
CLARITY TRUMPET

a publication of
CLARITY MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle? So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

-First Corinthians 14:8, 9

What About Those Who Have Never Heard the Gospel? Are they Lost?

How can a loving God let anyone go to hell if they have never heard of Christ and are therefore incapable of believing in Him? Does it seem fair for God to bar people from Heaven if they are living up to the light they have?

This is one of those emotionally charged questions that often receives either an equally emotional response, or a response where one appeals to reason in the attempt to make their way through the knotty problems that such a question seems to create.

I have no problem with either emotions or the intellect; God made us with both. As I see it, the problem is with emotionalism and intellectualism; that is, where the source for *solving* Bible based questions is found in the emotions or the intellect. We should not despise either, but neither should we *rely* on either for the discovery of Bible answers to Bible questions.

Proverbs 3:5, 6 is pretty clear: "*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*" We are not to *trust* in our hearts (emotions), nor are we to *lean on* our own understanding (our thought processes). We should be moved, blessed and encouraged emotionally by what we read in God's Word, but not to the point of allowing our emotions to determine our interpretation of that same Word. Just so, we should be intellectually challenged by what we read in the Scriptures, but we should also keep our thoughts and conclusions subject to what the Bible clearly teaches. Never *subject* Scripture to your logic or to your emotions; always let Scripture have authority over any conclusions based upon emotional or intellectual considerations only.

God's Word is not silent on this question. In fact, it is very revealing. The test for each of us, therefore, will be: Will I submit to what the Bible clearly reveals? If what I read in Scripture repulses me emotionally or is intellectually repugnant, will I bow before "Thus says the Lord" or insist on my

own conclusions based on my own emotional or intellectual bent?

What Does the Bible Actually Teach?

What God *Has Done* to Make Salvation Available to All

Romans 1:18-20: First, He has revealed Himself *in* those who "suppress the truth in unrighteousness." This is an *inborn* God-awareness. He has also revealed Himself *to* them through creation. This is a God-awareness through nature. Neither of these are sufficient to bring salvation to anyone, but they are sufficient to cause one to seek after the God of creation.

John 3:16, 17: God gave His only begotten Son to be our Savior and when He came to earth He provided salvation for all through His death and resurrection (cp. Luke 2:11 and 19:10).

Hebrews 2:9: Jesus "tasted death for *every man*" -- not just the civilized or the elect. Also, First John 2:2 states that Christ was the "propitiation (satisfactory payment) not for our sins only but also for *the whole world*" -- the so-called pagan included. Then there's Titus 2:11: God's grace "that brings salvation has appeared to *all men*" -- *all men* would certainly include those who have never heard.

What God *Is Doing* to Make Salvation Available to All

John 1:9: Jesus is "the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world." Every man, then, is born with Divine light from God, a God-awareness. People are not born with a bent toward atheism, but toward God. No one comes into this world without this *initial light* from God. What may happen to that light we'll see in a moment.

John 16:7-11: Jesus promised that once He left to return to the Father in Heaven He would send the Holy Spirit, and when the Spirit came the promise was that He would "convict" (persuade)

the *world* of the sin of unbelief, of its need for righteousness, and of coming judgment. Jesus *did* go back to Heaven and He *did* send the Holy Spirit who *is doing* His convicting work now.

John 12:32: Jesus promised that when He was “lifted up from the earth” He would “draw all peoples” to Himself -- “all” is all. *He is doing it now.* He draws, but not all respond to His drawing. **Note:** Some have changed the impact of this statement of Christ’s by making “all” mean all *kinds* of people -- various races, the poor, the rich, the educated, the ignorant, etc. But the evidence points to the all-inclusive drawing of all men by the Savior.

Jeremiah 29:13: God guarantees that those who *seek* Him will find Him -- written to Israel in captivity in a heathen country, Babylon. Also, Isaiah 55:1, 6-9: “Ho! *Everyone* who thirsts, come to the waters (v. 1). . . *Seek* the Lord while He may be found (v. 6).” In Acts 17:16-34 Paul was in Athens and he saw that “the city was given over to idols” (v. 16). He witnessed to the worldly (and heathen) philosophers on Mars Hill and told them that God has made “of one blood *every nation of men*” in order that they “should *seek* the Lord. . .” (vs. 24-27). He then proceeded to tell them of Christ and some of them believed (vs. 29-34).

Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8: All of these verses record The Great Commission where Christ commanded His disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. They did it and all the world heard the Gospel *in the first century* (Colossians 1:5, 6, 23). **Important Point:** If those who have never heard the Gospel can be saved by sincerely believing in their own gods or religions, then the *worse* thing Christians could do would be to take the Gospel to them, for then they would be condemned if they failed to believe in Christ (John 3:18, 36). Would Jesus Christ command us to preach the Gospel to the world if these people were already saved through their own pagan beliefs? Not hardly.

Why Have Some Not Heard the Gospel?

Romans 1:18-28 contains the answer: *They* suppressed (held down) the Truth in their unrighteousness (v. 18). “When *they knew* God (literally: when they were *aware* of God), *they* did not glorify Him as God, nor were *they* thankful, but became

futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts were darkened” (v. 21). Cause and effect: what you sow, you reap. “*They* became fools and *changed* the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man -- and birds, and four-footed beasts and creeping things” (vs. 22, 23). This is what pagans continue to do. *They* “exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator” (v. 25). So, “God gave them up to uncleanness. . . gave them up to vile passions. . . and gave them over to debased minds” (vs. 24, 26, 28). Cause and effect again.

God’s Remedy: His Way of Salvation

John 3:18: “*He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*”

John 10:1: Anyone who tries to “climb up” into the sheepfold (a possible reference to Heaven) “is a thief and a robber.” All “who ever came before” Christ are thieves and robbers (v.8) -- this could include the likes of Hinduism and animism.

John 14:6: “*Jesus said to him (Thomas), I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*”

Acts 4:12: “*Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*”

God’s Method to Reach the Unreached

- **God sends *witnessing* believers to *seeking* unbelievers**, as Philip was sent to the Ethiopian man on his way back to Africa (Acts 8:26-39).

- **At other times God sends *seeking* unbelievers to *witnessing* Christians**, as God told Cornelius to send for Peter (Acts 10:1-11:18).

Your Response

If you have never trusted in Christ to save you, will you do it now? If you have trusted in Him, will you be one of those “witnessing Christians” whom God is able to send to the lost? ×

Richard A. Seymour

Clarity Trumpet #21

~~~~~

P. O. Box 10 • LaGrange, WY 82221