The World's Most Unwanted Man

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The world's most unwanted man is alive today! He is not dead. In fact, He is very active in our times. He even has family here in New York City. Just the other day I spent hours with Him concerning this message! Many of you also know Him. Without a doubt the world's most unwanted man is Jesus, Son of the Living God!

In Moscow’s Red Square there are gigantic pictures of Lenin, Stalin, and other Communist leaders - all draped in red velvet. They ought to hang another picture in Red Square: a picture of Jesus Christ - draped in black sackcloth - with these words beneath it "The Most Unwanted Man in Russia - Jesus!" If you go to England to the halls of Parliament or to the great English cathedrals, you'll see all the pictures of past kings and queens. Some were loved; some were hated. But there, too, a picture is missing. There ought to be hung, where all Englishmen could see it, a huge picture of Jesus, with the caption: "England's Most Unwanted Man!" Or go to Washington, D.C., our nation's capital, and look at all the portraits of past Presidents on Capitol Hill, in the halls of Congress. See the memorials to Lincoln and Washington. There ought to be a special monument built with nothing in it but a picture of Jesus and these words: "This Man Is the True Father of America! He Planted, Watered, and Prospered It! But Today He Is This Society's Most Unwanted Man!"

Let's go a step further into the libraries and classrooms of almost any seminary in America. Listen to the godless, Christ-hating theologians - look at the books of higher criticism, how they delight in robbing and destroying faith. Or walk into the great cathedrals and look at the stained-glass windows with Jesus pictured on almost all of them - then hear their so-called gospel! It is not the real Jesus they preach, but another. Why won't they be honest? They ought to put a bronze plaque under those stained-glass pictures of Jesus that reads, "Unwanted!"

Jesus was born a Jew, but the Jews did not want Him - nor do they now. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not” (John 1:11). In all their synagogues they studied diligently about His coming! Priests and scribes could quote Isaiah 53. They thought they knew where he would be born and how to recognize Him. They said they lived for the day of His coming - just as the Jew today looks for his Messiah. I read of the murderous plots of the priests and religious leaders and say, "How can they plan to murder Christ, or even Lazarus, when so jealous for the Law that says, "Thou shalt not kill?" Where could such hatred for Jesus come from if not directly from hell? How can the modern-day Jew hate Jesus so much? He is the Son of David - He loved Israel - He came to fulfill all their laws. His heart was set on Jerusalem. He was Jewish Himself and a prophet just like Moses. So why do their eyes blaze with anger and rejection at the mention of His name? Today Jesus probably could not get a visa to Israel! It is likely He would be denied citizenship. They would stamp on his passport "Unwanted!" Indeed, His own received Him not.

We know all too well that the secular world doesn't want Him. Jesus is the song of drunks. Only in America is the name of Jesus so profaned. In Russia or China (They curse their ancestors and fallen gods or leaders!). But Americans curse Christ. Roman soldiers mocked Him by putting a crown of thorns on His head. Now this nation mocks Him with great sophistication: movie producers with their best talent and with millions of dollars produce movies about Jesus that are ingenious mockery - mocking His divinity and robbing Him of His Godhead.

Here on Broadway, Jesus is surely the most unwanted man of all. La Cage aux Folles with its homosexual theme,
was a challenge to Jesus with a message saying, "This is our territory! We don't want your interference." Times Square Church, right in the middle of Satan's seat (in his national headquarters), is the biggest threat to his kingdom that Broadway has ever had! Hell is enraged because the devil knows a multitude will be wanting to run to Jesus. Even in the theater district, with the plague of AIDS and all the emptiness, Jesus has come to Broadway. There is now a church planted by Him with a people whose cry is, "We want Him! We will have Jesus!" We are saying to New York City, to the drug pushers, to the pornographers, to the movie and Broadway producers, and to the powers that rule: "You may not want Him, but you can't keep Him out!" How the angels must rejoice to behold in the middle of America's largest city - in the heart of its crime and sin and its hatred for Jesus - hundreds now gathering in the name of the Lord. How they must cry for joy, "They want our Lord! They want Him!"

Even the "religious world" doesn't want Him. I believe Jesus is most unwanted by backslidden, corrupt church leaders, by liberal church organizations, and by compromising, lust-ridden Christians. There is a Jesus-idolatry in religion today that is as real and as ugly as the idolatry of Baal and all the other idols of ancient Israel. They have forsaken the real Jesus of holiness, the Cross, repentance, and separation and have carved in their imaginations another Jesus. Their Jesus is just like them - condoning their sins with nothing but words of brotherhood, love, and unity. They have put the name of Jesus on a very corrupt and evil image of their own making. It is not Christ's gospel and it's not the real Jesus. They use the right terms, but they do not worship the Jesus we know. Paul warned of those "that... preach another Jesus... another spirit... another gospel..." (2 Corinthians 11:4).

