

## JOEL OSTEEN & ICONBUSTERS INTERVIEWED BY LARRY KING

LK: Tonight, Joel Osteen, evangelism's hottest rising star, pastor for the biggest congregation in the United States. With him is the ministry, ICONBUSTERS, dedicated to destroying the idols of men.

LK: Why are you a preacher?

OSTEEN: You know, I never was for 17 years. I worked with my dad there at the church. He tried to get me to minister. I didn't have it in me. I worked behind the scenes. I loved doing production and things. But when my father died, I just knew -- I don't know how to explain it, it sounds kind of odd, but I just knew down to here I was supposed to step up to the plate and pastor the church. And it was odd because I had never preached before. But I just knew I was supposed to do it.

LK: And you, ICONBUSTERS, why do you stir controversy in the Church?

ICON: It was not our original intent to be controversial. We intended to keep our noses clean and everyone happy proclaiming a Christ who loves everyone equally. Salvation was theirs, if only they would accept His gift. This is what we believed until the Lord showed us otherwise. Today we understand salvation is the free gift of God to whom He wills, when and if He wills. The Lord cannot fail to save those whom He willed to save. Scripture is very clear on this doctrinal point: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth – (man does not have the free will to love and follow Christ) – nor of him that runneth, - (a man's good works are considered as filthy rags apart from Christ) – but of God that sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:15-16). This is the doctrine of Unconditional Election. God gives saving grace to those He elected for salvation before they believed or performed any good works. Salvation is unconditional, contingent on nothing within the individual. It is contingent only on the sovereign will of God,

whose will is never dependent on the will of the creature. All those on whom God has mercy will come to believe in and follow the true Jesus.....for the will of God can never fail or be obstructed.

LK: The *true* Jesus? Are you saying there is more than one Jesus Christ?

ICON: Yes. Soon you will hear of a false Jesus Christ, as taught by your guest, Joel Osteen.

LK: Joel, have you always believed?

OSTEEN: I have always believed. I grew up, you know, my parents were a good Christian people. They showed us love in the home. My parents were the same in the pulpit as they were at home. I think that's where a lot of preachers' kids get off base sometimes. Because they don't see the same things at both places. But I've always believed. I saw it through my parents. And I just grew up believing.

LK: What about you, iconbusters, have you always believed?

ICON: Goodness, no. We were born vile sinners, separated from God, dead in our trespasses. It wasn't until the free grace of God convicted us of our sins, giving us the gift of repentance and faith in Christ that we believed. The Bible does teach that certain men of God had the Spirit from the womb, being born a forgiven believer. But they are the exception and not the rule. Mr. Osteen apparently places himself in the company of John the Baptist, the greatest prophet of them all.....very humble of him, indeed.

LK: But, Pastor Osteen, you're not fire and brimstone, right? You're not pound the decks and hell and damnation?

OSTEEN: No. That's not me. It's never been me. I've always been an encourager at heart. And when I took over from my father he came from the Southern Baptist background and back 40, 50 years ago there was a lot more of

that. But, you know, I just -- I don't believe in that. I don't believe -- maybe it was for a time. But I don't have it in my heart to condemn people. I'm there to encourage them. I see myself more as a coach, as a motivator to help them experience the life God has for us.

ICON: Here we find the first inkling of Mr. Osteen's preaching a false Christ. Though salvation infers being *saved from* eternal punishment in hellfire and brimstone, he prefers to emphasize being *saved into* eternal blessings and bliss. Who doesn't want to believe in eternal happiness after death? But Christ's preaching and parables frequently had an ominous message behind them, warning those who felt secure in their faith that they were, in reality, deceived, their faith a false faith, trusting in false gods, and will one day regret believing the lies they so willingly embraced as truth. For them awaits the Lake of Fire.

LK: But, Pastor, don't you think if people don't believe as you believe, they're somehow----condemned?

OSTEEN: You know, I think that happens in our society. But I try not to do that. I tell people all the time, preached a couple Sundays about it. I'm for everybody. You may not agree with me, but to me it's not my job to try to straighten everybody out. The Gospel called the good news. My message is a message of hope, that's God's for you. You can live a good life no matter what's happened to you. And so I don't know. I know there is condemnation but I don't feel that's my place.

