

Gospel Meeting

April 10-13 with
Eddy Gilpin



Theme:

“Hope and Encouragement in Difficult Times”

Sunday Class (10 AM) - “Hope - What It Is, Does, and Produces”

AM Sermon - “As We Approach the Shore”

PM Sermon (6 PM) - “The Answer of Faith to the Advice of Fear”

Monday (7 PM) - “If You Die and Go to Hell, Who Cares?”

Tuesday (7 PM) - “Seven Things Hope Explains”

Wednesday (7 PM) - “Difficult Times”

Eddy and Jeanny worked with Mammoth Spring from 1989-1991

He currently works with the Pulaski church of Christ in Pulaski, VA

Two passages state the principle, “*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*” (Pro. 14:12; 16:25). The ways of man are manifold; the way of God is singular (Matt. 7:13, 14; Jn. 14:6; 17:17). Concerning religious matters, men are often heard expressing themselves thus: “Well, I believe...;” “I don’t think...;” “Surely the Lord would not...;” “I think...;” etc. It should be very obvious that man’s “think so” is not equivalent to God’s “say so.” However, most people will place their soul’s well-being in the hands of men they trust and never give the Bible a chance to reveal the truth to them. Why not give the Bible a chance?

Give the Bible a Chance to Tell You About Salvation. Men have devised many avenues regarding the salvation of man. Everything from Universalism (the idea that all men will eventually be saved) to the Calvinistic idea that only those whom God has handpicked will be saved litters the pages of religious history. But, what does the Bible say about the subject? Before you accept what some man or organization teaches, give the Bible a chance to show you the truth.

The Bible reveals that man is saved by the grace of God (Eph. 2:8; Titus 2:11). It states that sins are cleansed by the blood of Jesus (Rev. 1:5). It says that faith on man’s part is absolutely essential (Jn. 8:24; Heb. 11:6). It reveals that men must repent of their sins (Lk. 13:3; Acts 17:30). It shows that man must confess his faith in Jesus as the Son of God (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37). It states that men must be baptized (Mk. 16:16) in water (Acts 8:36; Eph. 4:5) “for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38), to “wash away” sins (Acts 22:16), in order to be saved (I Pet. 3:21). Any man who teaches less than what the Bible requires for salvation is a false teacher (II Pet. 2:1; II Jn. 9-11). Just because a man expresses a religious principle does not mean he has revealed a religious principle that is religiously right. By following the mandates of man, many men have been deceived into believing they have done what the Lord requires (Matt. 7:21-23). It will be painfully obvious that the way that seemed right was actually the way of death. Do not depend on the words of man for the salvation of your soul. Give the Bible a chance to instruct you about it.

Give the Bible a Chance to Tell You About the Church. By most estimates there are currently over 35,000 denominations in the United States. What that means is there are some 35,000 different religious groups (all claiming to be from Christ), teaching different doctrines, going by different names, and telling men different things. Many have pondered this

when trying to determine to which one they should belong. However, instead of going to a friend, relative, some religious leader, or following in the steps of family, give the Bible a chance to tell you about the church.

The Bible reveals that the church was purchased with the blood of Jesus (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25). (This fact alone reveals its significance.) The Bible states that Jesus promised to build His church - singular in quantity, possessive in nature (Matt. 16:18). The Bible shows that men were added to it by the Lord Himself, and that very early in New Testament times (Acts 2:47). (This fact alone shows that no modern denomination could be that church, as they all were founded much too late to be that church.) The Bible demonstrates that the church of Christ is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18, 24), and that there is only one body (Eph. 4:4); thus, only one church. The Bible emphasizes that Jesus is the Savior of His body, the church (Eph. 5:23). The Bible reveals that the saved are added to the church by the Lord Himself (Acts 2:47). The simple truth is: You can’t go to God’s heaven through a man’s church! You must be added by the Lord to His church, since He is the Savior of it. Do not be deceived by the words of man concerning this matter. Give the Bible a chance to tell you about the church of Christ.

Give the Bible a Chance to Tell You About Prominent Religious Beliefs. Just as there are a multitude of religious groups claiming to be acceptable to God, there are numerous very prominent religious ideas, beliefs and practices that claim to be based on God’s word and acceptable to Him. However, many of these doctrines contradict each other and, more importantly, contradict the Bible. False doctrines are to be rejected and false teachers are to be avoided (Matt. 7:15; Eph. 5:11; II Jn. 9-11). The Bible clearly shows that false teaching can be determined (Acts 17:11; I Jn. 4:1).

One prominent false idea is that man can be saved by faith alone. Let’s give the Bible a chance to tell us about this concept. The Record states, “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (Jam. 2:24). This is the only place where the phrase “faith only” is found in Scripture; and, the text stresses that it is NOT by faith only.

Another false teaching is that baptism is not essential to salvation. But, what does the Bible say? Give it a chance to tell you the truth. It states, “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh,

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Give the Bible a Chance

but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. 3:21). Clearly, “baptism doth also now save us” is opposite to “baptism does not save us.” Allow the Bible to direct your steps (Jer. 10:23), and not man.

