

How Many People Does God Want to Save?

OPPOSING THE ERROR OF PREDESTINATION

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: SUPRESSING PRESBYTERIANS / LEWIS FIRED / ACLU VS. TEN COMMANDMENTS

It is well-known to historians that Augustine (354-430) invented the theory of predestination because he could not sexually control himself. He became a Catholic monk and, later, bishop of Hippo in North Africa. The church eventually "sainted" him because he wrote in his book *The City of God*, that the papacy was the center of the church and "there was no salvation outside of the church."

John Calvin (1509-1564), of Geneva, was the leading Protestant advocate of predestination.

According to this horrible teaching, God intentionally saves only a few and throws everyone else in eternal hellfire after they die. They never had a chance to be saved. Salvation is not determined by man's decisions and actions, but by God's arbitrary preselection. Only a few that God "predestines" can be saved.

How can anyone believing such blasphemy love their Redeemer, and why should they live moral lives, thinking they are predestined to be saved?

Large numbers of Christians today accept this hateful doctrine, which actually teaches that God has an arbitrary, mean, vicious character. Here are several Bible verses which clearly disprove this error:

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."—*1 Timothy 2:3-6*.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."—*Titus 2:11-12*.

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure."—*2 Peter 1:10*.

"Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?"—*Ezekiel 18:23*.

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in Him should not per-

ish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."—*John 3:14-17*.

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."—*2 Peter 3:9*.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!"—*Luke 13:34*.

"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."—*John 1:9*.

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."—*1 John 4:9-10*.

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"—*Romans 8:32*.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—*Luke 19:10*.

"And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."—*1 John 4:14*.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—*John 5:24*.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."—*Acts 16:31*.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life."—*Revelation 3:5*.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—*Revelation 22:17*.

Suppressing Conservative Presbyterians in Texas

In mid-October, an important gathering of Presbyterians met in Camp Allen, Texas. The objective of leadership was to silence those pastors and lower-level church leaders who still believe in the Bible.

Because our own denomination is gradually moving in a similar direction, there are lessons here for us.

At this Diocese of Texas clergy conference, deep tensions occurred between those who want to remain with Biblical morals, standards, and beliefs, and the “progressives” who want to modernize the church.

Texas Bishop Don Wimberly presided over the meetings and fully supported liberal positions. The entire gathering was obviously convened to bring the conservatives into line. Liberal positions were maintained from the rostrum; and private meetings were held with pastors who expressed any concern to stand on Scriptural principles. Intimidation and threats were used to win their submission.

The cause of the problem was the fact that the ordination, several months ago, of Gene Robinson as Presbyterian bishop of New Hampshire has split the Presbyterian denomination down the middle, throughout the world field. As you may know, a number of years earlier while still a Presbyterian pastor, Robinson publicly divorced his wife, so he could have sex with a man who has lived with him ever since. Declaring that what he is doing is Biblical and fully accepted by God, Robinson does not attempt to hide this shameful conduct. This has aroused the worldwide church.

Wimberly, head of the Presbyterian churches in Texas, is determined to silence all conservative opposition in his territory—either threaten pastors into obedient silence or fire them. Wimberly is trying to accomplish this without arousing local church members into bolting from the denomination and leaving it. It is their donations which pay all the bills; and they must be placated during the process of gradually moving them into an abandonment of Biblical standards.

Without identifying themselves, several of the ministers have expressed their concerns to the media. Their comments reveal what happened at that gathering:

“The clergy conference was a disaster. This diocese is being ruined. Clergy had to sit through two sessions of an hour each, listening to Dr. L. Michael White, who is chair of the department of religion at the University of Texas and a Presbyterian Church consultant. We were told we must ‘embrace culture’; for, if we don’t, we turn our backs on Christ. There was no talk about salvation; everything was about relationships.

“White said St. Paul was not a Christian and did not consider himself one. He was just in charge of a Jewish sect which spent his time arguing with Peter,

who was in charge of another Jewish sect.

“He said Paul did not write the Pastoral Epistles, but they were written a hundred years later to disprove New Testament Christianity.

“White, who only quoted revisionist authors, never the Bible, said that those who hold to a fundamental understanding of the Bible are modern-day heretics.

“When asked why he invited White to speak, Wimberly said it was to get the pastors to think about other options and to stretch their minds.”

Each priest was given a new revised clergy manual with changed guidelines and church policies. He was also given a second new manual; this one was all about how the pastors should permit loose sexual conduct in the church. More than once a diocese official would say, “The lawyers have told us that we have to do this.”

One pastor commented: “If we refuse to sign and fax back the new changes, I expect we’ll be kicked out.”

The most depressing aspect of the conference was that nearly all the conservative pastors were silent. “They look defeated, especially the clergy of small congregations.”

“Repeatedly, Wimberly said, ‘We must face reality. This is the way it is now.’ ”

Wimberly said the next clergy meeting, scheduled for February in Houston, will be for those clergy who voted no to Gene Robinson’s consecration as bishop. They will either come into line with Wimberly or be pushed out.

With two exceptions, not one pastor in the diocese dared speak openly against the apostasy, lest they lose their jobs. One exception was a pastor who openly opposed Bishop Wimberly and then left the conference early. He plans, if necessary, to take his congregation out of the Presbyterian Church.

