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Commandment Accomplished Matthew 24:14 by Elder Keith Ellis

By removing Matthew chapter twenty-four from its proper time context we deceive ourselves as to what we should really be doing in the kingdom of God. Yet taking this chapter and futurizing it has tremendous monetary possibilities and we cannot expect this ungodly practice to soon cease. This doctrine and practice denies God's power and grace. Therefore, for the reader who is not acquainted with the Bible doctrine of grace, or the reader who thinks he is, I find it necessary to briefly discuss a few aspects of this doctrine in the following section. Please be patient with me at this juncture. The following verse is an important one and should be discussed at length.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Matthew 24:14

He says, "*this gospel*" shall be preached in all the world. It is the good news of the kingdom which was to be proclaimed. Primitive Baptists are the only ones I know of who preach "*this gospel*." Everyone else takes maximum advantage of the ignorance of the population in order to continue to oil their man made mission machine.

From the onset I want to state I believe it is of vital importance to the existence of the church that the gospel be preached. Others also believe it is of vital importance. Yet upon examination it will be discovered that the purpose or the reason why many think it is important to preach the gospel varies from group to group. It does not matter what our personal opinion may be on what the purpose of the gospel is. What really matters is what God's word has to say about it! Let me quote two texts which should establish a good understanding for us of what the purpose of the gospel is.

"...And I will give you pastors according to mine own heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."

Jeremiah 3:15

This text is clearly a prophecy of the time when the law will be superseded by grace. This is evident by the statement he makes in the verse which follows (verse 16) where He says the Ark of the Covenant shall be remembered no more. During the time when the gospel of grace was to first be preached, beginning with John the Baptist, we see the prophecy of Jeremiah to begin to come to pass. God said he would feed his people with knowledge and understanding.

After Jesus was resurrected from the dead, he appeared unto Peter and other disciples who had gone fishing. He asked them had they caught any fish and tells them to cast their net on the right side of the ship. They caught a multitude of fish when they had followed the

directions of The Lord. After recognizing it was The Lord, Peter jumped from the ship naked and made his way unto Jesus. Once the disciples had made their way to land Jesus already had a fire going and fish thereon. And he tells His disciples....

“Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine...”
John 21:12

This was not an invitation to have eternal life. It was an invitation to partake of that which sustains the natural life which God has given us all. This is highly figurative of the purpose of the gospel. Its purpose is to sustain the spiritual life which God has freely given by and through His grace. The message is clear from the continued context. Jesus tells Peter, who had previously denied The Lord three times to *feed his lambs* and to *feed his sheep*. (See John 21:15-17) Jesus emphasizes the importance of this by repeating it three times. If we love The Lord, we are to feed His lambs and sheep.

I come from a place where people like to eat. There are many good restaurants in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. I do not consider myself to be very smart about some things, but there is one thing I have noticed. There is not a single restaurant in the area which caters to dead people. Food is of no benefit to the dead whatsoever. Food sustains life. The gospel is food. Sheep food. It does not make or create sheep; it feeds them that they may grow in knowledge and in grace. (See Luke 1:76-77, Philippians 1:9, Colossians 1:9-10, 1 Corinthians 15:34, 2 Corinthians 2:14, 2 Peter 3:18)

When Paul speaks to Timothy he tells him the things for which the scripture is profitable. There is no mention of the scriptures giving or creating spiritual life. (See 2 Timothy 3:15-17) Scriptures which **seem** to teach eternal salvation comes through the preaching of the word must be rightly divided and become consistent with the whole of God’s word. Usually people fail to understand the difference between the Living Word, (Jesus Christ) and the written word. (See John 1:1-2, and 14, 1 John 1:1-3) When this happens confusion is the result and many children of God lose a great degree of the blessings of God which could be theirs in this life time. Hosea says, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...” (Hosea 4:6) They are not destroyed eternally, but in a temporal manner they are. A parallel verse to this one can be found in Matthew chapter seven. Here Jesus speaks of those who walk in the broad way which leads to destruction. (See Matthew 7:13) Again this is not eternal destruction, but rather of a temporal nature. It is like the admonitions given by Moses to the children of Israel. If they choose to walk in God’s way they would **prolong their days upon the land**. If not, they would be cut off.

