

Rom. 14:19
So then let
us follow
after things
which make
for peace,
and things
whereby we
may edify
one another.



John 8:32
And
ye shall
know the
truth and
the truth
shall make
you free.

August 5
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DO YOU BELIEVE GOD?

Jim Stauffer

Notice the question is not “Do you believe IN God, but is, “Do you believe God?”

This is very important because we understand the functional meaning of believe is to “commit to in trust”. Therefore, if we believe in God, we must complete that by believing all that God has said and done.

The Psalmist said, *The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. (Psa. 19:1)* In conjunction with that the apostle Paul said, *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

(Rom. 1:20,21) Now these words from the God Who is the Creator of heaven and earth and all that comprises our Universe, has made clear that evidence supports His creative work. He further states there are those who know and understand Who He is and yet choose not to believe what He says. Jesus pointed out those folks when in the following text He delineated between those who know who God is and those who truly believe Him and are committed to Him and His word, *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’ (Mat. 7:21-23)*

Man will always be caught in the middle as he lives on the earth. Paul tells us how strong the desire of the flesh is in directing our lives **(Rom. 7)**. He follows that with the encouragement of being guided by the Spirit of God in **Chapter 8**. To be guided by God’s Spirit demands belief in His word, thus commitment to it.

It is this inward battle the child of God must win if he

is to, *...walk in the light as He Himself is in the light...* **(1 Joh. 1:7)**. But the pressure comes from the fleshly associations that, if we are not careful, can draw us away from believing God.

You see the world has not agreed that God exists. As a result they do not believe His word, do not subject to the authority of His Son and consider those who do to be irrational folks who have come to their conclusions as a result of their emotions.

In reality it is they who have come to an emotional conclusion. Think about rational thought for a moment. If a person determines his position based upon what he prefers rather than on the preponderance of the evidence, he is making an irrational, emotional decision. This is exactly what Paul tells us about those people in **Romans 1**. *For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator....(Rom. 1:25)*. He goes on to explain how this fully released their lust and led ultimately to homosexuality which is an abomination to God. Do we see they chose what they wanted to do, ignoring the knowledge they had of God. They believed in God, but chose not to believe Him. If we choose what we want, it will inevitably lead to carrying out the desire of the flesh. **(Gal. 5:16)** This is the primary motivation of those who reject God and continue their futile attempts to prove He does not exist as they strive to demonstrate the Universe resulted from some action other than His command.

We have to give them credit for this. They realize if they admit belief IN God, they will be led by logic to believe God and accept His word.

Now this brings us to the application of this principle of believing God. Please re-read **Mat. 7:21-23**, then follow it by reading **verses 24-27**. Jesus tells us the one who claims faith in God but lives according to his own choices and does not believe the word of God, will be rejected and condemned by God. There is clearly a difference in believing IN God and believing God.

MOCKING CREATIONISM IN CANADA

This summer I have been teaching a class on Sunday evenings at Wellandport on “Evidences for our Faith.” We are demonstrating that there is solid, sound evidence for rational thinking people to be Creationists, to believe in the Bible as the Word of God and to accept the Deity of Jesus.

Through the course, we have cited many scientists who reject The General Theory of Evolution and believe in Intelligent Design. Following a recent study, one of the members suggested I check out a speech by Canada’s recently appointed Governor General, Julie Payette. Given last fall to scientists at an Ottawa convention, Ms. Payette mocked Creationists and religion in general. It was reported by those who heard that speech that her “delivery was theatrical, her tone incredulous.”

“And we are still debating and still questioning whether life was a divine intervention or whether it was coming out of a natural process let alone, oh my goodness, a random process.”

She continued by mocking people of faith by saying, “And so many people — I’m sure you know many of them — still believe, want to believe, that maybe taking a sugar pill will cure cancer if you will it!” Most believed she was referring to people who prayed about their illnesses.

As I googled her speech and the reaction, much has been written about her insensitivity to religious people. One writer called her “mean-spirited.” Especially since she is a representative of the Crown and expected to be apolitical.

As I pointed out in our classes unbelievers and evolutionists often resort to ridicule instead of an honest intellectual study of the evidence. Our young people are subjected to science teachers and university professors who express contempt for Christianity, mock the Genesis account, and caricature Christians as backwoods, uneducated buffoons.

One response to Ms Payette was especially thoughtful by Dr. John Nufeld, “As a Christian, I have several thoughts. For one, I wonder if Ms. Payette would include Francis Collins, the former Director of the Genome Institute, in her list of people who believed in a sugar pill? Or would she acknowledge that Denis Alexander, Supervisor of the research group in cancer and immunology at the Babraham Institute, is not working on sugar pills, yet believes in God? I would commend her to read John Lennox, a mathematician at Oxford, specifically his book, *God’s Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?* She might find it interesting to actually read a book from one of the “sugar pill” people!” By the way, just for the record, surveys indicate that 65% of Canadians and 68% of Americans believe in God. While those numbers are down from past years, a significant segment of our people do not

agree with the likes of Ms. Payette.

In 2009 President Barack Obama nominated the geneticist Francis Collins to head the National Institutes of Health. In an essay for CNN Collins wrote, “I have found there is a wonderful harmony in the complementary truths of science and faith. The God of the Bible is also the God of the genome. God can be found in the cathedral or in the laboratory. By investigating God’s majestic and awesome creation, science can actually be a means of worship.

“While some American scientists questioned whether someone who professed a strong belief in God was qualified to lead the largest biomedical research agency in the world, apparently he has succeeded since President Trump retained him in that position last year.