I can't name a single major "Christian" record company that really wants Jesus. They have become Wall Street-type money machines, using the name of Jesus as a sales gimmick! We get upset by movies like The Last Temptation of Christ which mock our Lord; but even worse are these "Christian" record producers and book publishers who crank out rock and punk. They are manipulators and modern-day money-changers. In fact, there is nothing religious about it at all. New Age music and humanistic theology are all creeping into the Christian bookstores. Some of these stores are becoming the biggest pushers of ungodly trash in America. Their record sections come right out of hell and most of the books are pulp, saying nothing! It's all business. We don't need to complain about Jewish businessmen profiting off Jesus' name at Easter and Christmas. Evangelicals profit on His name 365 days a year! Jesus is not wanted by these hucksters. It's the dollar they want! Thank God there are some exceptions, some bookstores that refuse to compromise.

You say, "Oh, but thank God for our church. We want Him - we haven't made Him unwanted. We've welcomed Jesus and desired Him with all our hearts!" But think of that terrible moment when most of the Lord's disciples went back and followed Him no more because the Word was too hard. Jesus turned to His disciples, to the twelve, and asked, "Will you go also?" Doesn't it warm your heart to hear Peter say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68)? Yet in the last hour even the twelve "all forsook him and fled" (Mark 14:50). Isaiah said, "He is despised and rejected... we hid as it were our faces from him.... All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way..." (Isaiah 53:3,5). The prophet uses the term "we." We despised Him. We rejected Him. We hid our faces from Him. We all went our own way. Think of the multitudes of backsliders, of those who once walked with Him. They are now hiding from Him and don't want to be in His presence. Some of you reading this walked away and have gone your own way. You turned on Jesus and even now you don't want Him.

My message here is really about the rejection Jesus suffers from those who claim to want Him the most. Ask most anyone calling himself a Christian these questions: "Do you want Jesus? Do you feel your need of Him? Do you desire to know Him better?" Nearly all of them would answer, "Yes, I really do want Him." Let me explain what I mean by "wanting Jesus." I am speaking of a consuming desire - a yearning to let Him be all to you. "...The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early..." (Isaiah 26:8-9). The prophet is speaking of a longing and a hungering after Him - even in the middle of the night! It means seeking after Him with a crying, yearning heart. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to taste... I am sick of [faint for] love... My beloved is mine, and I am his... By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth..." (Song of Solomon 2:2,5,16 and 3:1). This is wanting Jesus! He consumes the thoughts night and day. He becomes the very meaning of life.

Let's look at this matter of loving Jesus and endeavor to find out how much we really want Him.

You Really Don't Want Jesus If You Want Someone or Something Else More Than Him!

"If... thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 4:29). Hell will be full of people who will be saying all through eternity, "But I really did want Jesus. Deep in my heart, I needed Him!" And they won't be lying; they really did have a desire for Jesus. But there was
always someone or something else they wanted more. Are you hooked on someone or something? Is there some kind of evil thing that has your heart? We must learn that Jesus is a jealous lover. He will not allow another love to corrupt our love for Him.

The word that best describes American culture today is "unfaithfulness." It has corrupted even the ministry. There is a new kind of marriage arrangement in America today called "open marriage." They that practice it marry and live together, setting up housekeeping. But each is allowed to have other lovers and are free to date and vacation with others - then come back together as they choose! No wonder cheating has become such an epidemic!

A minister friend told me of the agony of finding out his wife was cheating on him. There were strange phone calls and lurid love-letters found, addressed to her from another man. Then there were her lies, excuses, and trips that kept her away for days at a time. Finally one day she came into his office and said, "I don't want you anymore. I want a divorce. I'm in love with another man in the church. I don't want the ministry - I respect you and will love you in my way - but I'm leaving!" He was shocked, and now two years later he is still not over losing her. Right now, some of you reading this may be caught in this same web of infidelity. You may be cheating with someone on the job or in the church or with a family friend - and your heart is divided. You want out of your marriage.

Jesus knows what it is like to be cheated on! He has been patient and long-suffering as all through history His beloved Israel has been unfaithful to Him, committing spiritual adultery over and over again. The heart of Jesus yearns for a faithful bride. How He longs for a people who will have eyes only for Him with no other love coming between. What is it that brings joy to a wife or husband? It is faithfulness - the ability to look into each other's eyes and see trust. No lies! No secrets! No strangeness! So it is with our relationship with Jesus. "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil" (Proverbs 31:10-11). Can Jesus look into our hearts and safely trust us?

I know an evangelistic sisterhood that spends hours just "loving Jesus." They repent for the unfaithfulness of His cheating bride. They try to fill His aching heart - to fill up the lack of love - they speak of "His hurt." How true it is that Jesus must hurt when today so few love Him with all their being! My heart has been breaking; and through tears I pray, "Oh, Jesus! How unfaithful I've been to You over the years! How often the things of this world took my heart! I've chased after cars, antiques, sports. There have been times of loving the praises of men, of wanting things, and giving my time to these other concerns." The Word of God says, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

Jesus asked a very disturbing question: "...When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). The word "faith" in Greek means "reliance upon and faithfulness to." To Him! He prophesied a great falling away; that even His elect would be greatly tempted. So many will fail and chase after this world in lust and pleasure. My cry is, "Oh, Lord, draw me to Yourself. Let me be one whom You can trust in. Let me love You without reservation. Give me a pure, holy, unmixed love for You!"

