

## Drive Fast!

In Dublin, Ireland, a man named Tom Huxley was delivering a lecture. When he finished his lecture, he left the hall and jumped into a taxi cab. He was in a great hurry to get to the railroad station to catch the train where he would move on to the next city where he would lecture the next day. He was very late as he left the lecture hall and so as he jumped into the taxi cab, he was nervous, he was on a high tension and he shouted to the taxi driver, "Hurry! I'm late. Drive fast!" The taxi driver took off like Jehu. Tom Huxley had failed to tell the taxi driver where to take him. He just assumed that one of his aides had previously given his driver instructions to take him to the railroad station. As that taxi driver drove like a mad man through the streets of Dublin, Tom Huxley looked out the window to see if they were about to arrive at the railroad station and suddenly it dawned upon him that they were going in the exact opposite direction of the railroad terminal. He shouted to the taxi driver, "You idiot, do you know where you are going?" The taxi driver turned around and smiled to him and said, "No sir, but I am driving fast." *That is what Huxley had told him to do!!!*

This story, I am afraid, is a picture of our lives. Everyone of us in 1993. What are we doing? We are driving through life with great

speed, with much motion, with rapid movement, but where are we going?

I am afraid that most of us are just exactly like the Athenians that Paul addressed in Acts 17. The city of Athens at the time Paul preached this sermon was a city of idolatry. One historian, who wrote 50 years later after Paul had died, said that Athens had more images than all of the rest of Greece put together. Another historian from the time wrote, "In the time of Nero, Athens had 20,000 public idols that the people worshiped and that did not include an additional 30,000 that were located in the Parthenon." Like Huxley's taxi driver, the people of Athens did not know where they were going, but they were driving very fast.

As the Apostle Paul used this pathetic sight of all of these thousands and thousands and thousands of idols that the people of that city were worshipping, his heart stirred within him and he delivered one of his famous sermons. Did you realize that his entire sermon only comprised six sentences? It only took two minutes to read Paul's mighty sermon. In that sermon, the Apostle Paul, a Jew, became a Greek to the Greek in order that he might win the Greeks to Jesus Christ. Acts 17:16-23. "I even found an altar with this inscription: To An Unknown God."

Yes, he had found one inscription in that city to the unknown god. They put that there just in case they had forgotten some god with all of the thousands of others that they were worshipping and Paul said this god that is unknown to you is the one true God, the creator of heaven and earth, the savior of your souls. He is the one I want to tell you about. Paul then proceeded to preach the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. He presented Christ as the Savior of all mankind and he concluded his sermon with a call of repentance reminding them that now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent. He warned them that if they did not repent that a judgment day was coming when they would be judged by almighty God. This unknown god that they had not previously known anything about.

Jesus charged the church in Revelation 2:1, "Nevertheless, I

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have something against thee because thou has left thy first love." Is it possible, brothers and sisters, that you and I may have left our first love? I have 12 evidences to present to you that we have lost our first love, that we are driving too fast!

1. When my delight in the Lord is no longer as great as my delight in someone else, I have lost my first love.
2. When my soul does not long for time of rich fellowship in God's word and in prayer, I have lost my first love.
3. When my thoughts, during leisure moments, do not reflect upon the Lord, I have lost my first love.
4. When I claim to be only human and easily give into those things that I know displeases the Lord, I have lost my first love.
5. When I do not willingly and cheerfully give to God's work or the needs of others, I have lost my first love.
6. When I cease to treat every Christian brother and sister as I would the Lord, I have lost my first love.
7. When I review the commands of Jesus as restrictions to my happiness rather than expressions of His love, I have lost my first love.
8. When I inwardly strive for the acclaim of the world rather than the approval of the Lord, I have lost my first love.
9. When I refuse to give up an activity when I know it is offending a weaker brother, I have lost my first love.
10. When I become complacent with sinful conditions around me, I have lost my first love.
11. Whenever I am unable to forgive another for offending me, I have lost my first love.

America, we need to repent. The Apostle Paul called upon the Athenians to repent and then warned them that if you do not repent, judgment and Hell await you.

1995, in modern day America is very much like ancient Athens. Everyone is busy and in a hurry! We want the preacher to preach a sermonette in 15 minutes and then shut up! We are idol

worshippers! We bow before the idol of money, pleasure, sports, sex, and TV.

What would it be like to die unrepentant? To go into eternity and face a Hell without God? In Luke 16, Jesus drew aside the curtain and showed us a picture of what it is going to be like. I want you to listen to these words because they are Jesus' own words beginning with Luke 16:19.

