

# Galations #16

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[ 0 : 00 ]     Someone asked regarding the days that Christ spent in the tomb and the literality of it being three days and three nights.

And we discussed that a little bit in a previous session. And I intended to bring a paper this morning, but the source from which I was going to get it, Ron Vincent, didn't have it immediately available.

But it will be next Thursday. And I will bring copies of it and can distribute them. And a very strong case is presented that does explain in considerable detail how it was that Christ was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

And you will appreciate the content. Here's another question, which I cannot answer immediately. What does the map look like of the land God promised Israel compared to the Middle East today?

You know, I've been searching through my piling system because I have a map with an overlay that expresses that beautifully.

[ 1 : 03 ]     And it is an enormous contrast to the little sliver of land that is now Israel compared to the geography that God said he was giving to Abraham and his descendants.

And it is many, many, many, many times larger than what is now considered Israel. And as soon as I find it, I'm going to bring that overlay because it is beautiful.

It gives you a contrast between what is. Much of what is there in the Middle East today has been in a state of geographical flux for centuries.

And as a result of World War I, the old Ottoman Empire was broken up primarily by the League of Nations as opposed to the Axis powers that was involved in World War I.

And it's too detailed for me to go into. But I will see if I can find that and I'll bring it and all of you would appreciate it. Question, why doesn't Revelation 19 say unbelievers are judged according to their sins instead of being judged according to their works?

[ 2 : 22 ]     This has led some to believe that sin will not be an issue at the great white throne. What gives? Well, I can understand the issue of controversy because some are of the opinion that since Christ died for the sins of the world, that sin is no longer a relative issue.

The only issue that remains is believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior. And there is a sense in which there is some truth to that.

However, in order for the universal redemption of Christ to be beneficial to the individual, I say, in order for the universal redemption of Christ, which was applicable for all human beings, in order for it to benefit the individual, there must be a personal acceptance and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ as the expression of faith from the human heart.

What Christ's universal redemption accomplished was simply to make all of mankind savable. Not saved, but savable.

That means anyone, anywhere, can become a child of God by putting their faith in Christ because of that payment Christ made.

[ 3 : 53 ] And I think this is borne out in that passage in 2 Corinthians 5, where Paul makes it quite clear that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

All this means is that the scope, the length, the breadth of the redemptive effort that Christ accomplished on the cross was every bit equal to the damage and destruction that was done by Adam in his initial disobedience.

So we are saying that the work of Christ in redemption more than adequately cancelled out the negative that sin imposed upon humanity through our first parents.

And then two verses later, Paul says, We beseech you then, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God. And that's problematic because two verses earlier he said the world is reconciled.

Two verses later he says, be reconciled. Well, which is it? It's both. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself is the blanket redemption that includes everybody and is the basis for babies being redeemed under the fact that they are covered by that blanket of redemption.

[ 5 : 17 ] But then the two verses later, Paul is saying, I believe, if my interpretation is correct, because Christ has died for your sins, the barrier of sin is removed and there is access available to God through Jesus Christ so you should come.

You can come. You are responsible to come. And that is the expression of human faith. And when the phrase is used here about every man being judged according to his works, works come in two shapes and forms.

One is works of the flesh. The other is works of the Spirit or the fruit of the Spirit. And what is not one is the other. So unbelievers who stand before the great white throne judgment in Revelation 19 will be judged on the basis of their works because some perform some pretty heinous, terrible works like the Hitlers and the Stalins and so on.

And they will be judged accordingly. Works and deeds and sins, I think, are really in the same category. And it just depends on who is performing them and whether they are the flesh or the Spirit.

So to say that sin will not be an issue at the great white throne, I think it will very definitely be an issue. It is just a determination of to what degree were their sins.

[ 6 : 52 ] There is a verse in one of the Gospels. I can't remember its address. But anyway, it says something to the effect that he who knew his master's will and did it not.

He who did not know his master's will and did not do it shall be beaten with few stripes. He who knew his master's will and did it not will be beaten with many stripes.

And the principle unto whom much is given, from him shall much be required. The more information and light we have, the more responsible we are to God with what we do with it.

And God will judge us on the basis of not only what we knew, but what we were willing to know and what we were unwilling to know. Because God judges the heart and knows the heart.

Roger? Can't we say that an unbeliever is depending on his works, what he considers his good works, before God to get into heaven?

