

"A DECEITFUL REPORT"**Introduction**

1. "Where God erects a cathedral, Satan builds a chapel!
2. Immense good and immense evil meet here
3. The background made clear

1. THERE IS SUCH A THING AS BAD RELIGION

- 1) God has just done marvellous things in love:
 - (i) the cross
 - (ii) miracles to confirm it
 - (iii) resurrection
- 2) Now we see Satan's agents fighting back:
 - (i) the first measures: 27:62-66
 - (ii) the last measures: 28:11-15
- 3) Those who act most guiltily are religious:
 - (i) chief priests + elders (v.11-12)
 - (ii) they take counsel to suppress the facts
- 4) The motives are atrocious:
 - (i) to uphold rabbinical superstitions
 - (ii) to keep their own prestige
 - (iii) to justify crucifying their Messiah

APPLICATION: "The best and worst of men become monks"

2. IT IS A GREAT SIN TO COVER UP THE TRUTH

- 1) "Holding down the truth in unrighteousness"
ILLUSTRATION: a ball in a swimming bath
- 2) See the extreme significance of their action:
 - (i) the great acts of God are not factual
 - (ii) all Christ's claims are fraudulent

- (iii) the gospel is based on a lie
- (iv) it was done by stealth + bribing
- (v) they were partners in this deceit
- (vi) they taught the soldiers to perjure themselves
- (vii) their lie has gone on for centuries

- 3) The resurrection of Christ is central to gospel:
ILLUSTRATION: Ironical advice at French Revolution

- 4) The modern attempts to deny resurrection:
 - (i) The disciples stole body. Answer
 - (ii) The Jews removed it. Answer
 - (iii) Christ not really dead. Answer.
 - (iv) Mary had hallucination. Answer

APPLICATION: Christianity is based on fact: Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

3. THOSE WHO COVER UP THE GOSPEL DESTROY SOULS

- 1) "This saying...reported...this day" (v.15):
 - (i) imagine how it comforted unbelievers
 - (ii) imagine how so many Jews deceived
 - (iii) 2000 years of deception!!
- 2) It is a MASSIVE lie – perhaps the very greatest in all human history
- 3) But similar is the suppression of gospel:
 - (i) "God is love" – nothing to fear!
 - (ii) "there is no hell" – live happily
 - (iii) "The Bible is not inerrant" – relax!
 - (iv) "Jesus is just a man" – eat and drink!
- 4) So false preachers tell their people:
 - (i) it is covering up the truth
 - (ii) it is damning men with deceit

APPLICATION: Are you deceiving yourself?

CONCLUSION

- 1.Face the truth of Christ honestly
- 2.Pray for grace to believe it
- 3.To believe in Christ is to have eternal life.

PSALM

9: 1 – 9

7: 9 – 15

5: 9 – 12