



# ZWTF

Zapping You Whenever Thoughts Flow

Volume 7, Issue 47

## More important than the salvation of all.

Understanding God's goal to reconcile the universe through Christ is fine, but is it enough for eonian life?



As great as the truth of the salvation of all humanity is, it is not the gospel of the transcendent grace of God. Rather, it is the result of that gospel. Put another way: the gospel of the transcendent grace of God (Paul's gospel) is the only place in Scripture where we will find definitive proof that all humanity was saved at the cross and will eventually return to God, "each in his own class" (1 Corinthians 15:23). But this truth is not the *essence* of Paul's gospel. It's the far-reaching result of Paul's gospel being true.

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What, then, is Paul's gospel? It is that Jesus Christ, and He alone (without the assistance of human contribution and, in fact, in spite of universal human opposition), rescued humanity from Sin and the resultant penalty of eternal death. In fact, He did this through His own death. For through the death of Jesus Christ, God considered the old humanity to have died. (That's why He sent Christ in the first place: to kill the old humanity.) In this, Jesus Christ became a representative Man. His life, death and resurrection stood for everyone who had been condemned in Adam, which was everyone (Romans 5:18-19). This was the judgment of God against Sin: the death of His Son, Who—although never committing a single sin—became Sin itself (2 Corinthians 5:21). The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead was God's seal of approval upon the work of His Son to accomplish what God had sent Him to do, which was to eventually vivify the same all who had become subjected to death through Adam, which was all humanity.

Here is Paul's gospel in a nutshell—

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 (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

One can believe this gospel without grasping the far-reaching, race-wide effects of it. Likewise, one can grasp the far-reaching, race-wide effects of the gospel without grasping the God-given means of effecting it. The former belief is sufficient for eonian life, but the latter—of failing to grasp the means of salvation—is fatal.



## CLOSE BUT NO LIFE

I know many who believe in the salvation of all, but who are not founded on Paul's gospel and, in fact, do not even know that Paul *has* a gospel. It is possible to believe in the salvation of all without having eonian life oneself. Witness the following:

1) Universalism. Universalists believe in the salvation of all, but they do not necessarily base this belief on the cross of Christ for Sin. The Universalist generally bases his or her belief on a soulish conception of God, that God is simply too nice to send anyone into an eternity of torment or death. This, of course is not the gospel. There *is* something known as "Christian Universalism," which aligns with Scripture and does recognize the cross of Christ as the means of the salvation of all humanity, but as this is often confused with the larger and more vague brand name, "Universalism," it is best to denounce the

title. I never call myself either a "Universalist" or a "Christian Universalist." It's too broad of an umbrella with too many opportunities for misunderstanding. When asked what I am, I announce myself simply as "a believer" (this is the inspired nomination of those of my ilk) which usually begs the question, "What do you believe?" This question allows me the opportunity to explain the finer points of my confession.

2) Unitarianism. The Unitarian church is more New Age than it is "Christian." It's chief tenet is the inherent worth and dignity of every person. In other words, humanity is too good to be damned. The way I usually explain Universalism vs. Unitarianism (my explanation is probably over-simplified but it does the job) is that Universalists believe that God is too good to damn people for eternity, whereas Unitarians believe that humanity is too good to be damned. Then there is the monstrosity "Unitarian Universalist," which ought to be avoided like the flu.

## MISSING THE BOAT

The common, negative denominator in many of the “universal salvation” camps is a lack of understanding and care about the underlying gospel—the message of salvation—which is exclusive to Paul. Paul’s gospel has to do with a *personal* salvation. It is the understanding that humans are helpless to save themselves. It is the understanding that the actual death of Christ (Jesus Christ did not exist for three days) and the faith of Christ in trusting that His Father would accomplish that for which He sent Him—both through the cross and His subsequent resurrection—is the backbone of salvation. It is certainly the backbone of Paul’s gospel. It is the understanding that God then imparts the faith necessary for humans to believe this message, apart from which they could not and would not.

Naturally, I like it when I hear teachers heralding the salvation of all. Some ministries and teachers excel in this aspect of truth. I can’t complain about it. But does this message, by itself, give its hearers the information necessary for eonian life? It does not. I suspect that perhaps hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of people on this planet have some vague concept that God will return all creation to Himself. But this alone is not saving faith. I am not convinced that Satan himself does not believe in the salvation of all. Is Satan then a member of the body of Christ? It’s a rhetorical question.

## OUT OF FOCUS

What are we to say, then, of ministries that focus on the salvation of all but either ignore or botch the gospel of Paul? Such ministries do an ultimate disservice to their hearers. It could be that the declaration of the salvation of all will lead one to further questions and, eventually, to the foundations of personal salvation, but is the ministry or teacher then equipped to field such questions? Most are not.

I know other ministries that emphasize the gospel of Paul, but that are ignorant of the logical outcome of Paul’s gospel, which is the salvation of all. One such ministry is called “Grace Ambassadors” in central Indiana. These people understand Paul’s specific message and rightly distinguish it from the gospel of the Circumcision, but at the same time they make salvation dependent upon a human free will decision, effectively contradicting their whitewashed assertion that salvation is of Christ. Besides this, they make Jesus Christ out to be God the Father *and* “God the Son,” which is of course not only nonsense but denies the death of Christ for Sin.

With the exception of the truth that God gave Paul a special message, “Grace Ambassadors” is a regrettable mess. They ought to call themselves, “Almost Grace Ambassadors,” or “Grace Shambassadors.” It’s a pity that no one in the ministry, including pastor Justin Johnson, believes any truth besides that Paul alone heralds the transcendent grace of God—which they don’t even vaguely grasp. I have learned some things from the website that have sharpened my grasp of Paul, but one must cherry-pick this site and leave everything that is not a cherry (which is most of it) to the compost pile.

## THE FIVE PILLARS OF TRUTH

What a theological mess the world is in. We have ministries that believe in the salvation of all, but are clueless as to how it comes. We have other ministries that know it comes, but deny their own teaching by poisoning it with the demonic doctrines of Free Will and the Trinity. What ministries or teachers *can* you trust?

Very few ministries or teachers herald every item of what I call the Five Pillars of Truth. Here are the five pillars:

- 1) a recognition that Paul’s gospel is to be segregated from the gospel to Israel as heralded by the terrestrial Jesus, and Peter
- 2) a knowledge that God is working out His purpose through a series of time periods known as eons
- 3) belief in the sovereignty of God, which requires a *disbelief* in Human Free Will
- 4) an understanding that death is non-existence, and that Jesus Christ, in fact, died
- 5) belief that, through the cross of Christ, God will reconcile all things to Himself

## GO FOR THE GOLD

Not many ministries or teachers herald all five of these foundational pillars. This is quite possibly the understatement of the century. When you find a ministry or a teacher that teaches all five things, then you have been dipped by God into a gold mine. Rejoice. If a ministry or a teacher lacks even one of these five pillars, seek elsewhere. One fly in the ointment spoils the entire jar.

Let us thank God for His indescribable gratuity.

—MZ