

AN ANCIENT AND MODERN DAY DILEMMA

“But do not think that I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?” (Jn. 5:45 - 47).

What’s going on here? The people set their hopes on Moses but at the same time didn’t believe him. How do we explain this? How is it possible to hope in someone you don’t believe? Perhaps it is the same dilemma we face today when people claim to have hope in the Bible but never read it. Then if they do read it they don’t believe what it teaches.

Moses was crystal clear in teaching the children of Israel. **“If”** they obeyed God and fully kept His covenant, **“then”** they would become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. **“Then”** they would become a treasured possession to the Lord (Ex. 19:3 - 6). If they did not obey the Lord, however, or fully keep His covenant, then a myriad of curses would come upon them and they would be scattered from one end of the earth to the other (Deut. 28:15 - 68).

The Lord Himself wanted the people to trust Moses. He said: **“I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so that the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you” (Ex. 19:9)**. Isn’t that amazing. They put their trust in Moses but didn’t believe what he told them! We are specifically told that they didn’t enter into the Promised Land because of unbelief (Heb. 4:2). Jesus said that if they believed Moses they would believe Him for Moses wrote about Him. Deut. 18:15- 19 immediately comes to mind. Peter summarized this passage when preaching in Jerusalem. **“For Moses said, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people’” (Acts 3:22, 23)**.

Jesus and Moses were alike! The Unity Teacher (Oct. 16, 2012) lists 40 similarities between Moses and Jesus. It is sufficient for this brief article, however, to merely mention that both were mediators. Both delivered the people of God. And, as you also know, both spoke for God. The Hebrews who didn’t believe Moses didn’t enter in, and today those who do not listen to “everything” Jesus said will also be completely cut off from among the people.

John H. Sammis wrote the hymn “Trust and obey”. Both are essential to salvation. The late Chuck Colson said that gangster Mikey Cohen repeated the sinner’s prayer and was happy to trust in Jesus for salvation but had no intentions of obeying Him. Cohen was supposed to have said: “You never told me I had to give up my career. You never told me that I had to give up my friends. There are Christian movie stars, Christian athletes, Christian businessmen. So what’s the matter with being a Christian gangster? If I have to give up all that—if that’s Christianity—count me out.”

Stuart Hamblen was different. He not only trusted Jesus, but also obeyed Him. Stuart was a womanizing drunk on a cowboy radio star in Los Angeles. When he trusted Christ, however, his life immediately changed. He stopped his wild ways and was even fired from his popular radio show because he wouldn’t run a beer commercial. John Wayne was his drinking buddy and asked how it was so easy for him to give up drinking? Stuart replied: “It’s no secret what God can do”. Wayne said that was a catchy phrase and suggested that he write a song about it. He did! Hamblen sat down at the piano and composed the entire song in only 17 minutes. It was the first song to be number one in all three categories of Gospel, Country, and Pop Ballad.

Not everyone who calls Jesus Lord will be saved, only those who “do” what Jesus says to do. On Judgment Day Jesus will say to many that He never knew them (Matt. 7:21 - 23). If you truly trust in Jesus, don’t make Him have to condemn you!