Now how can someone be expected to have strength if they are not fed? If God’s children are fed with knowledge and understanding the result will be people who walk close to The Lord. They will be found walking in the strait and narrow way. (See Matthew 7:14) Yet the sad thing which we see happening everywhere today is that God’s people are being force fed with junk food. (False doctrine) Those Twinkies, Ho Ho’s and Ding Dongs may offer some temporary satisfaction, but keep it up for a while and the fat will begin to constrict the blood vessels or arteries to the heart. The end result will either be a heart attack or emergency bypass surgery. Taking in or swallowing false doctrine can also damage the heart. This type of

junk food is pleasing at first (to the flesh) yet it deprives the spirit man the proper nourishment it needs to grow in knowledge (true knowledge) and in grace. Eating junk food leaves us in ignorance.

The apostle Paul, while on Mars' hill declared the knowledge of Jesus Christ to those who worshipped in ignorance. (See Acts 17:23) There are many places in the New Testament where we are told, "*I would not have you ignorant.*" **This is why God sends the gospel. He does not want us to be ignorant.** (See Romans 1:13, 11:25, 1 Corinthians 10:1, 12:1, 1 Thessalonians 4:13) Knowledge of the truth erases ignorance. It also implies responsibility on our part. There is no shame in being ignorant. I am ignorant of many things. I know nothing of rocket science, nuclear physics, medicine or a host of other things. But there is shame in being willingly ignorant, or willfully ignoring the word of God. To him that knows to do good and does not do it shall be beaten with many stripes. But the one who does not know (is ignorant) shall be beaten with few stripes. (See Luke 12:47-48) As the saying goes, with more knowledge comes more responsibility.

God designed the gospel that we may gain knowledge of His workings among men, His commandments and precepts and how He expects us to live beside a world full of sin. The gospel, if rightly divided and preached in power and demonstration of The Spirit provides a well-balanced meal containing the proper nutrients necessary to sustain spiritual life. It also contains medicinal properties. It can either heal the sin sick soul, or it can prick the conscience of an offending sinner.

Proper Bible knowledge can bring salvation. Not for eternity, but it can save us from our ignorance and the many hurts and heartaches which one may experience by walking according to the course of this world. Such an example is found in Romans chapter ten. This chapter speaks of Israel being *ignorant of God's righteousness* and going about to establish their own righteousness. This is the context of this chapter. The conditions placed upon the salvation mentioned in this chapter clearly speak to us to let us know this is not talking of eternal salvation but of deliverance from the ignorance of self-righteousness. Paul plainly says of Israel, "*they have zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.*" (See Romans 10:2-3) This is the message of the gospel. It declares the righteousness of The Lord Jesus Christ. The declaration of this "good news" brings hope and consolation to the weary pilgrim. It does not create sheep. It tells them the good news of what Christ has accomplished for them, the righteousness of Jesus Christ!

So we can easily see the purpose of the gospel is not to populate heaven, but to feed the sheep which God creates. This makes a big difference in how we view life and how we conduct our Christian walk before God.

But the fact of the matter is that Matthew twenty-four verse fourteen saw its completion before AD 70 and before the then present generation passed away. Let's look at another familiar verse to consider in connection with verse fourteen.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Mark 16:15

As in the other text, there was a command to preach **THE** gospel. I placed emphasis on the word '**THE**' because I believe there is only one true gospel. It is **THE GOSPEL** given by The Lord Jesus Christ. Paul warns us about another gospel, which is not another. (See Galatians 1:6-8) In my estimation a large percentage of what folks today claim is the gospel of Christ, is another gospel, setting forth a different Jesus. And we will find THE gospel has been committed to a small remnant of faithful followers.

But Jesus tells the Apostles to preach the gospel in all the world. Research will reveal this meant no more than the Roman Empire. And who were the subjects which were to receive the preaching? He says to preach the gospel to every '*creature*.' Now if we do not constrain the use of the word '*creature*' we will discover the Apostles neglected to preach to dogs and cats and birds and were unfaithful to Christ and His commandment. For the animal kingdom is part of God's creation. Let's qualify just who He is referring to.

