was that he was saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and accepting Him as Saviour.

Writing to the Galatians, Paul asks if they were saved” by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” (Gal 3:2). No one has ever been justified or saved by law (Gal 3:11).

Writing to the Ephesians, Paul reminds them, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph 2:9)

Writing to the Philippians, he reminds them “our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil 3:20)

Writing to Titus, he speaks of “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Tit 2:13)

The Lord is coming for his own to “Deliver from the wrath to come” (1 Thes 1:10)

The day of wrath will come and “every eye shall see him” (Rev 1:17).

Only the Gospel can save the sinner. For those who believe, there is a glorious future waiting for them with His Son from heaven.

There is another future for those who don't believe, a solemn future under the judgment of God.