

# Fulton County Gospel News

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## Is God Partial?

By Harold Turner

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.'" (Acts 10:34-35). "For there is no respect of persons with God." (Romans 2:11)

While we might be astonished at the number of people who actually believe that God is partial, the Bible declares such to be untrue. There are numerous reasons suggested in God's word which show that He is impartial toward all.

In the first place there are none of us worthy of his favoritism; for we are all in the same spiritual condition. In Romans 3 Paul stated to the Jews, who considered themselves better than others, saying, "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God, They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:9-12). Then in verse 23 he stated, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The entire world was lost in sin at the time Jesus came, and there was nothing any person could do to help himself out of this condition. Because of sin all men were separated from God, and stood under the condemnation of death for their sins. Therefore all stood in the same relationship with God - lost.

The next point suggesting the impartiality of God is seen in his desire to save all men. In 1 Tim. 2:3-4 Paul wrote, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved..." In the great commission, Jesus commanded the apostles saying, "Go ye into ALL the world, and preach the gospel to EVERY creature..." (Mark 16:15) And in 2 Peter 3:9 we are told that God is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." When Jesus stated in John 3:16 that God so loved the world, he included every person of all time. There isn't one soul living that God doesn't desire to save.

In order to save lost man, God provided one sacrifice to atone for man's

sins. The same sacrifice for every person would suggest that God wasn't showing partiality toward any person or group of people. In Heb. 2:9 the writer tells us that Jesus "by the grace of God should taste death for every man." His blood paid the price for our redemption, and each person required the same price. There is no person who will get by cheaper than another - There is no respect of persons with God.

Another proof to the impartiality of God is in the fact that he provided only one gospel for the whole world. In Mark 16:15 Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Jesus revealed this gospel to the apostles (Acts 1:2) and they in turn were commissioned to make it known to the world. In Gal. 1:6-9 Paul wrote, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." This one gospel set forth the conditions required for our salvation, and no person is assured salvation who does not meet these requirements. It is through obedience to the gospel that we are promised salvation (Rom. 6:17-18; 1 Peter 1:22, 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

Another point where many overlook the impartiality of God is in regards to his will for the church. Jesus promised to build only one church, Matt. 16:18. This one church is pictured as the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18-24). And in Eph. 2:16 Paul stated that Christ reconciled both Jews and Gentiles unto God in one body. If there had ever been a time when two churches might have been needed it would have been during the first century; for the Jews had no dealings with the Gentiles. The apostle Peter shows this to be the attitude of the Jews in Acts 10:28, saying, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto

## Progress or Retrogress

By Ernest Loomis

How long since you have stopped and considered the changes made in the past half century? From the model "T" to the moon. Unbelievable advancements have been made in the fields of transportation, medicine, communications and in most every field of science. Man has wrought wonders on the earth and walked on the moon, and far be it from me to minimize such achievements or belittle progress; but if progress is misdirected or misused it becomes retrogress, or progress in the wrong direction.

What good is speed if we have no place to go or nothing to do when we get there? Or what good is it if it diverts attention from the spiritual to the material? What good is improved communications, such as TV, if it offers little more than filth, trash and pornography to corrupt the minds of our youth? Our laws forbid open sewers and cesspools to pollute a city, but sewers and cesspools of filth, corruption, and pornography are left wide open to pollute the minds of our youth under the guise of freedom. What good is a longer life, brought about by improved medicine, if the longer life is used to serve Satan? Man continues to improve and modernize, but there are some areas in which he can neither improve or modernize.

We rejoice in progress, but man can improve on and modernize only that which he has made. Anything man can make, he can update and modernize, but that which he has not made he should beware of tampering with. Man can measure the light produced by the sun and trace the orbit of the moon, but he can't change the light or the orbit. Man may capture in awe the beauty of the rainbow, the spring flowers and fall colors, but he cannot improve upon them. All of God's creation was created perfect, and man cannot improve upon that, and his attempts only make the perfect imperfect. Man's attempts to modernize often leads to ruin.

From the time of Cain's "modern" approach and "reasonable" sacrifice (Gen. 4) men have sought to improve upon that which God has ordained. Nadab and Abihu, two boys from one of

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GOSPEL NEWS**

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EDITORS: Erwin Cowen  
and Harold Turner

**Progress or Retrogress (Cont.)**

the top families of Israel, whose uncle was the law giver and father the high priest, tried to modernize the worship by using strange fire to burn the incense, but they didn't have the chance to report their findings on this new religious experience; for they left in a blaze (not of glory) of fire coming out from the Lord which consumed them (Lev. 10:1-3)

The people of Israel rejected God's ordained form of government and sought to modernize it with a king like the nations around them. This updating and modernizing, however, ended in disaster and ruin, with the nation of Babylon picking up the spoils. Their "progress" was in the wrong direction as they turned from God's way to national suicide. Could we be following in their footsteps?