"Therefore if any **man** be in Christ, **he** is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

2 Corinthians 5:17

And

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a **new creature**. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Galatians 6:15-16

Only those who have been born of God, who are new creatures in Christ have the ability to receive the gospel message. (See 1 Corinthians 2:9-15) This is the creature which is under consideration in the command given by Christ to the Apostles. And it helps us to understand how the Apostles were able to preach the gospel in all the world (Roman Empire) in less than forty years. The Apostles went under the direction of the Holy Spirit. And wherever they were sent, they found someone prepared of God to receive the gospel message. In some cases there was opposition, yet God always sent the disciples where he had prepared hearts to receive the good news of Jesus. An example of this would be the story of Philip and the Eunuch. The Spirit of God led Philip into the desert where He had prepared the heart of a man returning to Ethiopia from Jerusalem. God will always work on both ends when He directs us to preach the good news of Jesus Christ to any of His children. And at times the Apostles were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to go into certain places. Paul wanted to go into Asia, but the Spirit forbade him.

So the Spirit was always at least one step ahead of the Apostles. For if the Holy Spirit did not regenerate or make a person born again, there is no way they could have believed the gospel message. (see 1 Corinthians 2:14 again) The sown seed would fall by the wayside.

In fact it is impossible for man to reveal Christ or to make God known to an individual. This is the work of God Himself. It is God's responsibility to make sons. It is the Christian churches duty to convert and disciple those whom God first makes sons.

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith The Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know The Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

Hebrews 8:10-11

I hear people say all the time "Others will know The Lord through our efforts." Nothing could be further from the truth. We can teach people who already know The Lord "about The Lord," but we cannot make them to know The Lord. **The knowledge that Jesus is the Christ comes only by direct revelation from God.** This is the rock which Jesus says the gates of hell shall not prevail against. It is divine revelation.

Need more evidence?

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jo-na: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 16:13-17

Notice first of all who men in general thought Christ was. Notice who the disciples think He is. This is important. To understand that Jesus is The Christ, The Son of The Living God is an evidence God has revealed this knowledge directly to you. This knowledge comes in and through the new birth. You embrace or believe the gospel message concerning Christ when you hear it because you are already a child. Not so you can become one. However if a person thinks of Christ as some good person in history, or a prophet only it is evidence that Christ has not been revealed to them. This is the test whereby we are supposed to try the spirits.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:..."

1 John 4:1-2

This verse needs no explanation. Language could not be any simpler. Christ is revealed to man through the new birth, the work of the Holy Spirit, not the gospel. The gospel is the "NEWS" of what Christ has done for them and carries with it special blessings and deliverance's when attended by the power of the Holy Spirit. The gospel brings life and

immortality "*TO LIGHT*." (See 2 Timothy 1:9-10) We are begotten to a life of discipleship through the gospel. To become vital sons of God is solely the work of God, period.

Look at this verse found in Matthew chapter nineteen in response to the disciples amazement after Jesus spoke in response to the rich young ruler;

"When his disciples heard it they were exceedingly amazed, saying, who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is **impossible**; but with God *all things are possible*."

Matthew 19:25-26

Notice they were not just amazed, they were **exceedingly amazed**. The same is true today when you tell people they have no power to save themselves for heaven. They become exceedingly amazed anyone would preach such a thing. Yet we are not to think we deserve a kinder response than Jesus Himself received. If they responded to Him in such a manner, what should we expect? Even in the face of such clear evidence many still refuse to accept the word of God on this matter. Most often they take their position based upon a *half-truth* such as the following example displays.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them believe on his name:..."

John 1:12

This verse is truth. When taken by itself we cannot get the whole story. Do you notice the colon at the end of the verse above? That's OK; lots of people make the same mistake. The colon means the sentence is not finished. If we read on we will find out how those who believed on Christ became sons of God. We also learn in what sense they become sons of God by considering the entire context. By embracing the truths of God brought through Bible knowledge, we, as God's children have the authority (power) to put on Christ and walk in His light. We become manifest sons. God has worked eternal salvation on the inside of us, it is up to us to work it out, or manifest it. . (See Philippians 2:13-14) Look at verse thirteen; it completes the sentence which was begun in verse twelve

"...Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

John 1:13

Amazing how the entire picture comes together for us when we finish reading the verse and keep it in its proper context. Remember when we began this study I stated you should be prepared to embrace the truth. The truth is we are born again not according to our own will. Just as we had no say in choosing our natural parents, the same holds true in the new birth. Regardless of how much we want to deny this truth it will not go away. The Bible will bear it out in a multitude of places. Once we embrace this truth it will help us to see them.