In a 2017 Huffington Post article, “12 Famous Scientists on the Possibility of God,” writer Carol Kuruvilla reports a survey that says 51% of scientists believe in God or some form of a Higher Power.

There are many who would echo the sentiments of Dr. Joseph H. Taylor, a 1993 Nobel Prize winner in Physics, “A scientific discovery is also a religious discovery. There is no conflict between science and religion. Our knowledge of God is made larger with every discovery we make about the world.”

Taylor’s approach is in line with what Paul wrote in **Romans 1:20**. *“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.”*

Indeed further scientific discovery and knowledge about our cosmos lead us to exclaim with the Psalmist, *“The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.”*

I believe, as do many men and women of science that *“in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).*

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JESUS AND DISCIPLESHIP

“When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” (Mark 8:34- 38).

Many people give their lives in complete dedication to many different causes. It might be freedom, or

totalitarianism, or the pursuit of happiness. Many give the last full measure on behalf of some value greater than themselves. The ultimate sacrifice for something unique and important has been a part of many, many lives.

Jesus asks you and me to give our lives to Him. As we believe and accept His message, we will commit to spreading His word. We believe He has the only hope the world so badly needs.

The call to discipleship is rooted in who God is; God is the only true and living God. He demands that our love for Him be exclusive. We are to be loyal disciples of Christ; we cannot serve two masters. When Jesus says to take up our cross and follow Him, He is inviting us to die. We die to sin, to self, to the world. A Jewish audience, 2000 years ago, would especially understand Christ's words. On one occasion, the Greek armies, as they filled the land of Palestine, crucified 800 Jewish men outside the walls of Jerusalem. Wives and children watched the murder of their loved ones. A cross means death.

The Jews avoided visual symbols of faith in an effort to not violate the second commandment. Christians embrace the cross as a symbol of faith. The preaching of the cross dominated Apostolic preaching, while the notion of putting one's faith in a dead man (He was not really dead, but was alive) who died on a Roman cross was abhorrent to the first century mind. Crucifixion was a vehicle of barbarians. The fact is that in spite of the offensive nature of the cross, the early Christians refused to abandon the instrument of death. After, all their Savior willingly died such a death.

That is what true disciples of Christ do; they take up their crosses, dying daily, and press on to serve their Savior. Trying to somehow get around having to do this will cause us to miss what is really important and vital. We may gain lots of things by avoiding the cross, but we will soon lose everything that matters. How strong is our desire to be disciples of Christ?

Randy Harshbarger

And the Verdict is....

To bring our series on The Seventy Weeks of Daniel chapter nine to a close we will simply recap the major points:

1. At the end of the 70 year Babylonian Exile Daniel enters a prayer of Repentance.
2. Gabriel delivers to Daniel a prophecy of Seventy weeks concerning Judah and Jerusalem.
3. This prophecy had six ends: a. to finish transgression, b. to make an end of sins, c. to make reconciliation for iniquity, d. to bring in everlasting righteousness, e. to seal up vision and prophecy, f. and to anoint the most holy.
4. The timeline included the time of the arrival of the long awaited Messiah at the end of the sixty-ninth week.
5. Each of these ends came to pass at the crucifixion and resurrection of Our Lord, in the midst of the

Seventieth Week.

6. The destruction of Jerusalem by "the people of the prince that shall come" was determined at the same time, though it happened forty years later. It did not have to happen within the seventieth week.

7. Jesus referred to the "abomination of Desolation" in **Matthew 24:15**. Luke's account of this explains exactly what this event is in **Luke 21:20**, "*But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies*". It is not a still future occurrence we Christians today should be dreading. It happened in AD 70.

8. Jesus was the one who "*confirmed the covenant with many one week*" by teaching as He did in the Sermon on the Mount the New Covenant promised by **Jeremiah 31:31f**.

9. Jesus caused sacrifice and oblation to cease in the midst of the week by making them obsolete by His perfect and permanent sacrifice on the cross, **Heb. 7:27 9:12, 10:10; Jude 3, 5**.

This is the Christ-centered understanding of Daniel's ninth chapter.

Cleveland Reddinger

EVIDENCE

A young American engineer was sent to Ireland by his company to work in a new electronics plant. It was a two-year assignment that he had accepted because it would enable him to earn enough to marry his long-time girlfriend. She had a job near her home in Tennessee, and their plan was to pool their resources and put a down payment on a house when he returned. They corresponded often, but as the lonely weeks went by, she began expressing doubts that he was being true to her, exposed as he was to comely Irish lasses. The young engineer wrote back, declaring with some passion that he was paying absolutely no attention to the local girls. "I admit," he wrote, "that sometimes I'm tempted. But I fight it. I'm keeping myself for you."

In the next mail, the engineer received a package. It contained a note from his girl and a harmonica. "I'm sending this to you," she wrote, "so you can learn to play it and have something to take your mind off those girls." The engineer replied, "Thanks for the harmonica. I'm practicing on it every night and thinking of you." At the end of his two-year stint, the engineer was transferred back to company headquarters. He took the first plane to Tennessee to be reunited with his girl. Her whole family was with her, but as he rushed forward to embrace her, she held up a restraining hand and said sternly, "Just hold on there a minute, Billy Bob. Before any serious kissin' and huggin' gets started here, let me hear you play that harmonica!"

Bits & Pieces, October 15, 1992, pp. 17-18.

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

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What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10