How Can You Say You Want Him, Yet Spend So Little Time With Him?

Why did Jesus say, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:6)? It is because the Lord desires intimacy. He wants to be shut up alone with the love of His heart! We have so many who will pray, who never miss a prayer meeting. They will go to any home meeting - and certainly it is scriptural for two or three to agree together in prayer. But there will come a tug from the Lord and He will whisper, "Come alone - shut the door - let it be just the two of us." Secret, closet prayer is the most intimate thing you can share with your Lord. If you don't have this kind of relationship, you don't really know Him.

Without intimacy with Jesus, even your good works can become evil: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:22-23). Now any one of you who prophesy, who cast out demons, as I have, had better not say, "This is not meant for me!" What is Jesus saying? The key is "I don't know you." There's been no intimacy; someone is doing an awful lot in His name without really knowing Him. This means that we can become so wrapped up in doing good, in programs, in helping others that we lose touch with Jesus. We end up doing things in His name, but those things become evil because they are done in the power of self.

When we do spend time alone with Him, it is mostly for our benefit seldom for His. Do we ever think of His needs? Jesus became man with all man's needs, including the need for friendship and love. He felt rejection like we do,
having never laid aside His humanity. Jesus is God and still man. Being touched by the feeling of our infirmities means he still experiences the hurts and needs of a man. I recently thought, "Lord, did You ever ask when on earth, does anyone love Me simply for Myself - as Jesus, the man?" Look at the multitudes that pressed Him on all sides, crying out for help, for mercy, for sight, for healing, for food, for signs and wonders. He saw them as sheep having no shepherd: He heard their cries and wept. But so few came asking nothing - so few came just to love Him!

There was a sinner, a lost woman, who came just to give to Him: "And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.... And he [Jesus] turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment" (Luke 7:37-38, 44-46).

Have you ever washed His feet with your tears? Have you come to Him asking nothing for yourself or your ministry or your family - but simply to pour out on Him a gift of incense, an alabaster box of love and worship? Listen to His heart cry: "Thou gavest me no kiss! No water for my tired feet! But she did this for me!" In Matthew, Chapter 26, another woman came to Jesus and poured perfume on His head as He sat eating. The disciples saw it and said with indignation, "To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor" (verses 8-9). We are just like those disciples: we think it's wasted time to be alone, ministering to His needs when so many poor, suffering people need our time and prayer petitions. Jesus said, "Why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always" (verses 10-11).

His own disciples could not stand with Him in His hour of need - not even one hour! He had told them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me" (verse 38). What He was really saying to them was this: "I'm hurting! I need you now! This is My hour: now I desire your love and support!" But He found them sleeping: "What could ye not watch with me one hour?" (verse 40). All He was asking for was one hour - one hour focused on His need - one hour of love from them when He was suffering! We say today to ourselves, "He is God! He has no needs - He doesn't hurt - He no longer weeps. What can I possibly give Him?" If He has no needs now - if He is just some unfeeling God outside our world - then why is He still standing at the door knocking? Why does He still have a need to come in and sup with us? (See Revelation 3:20) Why does He still say to Peter three times after His resurrection, "Lovedst thou me?" He clearly still needed to be loved! "Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." (Psalm 69:20).

We Cannot Truly Love Him Until We Allow Him to Be All He Promised to Be!

I stood at an altar years ago beside my wife Gwen and heard my father (who was the minister) ask Gwen, "Will you accept David to be your lawful husband?" We exchanged vows, each saying, "I will" Gwen has loved me in a thousand ways, but never better, never more, than when she lets me be the man of the house. It's taken a while for her to step aside and let me do the "husband" things - especially since I'm really not very mechanical! But she's learned to tactfully encourage me to fulfill this role. God has intended for a husband and wife to reflect His relationship with us, His bride: "For thy Maker is thine husband..." (Isaiah 54:5). We are "a bride adorned for her husband" (Revelation 21:2). But Jesus is not like any earthly husband. When He says, "I will," He has all power and glory to see it done! You can find our Lord's vows to His beloved all through His Word.

Our love for Him appropriates it, rests on it, and lets Jesus be God to us. Here are some of the vows He has made to all who have pledged their love and faithfulness to Him: "...I will bear; even I will carry... you (Isaiah 46:4). Can a woman forget her child... yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee" Isaiah 49:15 He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). "I... will heal him... and restore comforts unto him..." (Isaiah 57:18). "...Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24). For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

Jesus is our righteousness, our health, our deliverance, our rock of salvation, our daily bread, our comfort, our provider, our strong arm, our defense, our light, our joy, our peace - our everything in time of need! Let Him be God to you - believe every vow and rest on it. Don't fret and don't try to work things out yourself. Prove to Him you will trust His power!
You cannot love Him better than by simply letting Him be everything to you. Believe and rest in His vows to keep you, to supply all your needs, to stick with you through all your ups and downs, and to never leave or forsake you. Love is letting Him truly be Lord to you.

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