



Waylan Dabbs ON BELIEF

Huckleberry Finn ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD



I am privileged this weekend to publish an article by my friend Waylan Dabbs of Coral Springs, Florida. I commissioned him to write it. Waylan, along with many others, wrote me in support of my stand on “What is a Believer?” These letters elicited great thanksgiving on my part, as it was not without trepidation that I launched last week’s edition. This is a volatile topic, but apparently (and marvelously) not as volatile as I thought. Many “Amens!” washed ashore in the wake of that edition. I want you to know that you are not alone in holding to the fundamentals of Paul’s gospel and wanting to see them defended.

Waylan wrote me and used these very words, “Martin, you’re not alone. Believers have to believe something. Sounds logical to me.” Waylan is an able teacher, and so I asked him if he would write an article on this topic. Waylan is so self-effacing. He said, “Martin, I’ll do it, as long as you edit all the stupid out of it.” Truth is, I edited nothing out of it; not a word. It’s a smart article. All I did was fix some punctuation. Waylan’s short testimony of his journey into truth will resonate with many of you and will establish you even deeper into Paul’s evangel.

Following Waylan’s article will be a short piece by another one of my good friends, Huckberry Finn. Huck took time out from a fishing expedition with Jim to write an article for me on the sovereignty of God. Huck’s articles never fail to delight me. I love the drop-dead simplicity of Huck’s logic. He and Waylan have this in common, I would say: the beauty of their logic. Wouldn’t it be great to get these two together sometime at a conference? Man, I’d buy tickets to *that* show.

The grace of God be with you all. —MZ



Am I a believer?

by
Waylan Dabbs

1 Tim. 4:10—

For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, *especially of those that believe.*

Especially of those that believe? What does it mean to believe, to be a believer? Webster’s 1828 dictionary defines a believer as follows:

Believer, n. One who believes; one who gives credit to other evidence than that of personal knowledge.

1. In theology, one who gives credit to the truth of the Scriptures, as a revelation from God. In a more restricted sense, a professor of Christianity; one who receives the gospel, as unfolding the true way of salvation, and Christ, as his Savior.

Simply put, a believer is one who believes a certain thing. In the definition above, a believer is one who believes the gospel as unfolding the true way of salvation.

In Acts 16:30, one of the most important questions ever asked made its way into Scripture. *What must I be doing to be saved?* (Concordant Literal Version). “Believe” was the answer that came from our apostle’s lips.

That alone shows us the importance of belief.



1 John 5:10-13 (CLV)—

He who is believing in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; he who is not believing God has made him a liar, for he has not believed in the testimony which God has testified concerning His Son. And this is the testimony, that God gives us life eonian and this life in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who has not the Son of God has not life. These things I write to you that you who are believing in the name of the son of God may be perceiving that you have life eonian.

He who is not believing God has made Him a liar. Wow, strong words. What are we to be believing? What

record has been given us to believe? What do I need to believe so as to not make God a liar? According to the above, believing God concerning His Son gives us the testimony of eonian life. According to Acts 16:30, I must be believing to be saved. What do I need to believe?

Let’s go back to Paul

1 Cor. 15: 1-4—

Now I am making known to you, brethren, the evangel which I bring to you, which also you accepted, in which also you stand, through which also you are saved, if you are retaining what I said in bringing the evangel to you, outside and except you believe feignedly. For I give over to you among the first what also I accepted, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was entombed, and that He has been roused the third day according to the Scriptures.

The evangel through which also you are saved: *What is it?*

1. Christ died for our sins.
2. Christ was entombed.
3. Christ was roused the third day.

There it is, simple, plain, and precise.

Rom. 1:16—

For not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God’s power for salvation to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well.

The 3 things above are God’s power for salvation to everyone believing them. To everyone believing them? Yes!! To everyone believing them. The simple conclusion is that those not believing them are not presently saved.

I’m a simple man and I like simple logic and language. Either you are a believer, or you are not. Either you believe that Christ died for your sins, was entombed and roused, or you don’t. Either you are a believer, or you’re not.

When an honestly mistaken man is shown the truth something must happen. The man either ceases to be mistaken or ceases to be honest.

THE RECENT DEBATE

Much debate has surfaced lately concerning such doctrines as the Trinity, Free Will, and the Immortality of the Soul. Does belief in these doctrines mean that one does not believe the Gospel? Does believing that Jesus is the immortal God mean that one does not believe in the death

of Christ? These are great questions. Let me reflect on my own story.

I was raised fundamental Baptist all my life and knew the Bible well according to my belief at that time. If you were to ask me the below questions this is how I would answer.

1. Do you believe Christ died? Answer; an emphatic YES!!
2. Do you believe that Jesus is the immortal God? Answer; an emphatic YES!!
3. What does immortal mean? Answer; Incapable of dying.
4. Do you believe Christ died? Answer an emphatic YES!!
5. Do you believe that Jesus died for your sins? Answer; an emphatic YES!!
6. Why do people go to hell? My emphatic answer; because of sins!!
7. Where did Christ go after the Cross? Answer; He went and witnessed to the spirits in prison.
8. Do you believe Christ was buried? Answer; YES!!
9. Where was Christ buried? Answer; a tomb.
10. How long was He in the tomb? Answer; 3 days and 3 nights.
11. Was Jesus raised? Answer an emphatic YES!!
12. Why did Jesus need to be raised from the dead? Answer; because He was dead.