**I. What will be the first thing people will do if they drive too fast, fail to repent, and are judged by God and go to hell? The first thing they will do is to start praying,** Luke 16:24, and realize the importance of prayer. The first thing this rich man did when he got to hell was to begin to pray for water. Just a few drops of water, he prayed to cool his tongue. Here on earth you can be sure that he never prayed. He didn't have time to pray. He was a rich man, he was too busy investing money and making more money. No time for prayer, but that is the first thing that he took time to do when he got to hell. He started praying and he prayed and he kept on praying.

I issue a call for repentance. Repent, repent America, of our lack of prayerfulness. We are driving too fast!

**II. What was the second thing that this man did when he got to hell? He started praying for a visitation program.** Luke 16:28. He prayed that Abraham would send Lazarus back to his five brothers to visit them, to testify to them about being saved so that they would not come to hell.

William McPherson had a charge of dynamite to go off in his face. He lost his eyes, he lost his hands, he lost feeling in all parts of his face. After this tragic accident, William McPherson then realized how much the Bible meant to him and how much God meant to him and how much the church meant to him. He had never read the Bible even though he claimed to be a church member and now that he was blind and had his hands blown off, he could not read the Bible. He couldn't even read it in Braille

because he didn't have any hands to touch the Braille.

He began to investigate and he tried to touch the Braille with his lips, but his lips were numb as a result of the dynamite blast, but then one day as he was examining a Braille Bible, suddenly he realized that he could touch the Braille with his tongue and so painstakingly he began to read the Bible with the tip of his tongue touching those raised Braille dots. After reading for a little while, his tongue became sore, but he was so thirsty to know the word of God, he continued to read even with a sore tongue. Then his tongue began to bleed, but he prayed to God to just give him strength to go on reading his Bible with a bleeding, sore, painful tongue. During the 65 years that he lived after this dynamite went off, William McPherson read the Bible through completely four times by using the tip of his tongue.

Would I read the Bible if I had to get up an hour earlier each day before going to work, would I read the Bible if I had to sacrifice one hour of my favorite TV program each night? Would I read the Bible if I was like William McPherson and didn't even have any eyes to read it with or any hands to read the Braille? Do I love the word of God so much that I would read it with a bleeding and painful tongue as he did? You know what, if I don't read the Bible and if I die and go to hell, that is the second thing that I will be interested in. I will want somebody to come back and visit the people who are lost teaching them the Bible so that they won't go to hell. Repent America! We are driving too fast!

**III. The third thing that this man wanted was the preaching of the Gospel.** Luke 16:30. He said, "If somebody will go back from the dead. If someone will rise again and go back and testify to my five brothers, then they will believe and then they will not go to hell." And what did Abraham say, "They wouldn't believe even if somebody did rise from the dead."

The resurrection from the dead is the centerpiece of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I Corinthians 15:1-4. The facts of the Gospel, the good news, are that He died for our sins according to

the scriptures and was buried, but on the third day, he arose from the dead and it is the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that will convict those who are going to be convicted and bring them to Jesus Christ. If people will not believe the preaching of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, then they won't believe.

In Romania, under communism, the government arrested two preachers. They charged them with preaching illegally. The church of Romania was under the direct influence of the government and that means that all of the preachers of Romania were hired by the government and that means that they had to preach what the government told them to preach and if they didn't they arrested them and put them in jail. These two Romanian preachers did not preach what the government told them to preach, they preached the Gospel. They preached the resurrection of Jesus Christ, they preached repentance and hundreds of Romanians joined the church. Both of these churches had increased by hundreds and the Romanian government was so angry that they arrested the two preachers on charges of preaching illegally because they were too evangelistic. When I thought about the people in that country controlled by communism and when I thought about the people in our country free to do as we please, to go where we want to go, to think whatever we want to think, to worship wherever we want to worship. Look at the difference! America, we are driving too fast!

Here in America, where we are free people, we are not turning to Christ, people are not being converted, churches are not growing. But in Romania where there was slavery, the churches are growing by hundreds wherever the truth is proclaimed. I almost wanted to pray for God to make us slaves, for God to send suffering upon us. If we suffered, if we were slaves, maybe at last people would repent and turn to God. I pray that it will not be necessary for us to become slaves before we come to repentance.

We need a revival in America. America, repent of idol worship, repent of prayerlessness, repent of a lack of concern, repent of failure to visit the unsaved, repent of failure to study the word of God, repent of failure to listen intently to the preaching of the

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**Gospel of Jesus Christ. If each one of us will repent, revival will come. A great evangelist of an another generation once said, "Lord, send a revival, but let it begin in me."**