OK, one more before we move on to the next element.

"No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

John 6:44-45

So here we see what the religious world teaches today contradicts what the Bible has to say on the matter. And please do not confuse the statement in verse forty five, "hath heard" to mean hearing the gospel. I refer you to this verse;

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and **now is**, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they hear shall live."

John 5:25

This is how the elect of God experience the new birth, are regenerated or made alive, what ever term you wish to use. Though they are part of the fallen race of Adam, and dead in trespasses and sins, they become alive to the things of the Spirit once the life-giving voice of the Son of God speaks to them. (Ephesians 2:1& 2:8-9) This is the living Word, Christ Himself, not the written, preached word, or Bible.

After this, and only then is such a person a fit subject for *gospel conversion*. Prior to his being born again according to God's will, purpose and timing he cannot and will not be receptive to things of a spiritual nature. Jesus says a corrupt tree (man in a state of nature) cannot bring forth good fruit. (Matthew 7:18) Is acceptance of Christ a good fruit or an evil fruit? If a good fruit, then it came from a good tree. Therefore acceptance of Christ is not the cause the new birth, but rather the effect (*fruit*) of it. This is the 'creature' Jesus refers to in the commission to preach the gospel.

Is it any wonder God was able to guide the Apostles in preaching the gospel to every nation in less than a forty year span to all the world?

So what does all this have to do with the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew twenty-four verse fourteen? It is of vital importance we understand what the purpose of the gospel is. If we don't have a proper understanding, then we will probably have trouble accepting the whole truth concerning this matter. If we think our efforts in preaching the gospel are populating heaven then we have been deceived. This deception makes the one carrying the gospel 'savior' in place of Christ. If by our telling someone about Christ secures their heavenly home, and if by our not telling the same person about Christ denies the same person a home in heaven, we then have become their savior. And if you were a person who really believed he could save someone for heaven, why in God's name would you be spending time reading when you should be saving the lost?

Yet the very doctrine of gospel regeneration denies God's power and ability to save His children. Romans chapter one verse sixteen tells us the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to **everyone that believeth**. It is **not** the power of God to the **unbeliever**. Also the

salvation under consideration here is not eternal salvation. It is conditioned on belief. Belief is a work. Don't believe that? Let's see for ourselves.

"Then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

John 5:28-29

There is a twofold meaning in the above verse. First, belief, or faith within the individual is the work of God. It is the fruit of the Spirit. (See Galatians 5:22) The ability to believe on Christ comes from God only. God has dealt to every man the measure of faith. (See Romans 12:3) Secondly, we are told, faith (belief) without works is dead. If Jesus tells us the work of God is for us to believe on the one whom God hath sent we can clearly see that belief is a work. The only works which can earn us heaven and immortal glory are the finished works of Jesus Christ, not our own. The works of man cannot earn man eternal salvation because they are inconsistent with the doctrine of grace and contrary to the finished work of Jesus. (See Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 11:5-6, Titus 3:4-5, 2 Timothy 1:9, John 19:30)

Salvation for heaven and immortal glory is not a system of chance. It is sure for all those whom God chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. These, and these only he predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ (See Ephesians 1:4-11, Romans 8:29-31, 2 Timothy 1:9) Our heavenly home has been secured by Jesus Christ. Matthew says;

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."

Matthew 1:21

He **shall** save **his** people from their sins. Not might save them, or make it possible for them to be saved, or give them a chance to be saved. But He actually saved them by redeeming them with His own precious blood. This blood offering satisfied the justice of God on behalf of the elect of God. Our sin debt has been wiped out and will no more be charged against us.