When the kingdom of Israel was divided, and Jeroboam ruled over the ten tribes, he offered them "real progress" in religion when he said, "It is too much for you to go to Jerusalem to worship." (1 Kings 12) He built a place for worship in Bethel and Dan, and placed calves of gold there as objects of worship. But this religious experience hastened the captivity of the children of Israel.

The things of old stand as a warning for us not to tamper with God's ordained pattern (1 Cor. 10:11; Rom. 15:4), but can we not see that many today are trying to modernize and make worship logical and relevant like Cain attempted? That they are trying to experiment with religion and worship as did Nadab and Abihu; modernize God's plan for church government like Israel did; and attempt to make religion and worship convenient and appealing to man as Jeroboam did?

"A liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." Prov. 11:25

"Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safeth." Prov. 11:14

# God's Promises to Abraham

Ernest Loomis

Due to a misunderstanding of the promises God made to Abraham, many people are looking for a return of all Israel to Palestine and a return of the Lord to the earth to reign over an earthly kingdom for 1000 years. A careful study of these promises however, will reveal they have ALL been fulfilled, in fact the last one was fulfilled nearly 2000 years ago.

God made three promises to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-2). They were renewed to Isaac (Gen. 26:4) and to Jacob (Gen. 26:14). Those promises were: (1) Of his offspring would be made a great nation, (2) the promise of a land inheritance and (3) all nations would be blessed in his seed. Note the three promises in (Gen. 26:4) "I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." Please note each of these promises and the fulfillment of them.

By studying the history of Israel from the 70 who entered Egypt to the multiplied thousands who left, crossed the Red Sea, was given a law from Mt. Sinai to govern them, conquered Caanan and was a very powerful nation under the leadership of Saul and David, who could deny they were indeed a great nation. thus, promise number one was fulfilled.

Contrary to the belief of many, the land promise was also fulfilled many centuries ago. Joseph was so sure of it's fulfillment that he took an oath of his brethren that when God delivered them from Egypt into the land of promise they would carry his bones out of Egypt (Gen. 50:24-25), and Joshua declared in no uncertain terms that God did fulfill that promise in his lifetime; (Josh. 21:43) "And the Lord gave unto Israel ALL the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein." Then in verse 45 he said; "There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; ALL CAME TO PASS." Joshua declared God had given Israel "ALL" the land he had promised and they had "POSSESSED IT" and "DWELT THEREIN". He then told them that because of their transgressions and their worship of idols that God would destroy them from off the land He had given them (Josh. 23: 15-16). So instead of them not having received the land promise, as some insist, they received it, but it was taken from them because of

their sins. Can anything be made plainer? Don't let anyone deceive you into thinking that all Jews will return to Palestine, then Jesus will return to rule over an earthly kingdom from Jerusalem for 1000 years. Jesus said "My kingdom is not of this world..." (Matt. 18:36) and any teaching which differs from that is false.

The promise that in Abraham and his seed all nations or families of the earth would be blessed was fulfilled in Christ. Isaiah declared that the Lord's house would be established and ALL NATIONS would be accepted in it (Isa. 2:2). Jesus told His apostles to go teach ALL NATIONS (Matt. 28:19), and to preach the gospel to EVERY CREATURE (Mark 16:15). Peter stated that the promise of salvation was to the Jew, his children and to ALL that are afar off (Acts 2:39) and in EVERY nation he that fears God and works righteousness is accepted with Him (Acts 10:34-35). Then in the Galatian letter Paul leaves no doubt as to when and by whom this promise was to be fulfilled (Gal. 3:8-19).

Don't be led astray by worldly wisdom and philosophies of men for God will destroy all such (1 Cor. 1:18-21) and judge us by the word (John 12:48; Rev. 20:12).

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## Exposing Religious Error

By Ordell Heavin

There are those, even within the church, who do not want error exposed. "We do not believe in discussions" some say. But Jesus engaged in spiritual confrontations with the Pharisees, lawyers, Sadducees, and Herodians (Mark 12, Matt. 22).

Solomon wrote, "Debate thy cause with thy neighbor." (Prov. 25:9) Jude commanded Christians to "Contend earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints." (Jude 3) Paul was "Set for the defense of the gospel." (Phil. 1:17) And we must be of the same disposition.

In several books of the New Testament false teachers are called by name, and often specific error is identified and rebuked. How can we obey the command of 1 Thess. 5:21, "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good" and not expose error?