ICON: In Mr. Osteen's mind it may not be his place, but it is the place and solemn duty of every true Christian, including those who shepherd a flock of 30,000, whose influence reaches untold millions through television and books. Christ warned of the sleeping, drunken stewards whose responsibility it was to rule and watch over His household. Yet because they chose to eat and drink with the drunken, beating and berating the true servants of Christ, the Lord promises their judgment will be harsher than those who never professed Christ. For these

will be cut asunder and dealt with as hypocrites, whose end is eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth. The Good News of the Gospel is only 'good news' to the Elect, those chosen to believe in and follow Christ no matter where He leads. The Gospel is no 'good news' to hypocritical, heretical stewards, shepherds and their disciples.

LK: How'd your church grow so much.....?

OSTEEN: I don't know, Larry. I don't know if there was one thing. I think part of it was my dad had such a great foundation. Then all of a sudden here comes somebody 40 years younger, just new energy. New life. You know. I think one thing is my dad had a television ministry to start with. So all of a sudden here I was 36 years old and I was on television. Well, most young men that age, they're building a congregation and it costs a lot of money to be on television and all that. So all of a sudden there was a young minister across America. So I don't know if it's part of that. I think part of it is the message of hope and that I'm for people.

LK: ICONBUSTERS, do you agree?

ICON: No, we do not. Christ warned of the false church and its abnormal growth, using the parable of the mustard seed to prove His point. True Christianity is of a humble nature, small and insignificant in the eyes of the world. Yet Christ prophesied of an unnatural transformation from that of a lowly herb to that of a mighty tree. This religious monstrosity becomes home to the birds of the air, i.e., unclean spirits, devils, agents of Satan, whose task is to undermine the true Gospel, perverting the true nature of Christ and Christianity. Paul warned *the time will come when professing Christians will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* We believe this explains the phenomenal growth experienced by Lakewood church.

LK: Is Billy Graham a hero to the evangelists.....?

OSTEEN: He is a hero to us all. His life of integrity. Somebody that can stick with for that long and just stick with his message. What I love about Dr. Graham is he stayed on course. He didn't get sidetracked. That's what happens to so many people today. It's a good lesson for me, a good example for me to say, you know what, Joel, you may have a lot now but I want to be here 40 years from now sitting with you.

LK: ICONBUSTERS, do you assent?

ICON: We do not. Mr. Graham has proven himself to be the greatest false prophet of our generation when he applauds the papal Antichrist as a godly Christian and the greatest evangelist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Holy Spirit roundly condemns and castigates this man of sin whose hubris has no equal. Graham's open and earnest endorsement of the son of perdition proves he does not know the true Christ, because to know Christ is to know Antichrist. They are diametrically opposed to each other in word and deed. There is no way of estimating the countless millions the Pope and Graham have deceived, sending their ignorant disciples into Hellfire, by preaching a false Christ and false Gospel. It is our assertion that Satan has awarded Mr. Graham's mantle and authority to Mr. Osteen, since they both deny Christ while enjoying the unprecedented favor of men. Christ warned, *Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets.* (Luke 6:26).

LK: We've had ministers on who said, your record don't count. You either believe in Christ or you don't. If you believe in Christ, you are, you are going to heaven. And if you don't no matter what you've done in your life, you ain't.

OSTEEN: Yeah, I don't know. There's probably a balance between. I believe you have to know Christ. But I think that if you know Christ, if you're a believer in God, you're going to have some good works. I think it's a cop-out to say I'm a

Christian but I don't ever do anything .....

LK: What if you're Jewish or Muslim, you don't accept Christ at all?

OSTEEN: You know I'm very careful about saying who would and wouldn't go to heaven. I don't know .....

LK: If you believe you have to believe in Christ? They're wrong, aren't they?

OSTEEN: Well, I don't know if I believe they're wrong. I believe here's what the Bible teaches and from the Christian faith this is what I believe. But I just think that only God will judge a person's heart. I spent a lot of time in India with my father. I don't know all about their religion. But I know they love God. And I don't know. I've seen their sincerity. So I don't know. I know for me, and what the Bible teaches, I want to have a relationship with Jesus.