He said, “Because I stood up to the bishop at council and took my delegation with me when I left early, the bishop sent me a mean letter and I had a few ‘office’ discussions about my churchmanship, loyalty and ability. I expect this diocese to be totally liberal within one to two years, except for pockets of ‘truth’ here and there. I will have to leave, because I’m tired of being beat up by the church I serve.”

Following the Diocesan Council, a second congregation of 200 worshipers left the Episcopal Church entirely.

“It used to be that the Diocese of Texas was a safe and relatively conservative diocese; now it is not. It has become liberal and no longer a safe place for orthodox followers of Jesus Christ.”

Developments in the Presbyterian Church mirror liberal trends within our own.

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The ACLU vs. the Ten Commandments

The ACLU (which was the active agent in the 1925 Evolution Trial) hates God and Christians, and does all it can to destroy every vestige of Christianity from American life. But there is also another reason why, in recent years, it is trying to destroy the Ten Commandments:

“Pots of Gold Behind Crosses and Ten Commandments. June 23, 2004, by Phyllis Schlafly.

“The supervisors of the great Los Angeles County decided to turn tail and run rather than fight a lawsuit threatened by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Why such weak-kneed response? Lawyers for the county ominously warned that the county might lose the case and have to pay the ACLU’s attorney’s fees.

“The ACLU is demanding that the county remove a tiny cross from its seal, one of nearly a dozen symbols it portrays. One need only look at the seal to see how ridiculous is the ACLU’s demand.

“A third of the seal and the centerpiece is the Greek goddess Pomona standing on the shore of the Pacific Ocean. The ACLU doesn’t object to her; portrayals of pagan goddesses are okay.

“Six side sections of the seal depict historical motifs: the Spanish galleon San Salvador, a tuna fish, a cow, the Hollywood Bowl, two stars representing the movie and television industries, oil derricks, and a couple of engineering instruments that signify Los Angeles’ industrial construction and space exploration. The cross is so tiny that it doesn’t even have its own section and consumes maybe two percent of the seal’s space.

“Removing the cross is a blatant attempt to erase history, to drop it down the Memory Hole as George Orwell would say. It is just as reasonable to recognize the historical fact that California was settled by Christians who built missions all over the state as it is to honor the Spanish ship, the San Salvador, which sailed into San Pedro (named after St. Peter) Harbor on October 8, 1542.

“The reason the Los Angeles County seal is such a big deal is not because it is a violation of the First Amendment. It is because a pot of gold hiding under it is attracting the ACLU like honey attracts flies.

“A little known 1976 federal law, called the *Civil Rights Attorney’s Fees Awards Act*, enables the ACLU to collect attorney’s fees for its suits against crosses, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Ten Commandments. This law was designed to help plaintiffs in civil rights cases, but the ACLU is using it for First Amendment cases, that is, asserting a civil right NOT to see a cross or the Ten Commandments!

“The financial lure created by this law is the engine

that is driving dozens of similar cases all over the country. Every state, county, city, public park or school that has a cross, a Ten Commandments plaque or monument, or recites the Pledge of Allegiance, has become a target for ACLU fundraising.

“There are thousands of Ten Commandments plaques or monuments all over the country, and lawsuits to remove them have popped up in more than a dozen states. In Utah the ACLU even announced a scavenger hunt with a prize for anyone who could find another Ten Commandments monument that the ACLU could persuade an activist judge to remove.

“The most famous Ten Commandments case is one in the State Judicial Building in Montgomery, Alabama, installed by Chief Justice Roy Moore and ordered removed by a Carter-appointed federal judge. As their reward for winning its removal, the ACLU, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, and the Southern Poverty Law Center collected \$540,000 in attorney’s fees and expenses from the Alabama taxpayers.

“Kentucky taxpayers have handed over \$121,500 to pay the ACLU for its action against the Ten Commandments display outside its state capitol. Taxpayers in one Tennessee county had to pay the ACLU \$50,000 for the same ‘offense.’

“The ACLU profited enormously, collecting \$790,000 in legal fees plus \$160,000 in court costs, as a result of its suit to deny the Boy Scouts of America the use of San Diego’s Balboa Park for a Summer camp, a city facility the Scouts had used since 1915. The ACLU argued that the Boy Scouts must be designated a ‘religious organization’ because it refuses to accept homosexual scoutmasters and because the Scouts use an oath ‘to do my duty to God and my country.’

“In northern Minnesota, the Duluth city council voted 5 to 4 to acquiesce in the ACLU’s demand to remove a Ten Commandments monument from public property because the city couldn’t afford to pay the legal costs of defending the monument, plus the ACLU’s legal fees. Redlands, California, likewise backed down after the ACLU threatened a lawsuit to force removal of a cross from part of a city logo.

“Similar lawsuits could challenge ‘under God’ in the Pledge of Allegiance, since the U.S. Supreme Court ducked deciding the issue this week in the Michael Newdow case. There are 16,000 public school districts that could become targets of lawsuits to ban the Pledge.

“Rep. John Hostettler (R-IN) has introduced H.R. 3609 to end this racket by amending the federal law that makes it possible. Most lawsuits do not award attorney’s fees to the winner.” —vf