The Lord commended the church in Ephesus for marking some who claimed to be Apostles, and for exposing them as false teachers (Rev. 2:2). Today it would seem that some of the sophisticated brethren evidently want their neighbors to go to everlasting destruction in good humor rather than to point out their mistakes so they can be saved. Nothing short of TRUTH can redeem us and make us free (John 8:32).

The story of New Testament Christianity would have been much different if the Apostles had been as reluctant as many of us are today. The inroads of Judaism and Gnosticism would have overwhelmed the church of the first century if some of our modern philosophy had replaced the firm courageous stand the Bible reveals. Some of the soft-line concepts we face today are: "Just preach positively and error will die," "Love will get the job done," "Don't point out public mistakes or otherwise," "Truth is not absolute anyway," and "Exposing error is no longer relevant." I am so glad for the faithful gospel preachers who know better than to surrender to such silly false concepts. Brethren, the seed of salvation is the word of God, when cut up and misapplied it becomes perverted. The prophets of old, Micah, Jeremiah, Amos and others had their opponents (1 Kings 22; Jer. 20:9), and so did John the Immerser, Christ and his apostles. Such men could have lived longer through compromise, but they chose to live better as men of purpose and conviction.

In Acts 4:20 and 5:39 we read of faithful men who chose to obey God even if what they preached landed them in jail. Today there is a definite spirit of indifference, apathy and unconcern in our midst. Paul's warning concerning perverting the gospel (Gal. 1:6-9) means

## The Bible Reveals God to Man

By Clovis Ragsdale

In our nation there is an increasing number of people who admit to a belief in some higher power, but who will openly state that they do not believe in the God of the Bible. In recent months a few famous TV personalities have made this statement to vast audiences. They would resent being called an infidel. They speak of the "Man upstairs", and of the "Master of the universe", but Jehovah God they will not accept. This stand rules out Jesus Christ as our Saviour, (though Jesus is accepted as a historical fact, a great philosopher, teacher, and a man of good influence).

History records that all civilizations have been religious. It would seem from this that God placed within man the instinct to understand and accept the fact that man is the product of one far greater than himself. The result has been that men have invented many gods to fulfill this need to worship a creator.

Paul's experience in Athens illustrates the extremes to which man can go. In Acts 17:16 we are told that the city was wholly given to idolatry. In verse twenty-three Paul speaks of having seen one of their inscriptions erected to the "Unknown God". In the following eight verses (24-31) Paul made known to these very religious heathen people the true God. These people were ignorant of the Bible and were wasting their devotions. This problem still exists today in many parts of our world. For example, those who worship and follow Buddha, Confucious, Hinduism, and the other mystic religions of the Eastern world. These people worship crude images, and their gods have very little in common with the God of the Bible.

The Moslem religion has some similarity to the Judeo-Christian concept. The Koran is their Bible. Mohammed is

little to those filled with cowardice. Those of us who believe must speak truth and not be persuaded to join the non-combative soldiers who are so entangled with the world that they do not want their friends exposed to the search light of truth. If we care anything at all for purity in doctrine and life, we will buckle on the whole armor of righteousness and fight the good fight of faith. Where would the church be today if valiant soldiers in God's army had not manifested the backbone to stand up, speak out, and demolish the hellish doctrines of evil and error? May God help us to raise up this generation of defenders for the faith who will cause the demons in hell to tremble. For many false teachers have already gone out into the world (1 John 4:1).

similar to Jesus in some ways. Aliah is one god. This is not a coincident since the Moslem religion sprang from the Arabs, who are the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham by Hagar. Being cut off from Jehovah God they set up a religion similar to the true God. Some may ask, "Will God accept this religion?" The answer can be found in Acts 4:12, where Peter was being questioned about the power or name in which he had healed a person. His answer was that he was able to do this by the name of Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified, whom God had raised from the dead. He continued by saying, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." There is no exception to this statement. Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Many passages in the Bible warn us about false religions and false teachers. For example, in Matt. 15:9 Jesus said, "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." In this statement Christ is rebuking the Pharisees for having added traditions to the worship under the law of Moses. Their worship was vain, that is, it was not pleasing to God, and they were wasting their time and their chance of salvation in the end. God had spoken to the Hebrew nation through the prophets, but he had not yet revealed himself to the Gentile world. If the Jew was condemned when he changed part of God's message to please himself, where does this leave the Moslem, Hindu, Buddast, etc. who neither believe in God or the Bible.

The only conclusion we can draw from the teachings of the Bible is that God will not accept anyone who does not worship him as he directs. He admits to being a "jealous God." Exod. 20:5, Joshua 24:19, and several other places in the Bible make it plain that we can worship no other God but the God of the Bible, if we expect to go to heaven. This places a grave responsibility on God's people today to take the gospel to all the world, as Christ commanded in Matt. 28:19, and Mark 16:15.

"If you want your children to be Christians YOU must set the example."