A class action law suit involves persons who all held something in common. For instance, there is a big class action law suit against the manufacturers of asbestos. Every person who has ever been exposed to asbestos will be entitled to a portion of the settlement. It is certain many of the members of this class who are entitled to some money may never hear about the law suit or the money settlement. Some have died due to exposure and never received any of the benefits of the law suit here in this world. The same is true with God's children. Many of God's elect may never hear the good *news* of the gospel. But this will not change the fact Jesus has absolved their sin debt. Yet and if we reach them with the gospel they can enjoy the benefits of it **NOW**. The assurance to know what Jesus has done for us; to give us a good hope through grace. To help us understand the groaning's of the Spirit of God we have within us. We save ourselves from ignorance. And as Peter stated, we save ourselves from this untoward generation. (See Acts 2:40) We learn how to walk before God in this life time. This is what **the** gospel does when attended by the Holy Spirit.

Again, because of what Jesus did for us, we, at some point in our lives will be regenerated and made alive to the Spirit of God. It may be like John the Baptist who in his mother's womb leaped for joy by the Holy Ghost. Or it may happen like it did with the thief on the cross, who became convicted Jesus was the Christ in his dying hour. God works the new birth according to His own timing, not ours.

A person who is in the condition as described above as being born again is heaven bound. Period. Now he is a candidate for conversion. The likelihood of his receiving the good news concerning what Jesus has done for him is very great. But it is not absolutely certain. Even though he may have been born again, he may refuse to be obedient to the gospel message. But the chastening rod of God will be upon him if he does. For whom The Lord loves, He chastens.

The Spirit of God makes sons, apart from any assistance of man. Not according to man's will.

The gospel makes disciples or followers of Jesus out of those whom the Spirit has previously made sons. This is where the preacher and our obedience come in. When making disciples.

Even though we may have been taught something different all of our lives it does not release us from the responsibility of being good stewards of the word of God. Having said this, let's proceed to the Bible evidence showing the gospel had been preached in all the world before AD 70, before the passing away of the generation who eye witnesses to the ministry of The Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul was one ordained of God to preach the gospel. After the Jews had rejected the gospel message, it was opened up to the Gentile nations. Paul made three missionary journeys, finally appearing in Rome to preach the truth of Jesus Christ. And not only Paul, but the other Apostles also had their individual assignments. That we find more recorded about the journeys of Paul does not negate the fact the others were active in fulfilling the commandment Jesus gave them. The good news of Jesus was of a nature which caused the people of God to rejoice in the hope of glory. But to those who knew not God, it was a threat to their way of life. (See Luke 2:10 & Matthew 2:2-3) There was turmoil in most every place the Apostles preached. It is recorded in the books of Acts:

"And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These have turned the world upside down are come hither also;..."

Acts 17:6

The things the Apostles preached and the effects of it were known the world over. The Roman Empire, not the entire world.

But just a statement that the teachings of the Apostles turned the world upside down may not be enough evidence for some people.

"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:..."

Colossians 1:5-6

It is interesting to note here the gospel is said to cause us to bring forth fruit. Now it does not say it causes us to become trees, but rather furnishes us with the ability to bear fruit towards God. This is the life of discipleship. We also see here the gospel had come to God's people in all the world causing the people to bear fruit. It does not take a rocket scientist to figure out what had happened.

So here it is said the gospel had gone into all the world. But what about more specific evidence the commandment given by Jesus in Mark sixteen verse fifteen has seen its fulfillment? In fact Mark closes his writing out by stating *the Apostles went forth and preached everywhere*. (Mark 16:20) How much plainer need language be? Remember Jesus prophesied the gospel would go into all the world, then the end would come. Let's hear Paul on the matter.

"If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and **which was preached to every creature** which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;..."

Colossians 1:23

You will not hear the "gloom and doom" preacher ever mention this verse to you. He wants you to stay in the dark concerning it. The less you know about God's word, the better his pocket book likes it.

The gospel had been preached in all the world. So why are we still here if it was the end of time Jesus supposedly meant in Matthew chapter twenty-four verse fourteen? We must learn to distinguish the difference between "the end of time" and "time of the end." The reason we are still here is because Jesus did not mean the world would end after the gospel was preached in all the world. He was referring to the end of the law, Jerusalem, and those wicked Jews. Now notice the tense in the passage; which "**was**" preached to **every creature**. Again we need to remind ourselves to restrain the use of the phrase "every creature", or else we have Paul preaching to Fido and Spot. But we can see this is proof positive the command given by Christ has been completed.