ICON: May we interject, Larry? The Holy Scriptures are quite clear by infallibly declaring it is by faith alone, in Christ alone, that one is saved and bound for Heaven. This gift of salvation is due to the undeserved mercy bestowed by a sovereign, yet merciful God to whom He wills. To this purpose He sent His only begotten Son, who put on human flesh, all the while retaining His divinity, that He might do that which Adam did not.....live a sinless life in thought, word and deed, in complete obedience to the will of the Father. He then willingly offered Himself, an innocent man, as a substitutionary sacrifice, taking upon Himself the sins of the Elect, that the Elect might escape their deserved punishment, having the righteousness of Christ imputed to their account through faith. Christ alone propitiated the Father's requirement of justice and punishment through His sacrificial atoning death on the cross. No other human has ever or will ever atone for the sins of the Elect scattered throughout the world, through all time.

Thus, unbelievers and false believers have no sin bearer taking their punishment for them. In turn, they must bear the punishment for their sin. That punishment is

comprised of eternal torment in a conscious state, never to cease, for they are never to be forgiven.

To disbelieve Christ is to claim to be wiser than God. It is also to call God a liar. Mr. Osteen, like Graham before him, believes that the love of God resides in those who know not, and who hate, the true God and His Christ. The infallible Word teaches that *no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him*. Worshippers of idols, those who practice Hinduism, and other false religions, such as Roman Catholicism, worship false gods – demons – proving the love of the Father is not in them.

Those Muslims, Jews and Hindus who do love the true God are now ex-Muslims, ex-Jews, and ex-Hindus, as was Paul an ex-Pharisee when Christ sovereignly revealed Himself on the road to Damascus.

Finally, all the Mitzvahs in the world cannot and will not satisfy the justice of God nor atone for one's sins. This was proven in the Old Testament through the need for daily animal sacrifices to pay for the sins of the Israelites. These animal sacrifices were but a foreshadowing of the atoning work done by the Messiah who was to come. The slaying of the unblemished Passover Lamb whose blood stayed the hand of the death angel was yet another of numerous rites, rituals and ordinances to announce the mission of the Messiah, the Lamb who takes away the sin of not only Israelites, but the Elect Gentiles throughout the world.

LK: I want to get to the seven steps. But when the people call you cotton candy theology. Someone said you're very good but there's no spiritual nourishment. I don't know what that means ...

OSTEEN: I think I hear it meaning a lot of different things. One, I think, a lot of it is that I'm not condemning people. And I don't know, but Larry I talk, I mean every week in our church we're dealing with people that are fighting cancer, that

have their lost loved ones. That are going through a divorce. I mean, I talk about those issues, and to me I don't see how it can get any more, you know, real than that. So I don't know what the criticism is.

ICON: Scripture warns that many of those taking upon themselves the office of publicly preaching in the name of God would fail at that task for several reasons: (1) They honor filthy lucre above telling the whole truth which would have cost them admirers and hurt their income; (2) They wish not to offend, desiring the honor of men above the approval of God; (3) They are wolves in sheep's clothing, having a form of godliness yet denying the power and truth of God; (4) They are anti-Christ, deceivers who take pleasure in unrighteousness.

Christ is the Rock of Offense, the Stone of Stumbling. He told the truth, the whole truth, and it cost Him His life. He who is not with Christ is against Christ. The servant is not greater than his Master. To preach the unadulterated Word of God will always result in being castigated and hated by the world and false Christians.

LK: What is the prosperity gospel.....?

OSTEEN: I think the prosperity gospel in general is -- well I don't know. I hear it too. I don't know. I think what sometimes you see is it's just all about money. That's not what I believe. It's the attitude of your heart, and so you know, we believe -- but I do believe this, that God wants us to be blessed. He wants us to be able to send our kids to college, excel in our careers. But prosperity to me, Larry, is not just money, it's having health. What good is money if you don't have health?

