

LENEXA EDIFIER

*"and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.""
(John 8:32)*

October 24, 2021

THE PARTIALITY OF GOD

Jim Stauffer

To what or whom is God partial? The Scriptures tell us on more than one occasion, He is impartial. The apostle Peter learned God was not partial concerning ethnicity in **Acts 10:34**, *"Opening his mouth, Peter said: 'I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality,'"* This followed a vision in which God demonstrated the cleanliness of diet and lifestyle of the Jew was no longer part of His message in the gospel of salvation. Therefore, Peter entered the house of a Gentile and preached the gospel to his family and servants.

The apostle Paul expressed this sentiment particularly on two occasions. First, where he makes clear God will honor the faithfulness of all men without partiality, *"For there is no partiality with God."* (**Romans 2:11**) Secondly, he states God had no greater respect for the initial 12 apostles over his belated apostleship, *"But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality) — well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me."* (**Galatians 2:6**) So, to what is God partial? These passages make it clear to us God is partial to those of faith. Let us take a brief look to see through this partiality thing that is endemic to the Calvinistic theology.

The Calvinist makes the claim that all men of faith are specifically elected to have such faith by God prior to their birth and without respect to any character or integrity they may possess or any devotion they may feel toward the Creator, inherently or by way of teaching. God, by way of irresistible grace grants them the faith required to please Him and He does this regardless of any desire on their part to receive such.

Let us look at Scripture and see if that position prevails or the one expressed in the previous passages examined. Joseph was told prior to the

birth of Jesus, *...He will save His people from their sins.* (**Mat. 1:21**) God then says, *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."* (**John 3:16**)

Now this is an early indication the people of Jesus will be those who believe in Him. Jesus then says, *"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* (**Matthew 11:28–30**) This text makes it clear the will of the one who comes to Jesus is free of any power beyond the invitation given for relief of the burden of sin. When we combine these messages with Jesus' statement to Pilate prior to His crucifixion that, *...Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.* (**John 18:37**), it is clear that the one who desires to come to Jesus must of a willing heart believe Him and the truth he brings (**John 8:32; 14:6**).

God is righteous and has always been partial to righteousness. That is the reason He sent Jesus to die on the cross. Note, we are separated from God by our sin, **Isaiah 59:1,2**. He then, because of His love for His creation extended His mercy in the form of His grace, Jesus Christ, to offer salvation from our sin (**Eph. 2:4,5; 1Pet. 1:18,19**). He then calls on us to hear His word, the gospel of salvation (**Romans 1:16; 10:17**) and believe it. (Notice our faith comes from hearing His word, not a direct operation of the Holy Spirit) Once we hear His word and believe it, we are called to the action of repenting from our sins (**Acts 2:38**) and putting on Christ in baptism to become sons of God through faith (**Gal. 3:26,27**). This results in the salvation from sin promised in the gospel and a restoration to righteousness in order to

have our relationship with God restored (**Mark 16:16; 2 Cor. 5:21**).

And all this must be a voluntary decision to act on our part. Yes, God is partial. He is partial to the one who has faith in Him. Read the history of Israel in the Old Testament and notice who returned from captivity. The faithful remnant. There is a second remnant today spoken of by Isaiah the prophet (**Isaiah 11:11**). And just as He did not allow the original generation of Israel to enter Canaan due to unbelief (**Hebrews 3:12-4:1**), an unbelief they developed of their own volition, He will not allow any to enter or receive the inheritance planned for those who are faithful to Him through the message of the gospel (**Ephesians 1:13,14**). There can be no validity to God's claim of impartiality if indeed He in a very partial way chooses one of us over the other without our participation in the choice whatsoever. Paul explains God's method of choosing is accomplished by the message of the gospel, *"But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

(**2 Thessalonians 2:13-14**) Please accept God's message before it is everlastingly too late, *"and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,"* (**2 Thessalonians 1:7-9**)

What You Think of Jesus Matters!

And you don't have to take my word for it. Jesus said so Himself! Please read on and consider your convictions about Jesus Christ:

Matthew 22:41-46

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, 'What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?' They said to Him, 'The Son of David.' He said to them, 'How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: 'The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool''? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?' And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore."

The Most Important Question

The Pharisees and Sadducees had asked Jesus many questions. Jesus then turned the tables on them and asked them a question which goes right to the heart of the matter: *"Whose Son is the Christ?"* The Pharisees knew that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, but they did not understand that He would be more than a human descendant — He would be God in the flesh! But when Jesus quoted **Psalm 110:1** to show that David had prophesied that the Messiah would be God in the flesh — well, that was more than these dishonest Jews could accept. They had no answer for Jesus, they refused to accept Him as the Son of God, as God in the flesh, and so nothing else really mattered after that.

What About You?

What do you think of Jesus? It matters because Jesus raised the question Himself to those who saw and heard Him. Philip preached Jesus to the Ethiopian (**Acts 8:35**) and when he was finished, we read the following: *"Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him"* (**Acts 8:36-38**).