Consider the command of Christ to the Apostles "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Nowhere do the Apostles or writers of the New Testament go beyond instructing us to simply "preach the word." In all of their teachings they

do not tell us to go into all the world. If the commandment to go into all the world was given to the entire Christian church throughout all time, and if the Apostles were obedient to the command of Christ to "teach us to observe all things whatsoever He commanded them," then where in the New Testament is this commandment taught to us by the Apostles? Simply put, we do not have the responsibility to establish the infant church as the Apostles did. We do not re-lay the foundation. But we, through and by the leadership of God's Holy Spirit move out where ever He directs us to go. And we, according to the leadership of this same Spirit, at times refrain from going. The great commandment was given to the Apostles. The command given by Christ to baptize is repeated by the Apostles for us to obey, but not the command to go into all the world. It is easy to see how one could mistake the teachings of Christ if they believed their efforts aided in populating heaven!

We can see the necessity of the great commandment in the beginning of the infant church era. Christianity was not established anywhere but Jerusalem. The command was designed to give the church the boost it needed to survive in an unstable world. To send the church beyond Jerusalem before the city would be destroyed.

Yet many today deny this truth. They desire to deceive God's people for the sake of filthy lucre. Consider this! Approximately 10% of the worlds present day population profess' to be Christian. And approximately 30 % of the world's population has heard what most people claim to be the gospel message. (But I contend it is *another gospel*.) Yet man in over two hundred years since the invention of mission boards and vast communication efforts has not been able to accomplish what God did with His Apostles in less than forty. Man thinks God is handicapped and must be assisted in the redemption effort. With man it is an "*effort*." God never tries to do anything. **He speaks and it comes to pass.** He calls things that be not as though they were.

The Lord of glory uses the means of the Holy Spirit **alone** to make application of the new birth. God does not need television, radio, telephones, newsprint, books, tracts and satellite communications or preachers. And after all is said, it is commonly reported the mission efforts of man are losing ground. Millions die each day without having heard the gospel message. Does this mean they are banished to eternal hell? It does in the minds of those who believe the doctrines and commandments of men. But if you believe the Bible, you understand the gospel feeds Gods sheep with knowledge and understanding. It gives comfort and consolation to the wayward sinner. It instructs and corrects. It gives us hope. But it does not secure our eternal life. This is why Jesus came to earth. He says, "*Search the scriptures, for in them ye **THINK** ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*" (John 5:39)

Also consider what happens to the remaining 70% who have not heard any form of a message about Jesus Christ. According to the popular doctrine of gospel regeneration, they die and go to hell. This same doctrine says God loves all mankind and wants them saved. If He loves them, and died for them as it is said by the advocates of this doctrine, then how can He send them to hell? If God loves me and paid my sin debt through Jesus Christ, then how can He send me to hell if there is no sin to charge against me? Yet again, if He loves me just as much as those who go to hell, what assurance can I have of my salvation? The doctrine falls to pieces upon close examination.

Though some will say, God has special provisions for those who do not hear the gospel. Let's look at that just a moment. They say, we must reach the lost and give them the opportunity to accept or reject Jesus. If they accept, they are heaven bound. (They say) If Jesus is rejected, they are doomed for an eternal hell. So if God has special provisions for those who never hear the gospel, why preach the gospel to them at all. If a man is safe if he never hears the gospel, his destiny is put in jeopardy by preaching the gospel to him. (According to them) The man may reject Christ.

This is what the system of man teaches. But thanks be unto God for His marvelous grace in Christ Jesus. God saves all His children for heaven the same way. It is only through the merit and sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

And to conclude my comments on verse fourteen of Matthew twenty-four I will mention again the "end" which is under consideration here is not the end of time as it is so often preached. It is the "termination of the age", the end, or conclusion of the law of sacrifices, the end of the temple worship and its daily sacrifices. It is the end of Jerusalem. The time of the end, not the end of time.