Hopefully you can see the contradictions in my answers. Yet, those would have been my answers regardless of what order, or how you phrased the questions. But one day, a herald came by and told me the truth, the truth that Jesus actually died for my sins.

Rom. 10:14—

How, then should they be invoking One in Whom they do not believe? Yet how should they be believing One of Whom they do not hear? Yet how should they be hearing apart from one heralding?

At first this did not resonate with me but then I began to understand. Slowly but surely, I began to understand that if Jesus was the immortal God, then He couldn't have died. I began to understand that if Christ actually died for sins, then sin was dealt with; no one would need go to hell for sins that had been dealt with. These things began to stir in my mind and the open, outright contradictions in my belief system began to shine as if a bright light had been focused upon them. The change in thought and belief was slow and researched, but change nonetheless.

I realized then that to believe that Christ was the immortal God was to believe that He did not, no, *couldn't* die. To believe that people went to hell was to insist that Christ did not actually die for my sins. I had to come to the conclusion that I was honestly mistaken concerning these things, but mistaken all the same. I either had to continue to be mistaken and sacrifice being honest about my belief system, or quit being mistaken. I tried to clear these thoughts from my mind, but the light had been shown, and the more I struggled the more I sank, as if in quicksand, into the conclusion that I was mistaken. Then I became honest; *Oh my God!!! I don't really believe that Christ died! I really don't believe that He died for sins.* That honesty hit me like a ton of bricks.

SATANIC BLINDNESS

2 Cor. 4:3-6—

Now, if our evangel is covered, also, it is covered in those who are perishing, in whom the god of this eon blinds the apprehensions of the unbelieving so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, does not irradiate them. For we are not heralding ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, yet ourselves your slaves because of Jesus, for the God Who says that, out of darkness light shall be shining, is He who shines in our hearts, with a view to the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

I was blind, pure and simple, but God said, "Let the light shine in darkness," and I began to see. It was blind-

ness to which I could not claim responsibility, and a light that I also could not claim responsibility for. Only an imposed blindness could account for me, an intelligent, logical person, not being able to see the blatant contradictions that now are so evident.

On this side of darkness I can honestly say that;

I WAS NOT A TRUE BELIEVER UNTIL THE LIGHT SHOWN THROUGH AND MY CONTRADICTIONS VANISHED!

Phil. 1:29—

For to you it is graciously granted, for Christ's sake, not only to be believing on Him, but to be suffering for His sake also.

May God ever empower me to stand and herald the truth that Christ died for our sins, was entombed, and raised the third day. —Waylan Dabbs



Waylan and Regena Dabbs live in Coral Springs, FL.

The Sov'rignty of God; I git it.

by
Huckleberry Finn

Man is a creature tryin' to convince himself he's a creator. The preacher in our old church, Rev. Gilger, he said God was sov'rn. Maybe I don't got the word right. Anyway, Miss Watson says it means that God's running everything like He wants to, when He wants to, how He wants to, and all such. I go along with it. That's the only way it *can* be, seeing as how He's God. But Rev. Gilger gummed it up after that, sayin' that, in His running everything like He wants to, God decides to give everybody else their own

sov'rignty. That's when it went bad. The last time I heard a man jabber like that he was running a fever of a hundred an' six.

You tell me: if I give my best shootin' marble to Tom Sawyer, do I still have the shootin' marble? Why, I just told you: *Tom's* got it. And he ain't giving it back, neither, because I know him. So soon as God gives away His sov'rignty to everybody, why, He ain't getting it back. He done tied Himself up. Now everybody's got the sov'rignty, just like Him. What does that spell? That spells that *nobody's* got the sov'rignty. There's no room but for one sov'rignty in the universe. Otherwise it's like puttin' six ladies in a bathroom at the same time; it don't go good.

This thing gets more neutered-up the more a body thinks on it. If everybody's sov'rn, there's no tellin' what's going to happen. It's a tangle. If God really did give sov'rignty to everybody—which He never done, so don't fret over it—then how's God goin' to garruntee that all what He says is goin' to happen *is* goin' to happen? Why, He can't, not if every blame person in the world's got his own sov'rignty. Even Pap's jackass knowed *that* much. If that's the way it washes, all God can do now is sit around and hope it all comes out. That can't be; He's *God*. And to me, that's just the start of His worries, that is, if everybody's got the sov'rignty. Well, I know I ain't got it, because every time I try to express it, Miss Watson fetches the hick'ry. So the whole thing's wet.

You'd think a schooled man like Rev. Gilger would have knowed better. I don't think a man learns much about God in a cemetery ("seminary" *-Ed*). From what I see, they carry their sense in on a wheelbarrow and out in a thimble. If what I heard in church that day is what they teach in a cemetery, I know I ain't signing on. And if any of what I heard from Rev. Gilger that day ever makes a lick o' sense, I'll eat a worm.

And I done it before. —Huck



Huck and his friend Jim live in Hannibal, MO.