[ 7 : 55 ] Because he's not going through the blood of Christ. Yeah, well. He's either going his good works to get there, or depending on Jesus' good works to get there.

Does that make sense? Oh yeah, well, he's counting on his. You know, the salvation and the works that bring us into a right relationship with God has nothing to do with the quantity of your works.

However good they may be. However much money you give. However many little ladies you help across the street. How many things you do of a benevolent nature. That which brings us into a right relationship with God is not how much righteousness you have.

It is what kind of righteousness you have. You either have human righteousness, which is flawed and unacceptable, some of which is better than others, but it's all flawed, it's all unacceptable to a holy God.

You either have human righteousness, or you have the righteousness of Christ. And when you have the righteousness of Christ, you stand before God accepted in the beloved.

[ 9 : 05 ] Not on your merit, but on Christ's merit and your faith in him. Yes, Joe. The young believer is going to be judged on his works, but there are what we think of as sin works, too.

When we think of works, we're thinking of good things, but he could be talking about sin works. Oh yeah, there are evil works and good works. Right. Yeah, yeah. Sin is works, too. Sure, absolutely.

And all of the so-called good things that men do are merely good in men's eyes. They do not register with God because man's best works are tainted.

Isaiah, I think it's 64.6, says, All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. That's not our goodness.

That's our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Well, if that's the case of our righteousness, what about our bad things? Well, you know, that's the human condition.

[ 10 : 15 ] And, fellas, in my estimation, this is the greatest single con in the entire world. And that is that man can become rightly related to God on the basis of his personal performance and goodness.

That is probably the number one lie that exists in the world. And it is universal. Every religion, every faith, every religion, every belief system makes acceptance with God dependent upon the faithfulness, the productivity, and the works of those who subscribe to that particular religion.

Every one of them, without exception. They are all performance-based. They are all dependent upon works. That's probably a good definition of religion, is that religion is man's effort to get acceptance with God on man's terms.

Christianity is gaining acceptance with God through what God has provided for man on God's terms.

And the difference is huge. Biblical Christianity is the only faith out of the 3,000 major and minor cults, isms, faiths, beliefs, etc. in the whole world.

[ 11 : 46 ] Biblical Christianity is the only one that is faith-based, that is grace-based, by grace through faith. That distinguishes and sets biblical Christianity apart from every other belief system, without exception.

John. Would that be the case, like in Cain, offering an unacceptable sacrifice, an able sacrifice, was accepted?

I think that's simply an Old Testament illustration of that. Yeah. It certainly seems to be. Mark? Yes. I don't know if you noticed, it's during the eulogy by the President, or the pictures of assassinations down in South Carolina, that President Obama professes to be a Christian.

And this wouldn't disqualify him, but the comment that he made about becoming worthy of the grace. Did you catch that? No, I didn't.

It's not bad in there. Yeah. Well, that may be a telltale indication of where somebody is coming from. But not everybody understands grace.

[ 13 : 01 ] Oh, absolutely. You know, there isn't anything that the Bible is saturated with, like the grace of God. It starts way back in the Old Testament, where Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

But that doesn't register with most people because we can't get away from that performance base. That's the way it works in every other area of our life. You do good, good results.

Do bad, bad results. Want to go to heaven? Do good. And God will reward you with heaven. That's the mantra. And you know something? It is totally, perfectly logical to human beings.

But it is completely wrong. That kind of thinking is a result of our moral, spiritual fallenness. And the other, lie number two, which I don't want to elaborate on, but I'll just say it.

That's the concept of biological evolution. And once that is in place, and people are operating from that as their base, that there is no need for God, as the world's greatest physicist, Stephen Hawking, has made clear.

[ 14 : 15 ] There is no need for God because of the existence of the law of gravity, which makes it possible for creation to create itself, for the universe to create itself.

That's the best the world has to offer, and that's what he comes up with. And if you buy into that, you must realize that you are not here by design or purpose or intentionality at all.

You are a biological accident. That being the case, you have no purpose and no meaning for life. That being the case, life has value only if you assign value to it.

That being the case, there is no destiny. There is no end game. There is no goal. Humanity is going nowhere.

It's just coming on the scene and dying off, according to the survival of the fittest, and that's the end of that. So, let's hasten along. I want to get through these. Are there different degrees of torment and punishment in hell?

[ 15 : 22 ] We've touched on that a little bit. I think that there are, because believers are going to be rewarded at the Bema Seat, the award throne of Christ in 1 Corinthians 3, on the basis of the deeds done in the body, whether they were of the flesh or of the spirit.

