

Do Jews Need Jesus?

<http://www.christianpost.com/article/20080331/31755.htm>

Dozens of prominent evangelical leaders recently endorsed a statement declaring a fact that many Christians already hold to be true – that Jewish people need the Gospel and Jesus Christ to receive eternal life.

The statement, sponsored by the World Evangelical Alliance, expressed friendship and love for the Jewish people, but unapologetically declared that salvation comes only through Jesus Christ. “We want to make it clear that, as evangelical Christians, we do not wish to offend our Jewish friends by the above statements; but we are compelled by our faith and commitment to the Scriptures to stand by these principles,” read the evangelical statement on “The Gospel and the Jewish People.”

An ad with the statement appeared in the New York Times on March 28 and will appear in other major secular newspapers and several Christian magazines throughout April and May. “It is out of our profound respect for Jewish people that we seek to share the good news of Jesus Christ with them, and encourage others to do the same, for we believe that salvation is only found in Jesus, the Messiah of Israel and Savior of the World,” the statement continued.

Some of the key declarations made by the statement include:

- A pledge of commitment to be loving friends and to stand against injustices against the Jewish people. At the same time, affirming the belief that the most loving and Scriptural expression of friendship towards Jewish people, and anyone called a friend, is to candidly share the love of God in the person of Jesus Christ
- Affirming the belief that only through Jesus that all people can receive eternal life. If Jesus is not the Messiah of the Jewish people, He cannot be the Savior of the World (Acts 4:12)
- Recognizing that it is good and right for those with specialized knowledge, history and skills to use these gifts to introduce individuals to the Messiah, and that includes those ministries specifically directed to the Jewish people (I Corinthians 9:20-22)
- Denouncing the use of deception or coercion in evangelism but rejecting the notion that it is deceptive for followers of Jesus Christ who were born Jewish to continue to identify as Jews (Romans 11:1)

“Increasingly, Jewish evangelism is being marginalized and even dismissed as irrelevant, inappropriate, unethical or deceptive by some segments of the church,” commented Dr. Geoff Tunnicliffe, the CEO and international director of WEA, regarding the statement.

“This statement is an attempt to speak to the evangelical community

about the biblical basis for sharing their faith with all people, including Jews.

"It is our hope that it will be received in the spirit it is intended by the non-evangelicals who see it," he added.

Tunncliffe explained that the statement is made out of friendship and respect for the Jewish people, as well as out of a commitment to stand with the Jewish people who have suffered mistreatment "simply for being Jewish." "And that part of our friendship and care and respect is shown in our commitment to share the love of God in Christ whom we believe is their Savior as well as ours," he said.

The World Evangelical Alliance is a 162-year-old global network of evangelical churches and organizations with members in 128 nations and claiming to represent more than 420 million evangelical Christians.