ICON: The Prosperity Gospel is that false Gospel which teaches God owes you. The Lord owes you nothing.....not your first birth, not your new birth. Your sin requires the payment of death. Every man owes and every man pays. The Good News is that which declares the payment of death was made by Christ on behalf of repentant sinners, sinners who know not what they do. Those who genuinely



repent of their sin, (the words 'repent' and 'sin' are unknown to Osteen), do so because God has graciously and miraculously transformed their heart of stone into a heart of flesh. He has given them the gift of repentance, one of the many gifts necessary unto salvation purchased by the blood of Christ and ultimately given them by the Holy Spirit. The Lord does not and will not create this miracle in all men, preferring instead to set most men aside for personal judgment and eternal condemnation, to the praise of his holy justice. Those for whom Christ died, salvation and eternal life is given, to the praise of his glorious grace. The Apostle Paul explains this hard truth in Romans 9.

LK: Don't you ever doubt?

OSTEEN: No. I don't -- I wouldn't say that I do. I guess I do and I don't think about it too much.

LK: Well, 9/11.

OSTEEN: Well, yeah.

LK: Didn't you say what? Why?

OSTEEN: You do. You definitely do.

LK: And how do you answer?

OSTEEN: To me it comes back and God's given us all our own free will. And it's a shame but people choose ...

ICON: Larry, the concept of free will is nothing more than a myth perpetrated by the Father of Lies. The only One with free will is the Lord God Almighty. Scriptures teach the bondage of the will beginning in the Garden of Eden when Adam freely chose to disobey the Lord his God. From that moment death entered

as punishment upon all men, and Satan became their new lord and god.

LK: The people in the building didn't have free will.

ICON: Brilliant deduction, Larry. They did not have the choice of escaping their fate, of going to work that day or not, because no one warned them of what was to befall them. On the other hand, the Word of God admonishes that *today is the day of salvation*. There is no guarantee that we will have a tomorrow. That being said, Larry, since you are alive at this moment and have been confronted with the fact of Jesus Christ who came into the world to save sinners, will you now confess you are a lost sinner in need of forgiveness? Will you confess before men that Jesus Christ is God come in the flesh, who died, was buried and rose the third day for our justification? Will you now deny yourself, your vanity, your worldly lifestyle, pick up your cross and follow Christ, whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light? Will you now join in fellowship with other believers, growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ by studying His Word faithfully? Will you no longer trust in your own wisdom and money, placing your trust in Christ alone, as would a child his parent.....?

LK: Thank you for the offer, but I will repent on my deathbed. Right now I have too many other obligations to take care of.

ICON: What about you, Mr. Osteen? Will you repent of your heretical teachings, denying the sin nature of man, a nature which inherently hates the true God; inventing, instead, a false god made in his sinful, lustful image and likeness? Will you repent of your negligence in exegeting and preaching the whole counsel of God, which is the smell of sweet savor to some and death to others?

OSTEEN: I'm sorry, I don't understand the question.

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POST SCRIPT: Osteen has asked forgiveness for not responding affirmatively that Christ is the only way to Heaven.

“Many of you have called, written or e-mailed regarding my recent appearance on Larry King Live. I appreciate your comments and value your words of correction and encouragement.

“It was never my desire or intention to leave any doubt as to what I believe and Whom I serve. I believe with all my heart that it is only through Christ that we have hope in eternal life. I regret and sincerely apologize that I was unclear on the very thing in which I have dedicated my life.

“Jesus declared in John 14; *I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me.* I believe that Jesus Christ alone is the only way to salvation. However, it wasn’t until I had the opportunity to review the transcript of the interview that I realize I had not clearly stated that having a personal relationship with Jesus is the only way to heaven. It’s about the individual’s choice to follow Him.”

ICONBUSTERS responds: True repentance would acknowledge heretical teachings. Instead, Osteen proves his political prowess by speaking out of both sides of his mouth. In the company of Larry King and his millions of viewers, Osteen openly denies Christ, avoiding their wrath and displeasure. In the company of his church and irate Christian viewers, he then apologizes, claiming allegiance to Christ and His Word, gaining their trust and admiration once more. Yet tomorrow he will continue preaching a false Gospel, a false Christ and a false Christianity before a disbelieving and untoward generation.

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