"You are never defeated until you give up."

"Strength unused becomes weakness."

"Experience is a hard teacher; it gives the test first and the lesson afterwards."

"Good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes often from poor judgment."

# How Can I Convince the People?

By Glynn V. Purdy

We are living in a period of time in the church, when, if you could name it, it would no doubt be the "Know how" period. Everyone has an answer, a shortcut, a method, a know how. We are forgetting that God gave us the method and the know how. The method is the gospel of Christ, for it is God's power to save. (Rom. 1:16). It matters not what else is preached, and how many respond to such teachings, unless it is the gospel of Christ, no saving is done! The know how is to study the gospel of Christ and preach it. (2 Tim. 2:15; Mark 16:15).

God commands that we "convince" people by presenting EVIDENCE that Christ is His Son. By presenting EVIDENCE from God's word that man is a sinner and cannot save himself, and by presenting EVIDENCE concerning God's plan to save man. We have no other method given to man from God to "convince" people to obey God. God planned, before the world, how he would save man. Jesus died to validate the plan, and the Holy Spirit presented the EVIDENCE through the writers of the New Testament. We are to preach this plan, and no other (Gal. 1:8-9).

When the gospel of Christ was preached by the New Testament preachers they simply presented the EVIDENCE. When this was done it was then between the person and God. This was the method of convincing. Paul preached at Thessalonica, and "Some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas . . . But the Jews which believed not (The evidences - the gospel, GVP) moved with envy . . ." (Acts 17:1-6). Paul and Barnabas preached at Antioch in Pisidia. Some believed and some were filled with envy, contradicting and blaspheming! Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and told them that they had judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, and the preachers went on to preach to other people who would accept the EVIDENCE God prepared to convince. (Acts 13:45-46). As was said to the rich man, if people would not believe the evidence God prepared, then neither would they believe one raised from the dead.

Man has never been satisfied to let God take care of His part and let man take care of what God assigned to him. Man has ever believed that he has found a new and better way to convince people to obey God. This is not something new. Listen to Paul, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek wisdom: But we preach

Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:21-24). There you have it!

According to the wisdom of God, there is no way man in his wisdom can know God. So God chose the only method to present EVIDENCE concerning himself and his relationship to man, this method, the Bible. The Jew was not happy about this, he wanted to see more "signs". The Greek was not happy with God's method, for God's method seemed foolish to the Greek. It is the same today. Hundreds of Creeds have been written by the wisdom of men; because they did not like God's method. The gospel is still God's power to save. But, it must be presented, believed, and obeyed by the individual.

Those who do not obey the gospel of Christ will be LOST! (See 2 Thess. 1:7-9). The word 'response' has become, in the minds of worldly men, to be synonymous with conversion. They are not the same anymore than sprinkling is the same as Bible baptism.

How can I convince people? There is only ONE way, and if that doesn't work, forget it. Present the EVIDENCE God gave you. He that believes this EVIDENCE can go on to repent, confess Christ, and be buried with Christ in water for the remission of sins. And, He that believeth not shall be damned. (Mark 16:16). Plain enough? To put one in the water who rejects the EVIDENCE, or who came to the water as a "response" to some method the preacher has conceived to short cut the necessity of conversion, is WORTHLESS! Preach the word! Then Peter said to those who NOW had the EVIDENCE, "Save yourselves", Acts 2:40. Three thousand believed the EVIDENCE, obeyed, and were saved and added to the church. What convinced them? The gospel of Christ! Preach the word, and leave the rest to God and the hearer.

## Is God Partial? (Cont.)

one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." But God didn't plan one church for the Jews and another for the Gentiles, rather that both be reconciled unto himself in one body - the church. Man's efforts to justify the existence of many churches denies the impartiality of God.

One other way that the impartiality of God is seen is in the judgment. In Rom. 14:10 Paul stated that "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." And in 2 Cor. 5:10 he wrote, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The standard of this judgment is stated in Rom. 2:16, where Paul said, "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel." Jesus also stated in John 12:48, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." Every person will someday stand before the Lord and be judged. And the only standard to determine our destiny will be the gospel of Christ.

The fact that all men are lost in sin apart from Christ; that God desires the salvation of all; that He gave only one sacrifice for all alike; that He gave only one gospel to guide all to Christ for salvation; that He built but one church in which all may be reconciled unto God; and the fact that all will someday be judged by the same standard, all attest to the great and wonderful truth that God is not partial. How thankful we should be for this marvelous truth. May God help us never to lose sight of this great fact, and may we have the determination to ever walk in the one straight and narrow way that leads to eternal life.

### SPECIAL NOTICE

The area Churches of Christ are sponsoring an area-wide gospel meeting:  
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Date: June 19-25

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