Another prominent thought from the religious world is “once saved, always saved.” This is the idea that once one is saved he cannot be lost. But, again, give the Bible a chance to tell you about this concept. What does it say? The apostle Paul told the Christians of Galatia, “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:4). Notice that these Christians could “fall from grace” and be lost. An example of one who did so is found in Acts 8. Simon had obeyed the gospel and was a Christian (Acts 8:13; cf. Mk. 16:16). However, he sinned and was found to be in a condition

in which his heart was not right with God (Acts 8:21), and he was “in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity” (Acts 8:23), in danger of perishing along with his money (Acts 8:20). In a most demonstrable way the Bible shows that a Christian can sin and be lost (II Pet. 2:20-22).

There are scores of false teachings extant in the religious world. Time and space forbid our examining but a small sampling of them. We must “search the Scriptures” to determine what is true (Acts 17:11; Jn. 5:39). Take great care in “handling aright” (II Tim. 2:15- ASV) the word of God.

Dear friend, are you concerned about your soul? Are you looking for answers to your questions? Why not give the Bible a chance to reveal the truth to you? There is no other reliable source (II Tim. 3:16, 17). Give the Bible a chance.

Can Man Choose to Come to God and Be Saved?

Barry O'Dell

Some would tell us “No!” Reformed Theology and Calvinism are systems of belief - very closely related - that say no man can choose because God has chosen sovereignly the saved and the lost. They say God is 100% in control of a person being saved and of every decision. At the same time, they say man is 100% free and able to decide for himself. They tell us that salvation is not against man’s will, while, at the same time, God “sovereignly” chooses who will be saved. If God chooses, at a rate of 100%, who will be saved, how then can man choose? Because, they say, “God makes them willing.” This teaching is utterly nonsensical and full of self contradictions. This doctrine says that we don’t have a will until God gives us a will and “makes” us willing. Read that again - we don’t have a will until God gives us a will and “makes” us willing. Confused yet?!

Now, let’s follow that to its logical conclusion. If God, at a rate of 100%, chooses who will be saved by giving them a will to be saved, then man has no choice in the matter - either that or 100% doesn’t mean 100%. Trying to dance around that conclusion by saying that man *can choose* is yet another contradiction! Perhaps those who teach such things should review the meaning of 100%!

The question then is, how does a man come to God? Is it by a sovereign choice of God? Part of the foundational belief of the system described above is that man cannot choose until God makes him choose because He has chosen him to be saved. In opposition to all of the previously noted self contradictions the Bible says something quite different. Man absolutely has a choice - and it’s not a choice forced upon him by

God. The Bible says in many places that God does not show partiality (Deut. 10:17; Rom. 2:11; Acts 10:34; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; 1 Pet. 1:17). Read those verses and think about the doctrines of Reformed Theology and Calvinism! God does not show partiality, but they would tell us that He chooses who will be saved. But that’s not all! Not only does He choose who will be saved, but He literally *makes* them have a different nature! If you’re not one of the “elect,” too bad! Sorry! God didn’t choose you. You can read the Bible. You can learn about Jesus. You can learn about the church and what it means to be a Christian. But, God didn’t choose you, so, too bad! What kind of an evil, arbitrary, punitive God would He be by allowing His Son to die “*for the world*” and then choosing only a small part of that world to be saved? Those doctrines attempt to explain that away by saying that we’re humans and we can’t understand the sovereign nature of God. Yet, they understand it enough to teach that the saved are saved and the lost are lost and neither can do anything about it! Here’s another thought - if the choice of salvation is 100% up to God - how does one know whether or not he is one of the elect? Again, perhaps those who teach this foolishness need to review the meanings of “100%” and “sovereign.”

The Bible, from beginning to end, teaches that man has a free will - not imposed upon by God - because then it would cease to be free will. Adam and Eve made a choice (Gen. 3:6-7). Israel had to make a choice (Jos. 24:15). Man today must make a choice. “*Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*” (Rev. 22:17). It’s not “*Whosoever will*” (that God chooses to have a will).”

LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER

Unique features of the Church of Christ

- We use the Bible only (2 Pet. 1:3). We have no creed book, convention, or central headquarters.
- Our name is after the One who died to establish His church (Rom. 16:16).
- The church of Christ began in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3; Acts 2:1-4).
- Jesus promised to establish His church (Matt. 16:18).
- That church was purchased with Jesus' blood (Acts 20:28).
- The church is married to Christ (Rom. 7:4).
- It was established in the first century (Acts 2:41, 47).
- Jesus is the one and only Head of the One Body (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; 5:23).
- You can only be added to the church by God Himself (Acts 2:41, 47).

What about being saved?

- All people are saved by grace, though faith (Eph. 2:8-9).
- No one is saved by faith alone (Jas. 2:14-26).
- No one is saved by grace alone (Matt. 7:21).
- Jesus said that belief plus baptism will produce salvation (Mk. 16:16). That is a promise, not a command.
- The Bible teaches that repentance plus baptism produces remission of sins (Acts 2:37-38).
- Belief, confession, and baptism is seen in the account of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:37-38).
- The Corinthians heard, believed, and were baptized (Acts 18:8).
- Christ is "put on" in baptism (Gal. 3:26-27).
- The apostle Peter said that "baptism does save us" (1 Pet. 3:21).

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Mammoth Spring church of Christ
110 S 3rd St/PO Box 251
Mammoth Spring, AR 72554
(870) 625-3217

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Wednesday Classes for all ages - 7:00 PM
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