Notice from this text that when an inspired teacher preached Jesus to the person his response was a desire to be baptized — right then, and there! Notice also that Philip refused to baptize him unless he confessed *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* So it not only matters what you believe about Jesus, but also you cannot be saved unless you believe the same thing the Ethiopian confessed! Many "cults" who claim to be "Christian" do not believe the truth about Jesus Christ. Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons say that he is a "created being." The Bible teaches that He is God Who came in the flesh.

If You Believe Jesus Is God's Son

Now if you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, but you have not been baptized in His name for the remission of sins, then you still have not been saved! Why believe Jesus is God's Son if you are not going to believe and obey Him? Many denominations who also claim to be "Christian" teach that baptism is not essential to salvation. They affirm that it is "an outward sign of an inward grace," or "proof that one is saved already." This is false and those baptized under such beliefs are not saved. So it matters what you believe about Jesus and that you are willing to submit

to Him and His true teaching. Beware, dear reader, that you are not deceived. Deception will get you lost forever. Satan is behind the false scheme and he can cause a "believer" (?) to be lost by believing a lie! Don't do it.

Believe the simple truth of **Mark 16:16**.

- Believe + Baptized = Salvation. •
- Not Believe = Salvation +- Baptized. •
- Not Baptized (as infant) = Salvation +- Belief Later.
- What You Think of Jesus Matters!

by Wayne Goff Roanridge Reader

The Third Requirement for a Kingdom

We have established in our last two articles that in order for a Kingdom to exist there must First be a King and Second there would need to be Subjects. If either of these is missing there can be no kingdom. This week we examine the next requirement for a kingdom and that is a Territory or Domain of Rule.

Every kingdom in history has had a territory of some kind whether it be large or small. Luxembourg is one of the smaller kingdoms while the Empire of Genghis Khan was by far the largest stretching from the Pacific Ocean to the Eastern parts of Europe. However, whatever the size or scope, a territory is necessary. So what of the Kingdom of God? To quote Jesus: *"What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"* (**Luke 10:26**) What did Jesus and the Apostles say about the Kingdom that sheds light on this question?

In **John 18:33-38** we read, *"Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, 'Are You the King of the Jews?' 34 Jesus answered, 'Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?' 35 Pilate answered, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?' 36 Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.' 37 Therefore Pilate said to Him, 'So You are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.' 38 Pilate *said to Him, 'What is truth?' And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and *said to them, 'I find no guilt in Him.'" Here we see Jesus acknowledging to Pilate that He was a king, indeed,*

but that his kingdom was not of this world. In other words it was not an earthly challenge to Rome and PILATE UNDERSTOOD EXACTLY THAT for he later said he found no guilt in him. It would have been treason for Pilate to say so if he thought Jesus was establishing a kingdom in competition to Rome and, for all his faults, Pilate was not a traitor. So, where does this leave us? Jesus said he was a King but not challenging the territorial rule of Rome and yet, He needs a territory.

The answer is in **Luke 17:20f**, *"Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.'" The older versions say, "the kingdom of God is within you." (ASV) Here is the answer we were seeking! The territory where Jesus reigns supreme is in the hearts of men. That is the territory where Jesus reigns. It helps us to understand what Peter means in **Acts 5:29**, *"We must obey God rather than men."* You can only wholeheartedly obey one master.*

We have a King. We have Subjects and we have a Territory. What lack we yet?

Cleveland Reddinger

Is feeling guilty a good thing?

Our conscience is like a thermostat for how we are measuring up to our standard of right and wrong. If our conscience is determined by God's word it can properly commend or rebuke us and our behavior. Note **Romans 2:15**: *"...who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them."*

It is a good thing for the conscience to feel bad when we are guilty. It is a very personal warning system.

A guilty conscience can drive us in a good way or a bad way. I am sorry for people who feel guilt for past deeds and do not know what to do. The guilt is a heavy burden that can destroy a person.

The word of God helps us fully and completely correct and reset a guilty conscience. It can bring us to repentance, confession and an appeal for forgiveness. That can be done for a person we have offended. Certainly all sin needs to be taken before God in that way.

Consider this text that speaks of guilt and the grief it produces. Not only does it describe the burden and grief produced by guilt, the text also describes the solution for a guilty conscience.

But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. (James 4:6-10).

If you would like to know more about forgiveness and the easing of a guilty conscience, give me a call so we can read the Bible together.

Don Bunting

We offer either in home studies in person or by way of Correspondence Courses.

Call me, Jim Stauffer at 913-620-0563, Evangelist at the Lenexa church of Christ.

We believe in worshiping and serving the Lord as He has instructed in His word.

Things people believe that are not taught in the Bible!

Some believe and practice that the church Jesus died to purchase is divided over doctrinal issues. See 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 12:25.

Please call us to study the Bible. It is refreshing.

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.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

OUR ADDRESS IS:

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Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders:

Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons:

Bill Miller

Brandon Jimison

Joe Hurd

Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

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

News and Notes:

Those in need of prayers:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick, Denese Goring, Brooklyn Boyer, Tracy Richardson, Don Craig, Tina Brofft, Ken Green, Matt Bassford, Tim Young, J R Bronger, Gerry Sandusky and Cleveland Reddinger.

Bible Classes: Sunday Morning - **Revelation** - Bill Miller

Wednesday Evening - **1&2 Peter and Jude** - Ron Peck

Sunday Sermon:

I Know God's Promise is True