But Christians doing things in the flesh are no more acceptable to God than unbelievers doing things in the flesh. Only that which is done in the spirit is acceptable to God.

So, likewise, there will be degrees of torment and punishment in hell, and I don't understand how that is going to work. Not at all. How can a loving God punish one forever and ever?

I do not know and don't understand that, because I'm limited to a human perspective, but apparently God has no problem with it. And I want you to keep in mind a very, very important fact regarding the attributes of God.

There is no question God is loving, He is gracious, and He is merciful. To hear some people tell it, that makes up the sum total of God's character.

[ 16 : 39 ] But it doesn't, because there are numerous other attributes involved as well. One of which, with which man has to do, is God is holy, God is just, God is absolutely righteous, and God must punish sin, or resign His position.

And I don't think He is about to do that. Granted, we have difficulty understanding these concepts, because we can't even get our brain around how God can be sovereign, and in control of everything, and how man can be responsible, and accountable, and how those work together.

We can't make that mesh. And the greatest reason, in my estimation, that we can't, is because we each possess a very limited perspective.

We are still arguing over the accuracy of things that happened in the past. We still can't even agree on who assassinated Kennedy, because we have such a low perspective.

And insofar as the present is concerned, much of us interpret what is happening right now in our nation in an entirely different way from the way somebody else interprets it.

[ 18 : 03 ] And that's because we are lacking perspective in that too. And as regards the future, forget that, we can't even deal successfully with the past and the present, much less the future.

So, a loving God can do whatever. You see, the only thing, there's a lot of things God can't do. We understand that. God cannot deny himself.

God cannot lie. God cannot justify anyone other than through the finished work of Christ. That's why he sent him. So, God has certain restrictions placed upon himself.

God cannot make a square circle. That's a contradiction in terms. God cannot make a rock so big he can't lift it. That too is a contradiction in terms. But, God can do all that needs to be done and he is more than capable of doing it.

Okay. I've been troubled about this. I think I dealt with that one. Let's see. Since God is a supreme entity over all and is above all other gods, in what perspective do we as Christians approach the Muslim movement?

[ 19 : 14 ] Do we pray for our enemies? What does God ask of us? What is the Christian perspective on this and what should it be? Well, I think the scriptures address this very clearly in the sense that it really puts all Muslims in the same category as everyone else who is a non-believer in the person of Jesus Christ.

And we need to keep in mind the fact that contrary to what we might think from time to time, Muslims are not our enemies.

they are captives of the enemy in the same way that you and I were captives of the enemy before we came to faith in Christ. And Islam has millions of people subscribing to it who are not really accorded any right of conscience at all.

Christianity respects human conscience. And because of that, we implore and we plead with men to come to Christ.

But we will not intimidate them to do so. We will not force them to do so. We will not threaten them to do so. And we respect the right of conscience and volition that God has endowed each of us with because each person is responsible for himself to God.

[ 20 : 45 ] And that's why we must respect the freedom of conscience. So, even though I completely disagree with someone and they're embracing the Muslim faith, I strongly am committed to allowing them to do that.

I would not prevent them even if I could because that would invade their conscience. And God doesn't do that. God doesn't invade our volition. So, we need to respect that.

And these people are as desperate in their position without Christ as is anybody else.

And we just need to recognize that the Bible, in a sense, there's a parallel here. Muslim considers everyone either a Muslim or an infidel.

because everybody who is not a Muslim is an infidel in their minds. That means an unbeliever. And there's a parallel to that in Christianity because Christianity takes the position that everyone who is not a Christian, who is not a believer, is an unbeliever.

[ 21 : 57 ] So, there are two classes there that exist in the world. The difference is we don't kill those other people. Yeah, well, there is a penalty to pay for rejecting Christ and Christianity, but it is a penalty that God will exact.

There is also a penalty to pay for rejecting Islam and its tenants, but it is one that Muslims may exact. And they can do so by fining you, making you pay a fine, or cutting off your head, or imprisoning you.

That's the penalty that they make you pay. Jesus said, if you forgive anyone their sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.

So, did the people confess their sins to the disciples because the disciples at church are given authority to forgive sins? Is this where some churches have confessionals such as the Catholics? Well, that is the base of operation for Catholicism, is what Christ said there in John 20, and the authority he gave his apostles.

And I don't want to elaborate on this too much because it would take more time than we have, but I just want to say that the authority that the apostles had, and the term that's used here is disciples, but it should be apostles.

[ 23 : 26 ] The authority that the apostles had, and I'm talking about Peter, James, and John, Bartholomew, and so on, the original 12, the authority they possessed, they had solely because Christ delegated that authority to them.

These were just a bunch of ordinary commoners, ignorant fishermen, if you will, most of them. And they possessed supernatural authority because Christ gave them supernatural authority they otherwise wouldn't have.

And that's made clear in Matthew 10 where he commissions them and sends them out to go forth and to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom. And as you go, heal the sick, raise the dead, give sight to the blind, and so on.

Do just what I have been doing. Replicate my ministry as you go out two by two. And as Christ also had the power to forgive sin, as he did with the man who was let down through the hole in the roof, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

Pharisees standing there says, who does this guy think he is? Who can forgive sins but God only? Well, it was God in action, enclosed, incarnated in the person of Jesus Christ.

[ 24 : 43 ] And he gave authority to his apostles, and that includes their ability to forgive sins. And we look upon that today as being impossible, but the Roman Catholic Church interprets that passage and takes it quite literally, and they believe that priests, including whom they would regard as the chief priest, the Pope, they believe as a direct descendant of Peter, that endowed in the priest's ability is the power to forgive sins.

So this is why people go to the confessional and they confess their sins and the priest says that he absolves them of their sin. But you've got to keep in mind, this was under the Jewish kingdom program.

And along with that were all the other miracles that were commonplace in that time and in that era. And it extends into the book of Acts. And we find the apostles doing that there.

But as you move on through the book of Acts, the miracles begin fading away because the church dispensation is coming on hand and the age of Israel and the dispensation of the law is passing away.

So the miracles and the signs that Israel required were no longer operative because Israel was fading off the scene and new people are coming on board and they are to walk by faith, not by sight.

[ 26 : 12 ] Walking by sight is demanding miracles, things that can be attested to physically and so on. I've been troubled about this subject for some time now.

Gay marriage, I've changed my mind and we've talked a little bit about this but I thought maybe I'd bring it up because of what's been happening in our community, the Supreme Court. recent decision by the Supreme Court.

I think most people had a pretty good idea of which way this was going to go simply because we understand the makeup of the court and even though theoretically it is stated that the Supreme Court is emphatically intended to be and supposed to be non-political yet that's just blowing in the wind.

We know that it is impossible because people are going to vote their convictions and you cannot expect the court to do anything else other than what it did so we ought not to be surprised.

It's somewhat predictable and I'll tell you, if you want to point some fingers and assign blame, the Christian community needs to look at itself because there are multitudes of Christians, I mean real born-again Christians, who actually take the position, ah, politics is a dirty business.

[ 27 : 55 ] I don't want to have anything to do with it. And not only that, but I'm not going to bother to vote because those politicians, they're going to do what they want to do anyway. It doesn't make any difference how you vote.

There are lots of Christians across this nation who feel that way. Whereas if they had gone to the polls and voted, not Republican, not Democrat, if they had just voted their honest convictions and values, votes, we may very well have a different person in the Oval Office right now, which would translate into a different Supreme Court than what we have right now.

Because who appoints those judges? The President. So for Americans, particularly Christian Americans, to think their vote doesn't matter, they're just one person, what difference does that make?

Makes a lot of difference. I hope we can see now, theoretically at least, how much difference that can make. Because we are in a situation where we have never been before.

This is uncharted water. Any other thoughts or comments? Yes? If it's higher than possible, though, with their death, it was over.

[ 29 : 23 ] They didn't have the fire to pass it on. I wholeheartedly concur with that. Tim says, with the passing of the apostles, and it is true, the passing of the apostles also was of the same approximate time frame as the passing of Israel.

And setting aside of the nation of Israel in judicial blindness blindness, as Paul has spoken of in Romans 9, 10, and 11, that blindness in part has happened unto Israel.

And that came about as the apostles were fading off the scene, and there is no evidence whatever that the apostles were ever in any way able to extend their influence by laying on of hands of people from another generation.

there is no indication biblically that Peter was actually succeeded by someone else who took up his mantle and became as it were the next pope and so on and so on.

Then where do Roman Catholics get that idea? They get it from a very powerful medium that they equate with the authority of Scripture and that is tradition.

[ 30 : 54 ] The Bible is one authority. Accepted tradition is the second authority and it has the same level of authority as Scripture and the third is the official pronouncements writings papal bulls decrees etc.

by the pope when he speaks what is called ex cathedra when he speaks from the chair of Peter and makes official pronouncements that are to be adhered to by the faithful.

So the Roman Catholic Church has three different entities which they all regard as having equal authority. The Bible, tradition, and the pope.

and of course they believe in the infallibility of the pope and they have to take that position otherwise the pope could speak in error which would be unthinkable so they assign the infallibility of the pope to the office and and reformation Christianity is begun by Martin Luther and Protestant Christianity as it is generally practiced accepts but one authority and that is the Bible and we say the Bible and the Bible alone and the Latin is sola scriptura which means scriptures alone sola fide which means by faith alone sola gratia which means by grace alone and sola Christos which means by Christ alone so that's where that's where Protestants are coming from and it makes of course a huge difference because bottom line is this what you accept as your authority that will determine what you believe and if you accept those three things as your authority then you are embracing

Roman Catholicism and if you accept only the Bible as your authority then you are embracing Protestantism and what the Bible teaches interestingly enough and sad to say there are many Protestants and I don't have any idea what the number is but it's too many who themselves do not accept the authority of Scripture either in fact they only accept much of anything as authority other than their own opinions that's their authority and that's where we are in much of our world today yes Bob would that be the same thing as with all these churches now that are going to marry the same sex couples oh yeah yeah absolutely absolutely you know if you if you do not accept the Scriptures as your sole and final authority you're going to really be hard pressed to deny same sex marriage you really are because what you are tampering with what you are tampering with is denying the rights to people's feelings and preferences and this is the great argument that we are confronted with today and this is kind of fresh in my mind because

[ 34 : 24 ] I'm going to be speaking about Sunday morning at church and if you take the position whether it's evolution or accepting any other authority if you make humanity your authority then you really have no right to deny or sit in judgment on someone some man who wants to marry another man or woman who wants to marry another man matter of fact you really have no legal or logical basis for denying multiple marriages and multiple partners you really don't once you leave once you leave the scriptures the word of God out of the mix then each person becomes their own authority that's where we're at and if you buy into the evolutionary concept like many do where a God isn't even necessary then why not same sex marriages why not homosexuality on what logical basis or authoritative basis can you oppose it you don't have one you just don't have one what what

I don't understand is how they can say you're a preacher and you won't marry these people how can they find them or they won't take a wedding date for dating couples or whatever you will go to jail where's your freedom there well you know of course there isn't any freedom there and there are those who insist that it will not come to that that churches and clergy will not be forced to perform these marriages but experience has taught us that the liberal agenda and I want you to keep this in mind guys so you won't be surprised or blindsided by anything the liberal agenda is never never satisfied with its gains never they push they will keep pushing and keep pushing so it may well be that at the moment we cannot be prosecuted for refusing to conduct a marriage like that but

I wouldn't say that's where we'll be a few years from now because these people will never be satisfied until well they'll never be satisfied there is always additional gains that they feel they have to make because we are and by the way Christians are viewed as the oppressors get used to that get used to that that's the way we're going to be billed we're going to be billed as the bad guys we're going to be billed as the people who want to deprive others of having warm loving caring relationships and we're going to be made to look very ugly Joe the humans have a law that's what it's going to be a problem the liberals are going to constantly change the law so there is a law that regulates us and it's going away from



Christian law and so that's where it goes that's what keeps us from doing things and not doing things whatever man is in power at the time feels the law ought to be so it isn't terribly your legislators are oh absolutely absolutely and keep this in mind with this I'm going to close because this is really really important guys I think that it is unbecoming of a preacher including myself to just preach to an audience on politics and try to get people to vote a certain way in so far as a political party is concerned I don't think that's appropriate and I don't think a preacher ought to do that but here's the problem it is absolutely impossible to separate politics from morality and we are charged with the responsibility of addressing moral issues that's part and parcel of what the prophetic ministry is all about you speak truth to power and you come from a moral base that is provided in the scriptures and usually there is a price to pay for doing it all you have to do is examine the prophets in the bible who spoke the truth to people who didn't want it and didn't appreciate it and many of them paid dearly for doing so some were imprisoned some were even put to death just because they said thus saith the lord and they paid for it john the baptist and of course the most example greatest example of all is the person of christ is not as as as as as as as as