

Spiritual Blessings



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“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” Eph. 1:3

Major World Religions by Frank Haegler

“When Christians, Jews, Buddhists and others pray to their god, all of these individuals are actually praying to the same god, but simply using different names for that deity,” says one out of every four American adults according to a recent Barna poll.

“The soul of religion is one, but it is encased in a multitude of forms,” said Mahatma Gandhi.

“In reality, there is only one religion, the religion of God. This one religion is continually evolving, and each particular religious system represents a stage in the evolution of the whole,” claims the Bahá’í faith on its official Web site.

“In whatever way men approach Me, even so do I go to them.” —quoted from the Hindu scripture by Swami Chidananda of Divine Life Society.

“There is no right or wrong”, and “Jesus was a good man who went around doing good things, just as the other great religious teachers”, say many people today.

So are any or all of these claims true?

Let’s have a look at the six major religions and see what they believe. Although each of these religions is very complex, an article of this size can only deal with the basics of each.

For the sake of this article, I am going to define religion as *a specific fundamental set of beliefs and practices generally agreed upon by a number of persons or sects.*

Atheism is a religion based on naturalism, evolution, and ethical relativism. It plays itself out in three major ways, each of which needs to be looked at in and of themselves for a complete picture. They are Secular Humanism, Marxism/Leninism (Communism) and Postmodernism.

Secular Humanists believe that there is no God, that science and the scientific process has made

God obsolete. Humanists believe that only matter—things we can touch, feel, prove, or study—exists and has **always existed**. Man is only matter (no soul or spirit). No supernatural explanation is needed for the existence of this matter.

If something has always existed then it is eternal and, therefore, the universe itself becomes God. People, as the highest form of life on the planet, are then also god-like, as it is we who determine our own destiny. There is no outside influence, no one to tell us what we can or cannot do.

So how is the belief that there is *no* God a religion? The belief that there is no God is just that—a belief. No one can prove that there is no God so therefore the statement “there is no God” is a faith statement.

The Humanist Manifesto 2 says, *“No deity will save us; we must save ourselves”.*

Isaac Asimov (the head of the American Humanist Association), said in *Free Inquiry*, *“I am an atheist out and out...I don’t have the evidence to prove that God doesn’t exist, but I so strongly suspect that he doesn’t that I don’t want to waste my time”.*

Julian Huxley said, in *The Humanist Frame* – *“The classroom must and will become an area of conflict between the old and the new—the rotting corpse of Christianity, together with its adjacent evils and misery and the new **faith** of Humanism, resplendent in its promise of a world in which the never-realized Christian idea of ‘Love thy Neighbor’ will finally be achieved”.* (Emphasis mine).

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President's Word

Greetings once again to all our readers. I trust you have enjoyed our magazine this year, and must say thank you for your support and encouragement during 2009.

In countries with a Christian heritage, December is Christmas time. Some Christians view Christmas as a pagan festival to be shunned; some see it as a reason to celebrate and praise God. Personally, I cannot help but be reminded of some profound verses in John's Gospel. In John 1:1, we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."; and soon after, in verse 14, we are told that, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us". The mysterious and glorious truths behind these verses are at the heart of what is often called the Christmas story. Soon we will be bombarded with humanistic statements in the secular media about "the true meaning of Christmas", but let us not forget that it was God who took the first step and, through His loving provision for us, "gave His Son".

May we make this occasion, whatever our views of the festival, to be a time when we are drawn to magnify our God and give thanks for "His unspeakable gift" - the Lord Jesus Christ.

Conference audios available

Now, a matter of housekeeping. In our last issue there was a very good report by Mary Harper about our Annual Conference held in September. The report outlined a synopsis of all nine Bible studies presented, but it was remiss of me not to mention that audio recordings of these are available on audio CD, or in MP3 format. If you would like a copy of the talks, please drop us a note or email me at admin@spiritualblessings.org. The audio CDs are \$1.00 for each talk, or you may order all nine talks on one disk in MP3 format for \$1.00. Please add \$2.00 postage to your order, and use one of the payment methods listed on page 12 in the "Donations" section.

Mike Penny's Visit

In September and October 2010, Michael and Sylvia Penny will be visiting Australia. Mike will be the guest speaker at our Annual Conference (September 18-20), and will also be conducting a

number of other meetings around NSW, Qld and possibly Victoria. If you are interested in having one of these meetings in your area, please contact me at admin@spiritualblessings.org as soon as possible, as we are presently working on the itinerary.

You may view Michael Penny's biographical information and photos, and peruse the many books and booklets he has written, on our website page www.spiritualblessings.org/book/amp. Well worth a visit if you haven't checked it out yet.

Until next time, may the Lord be glorified by our walk, our witness and the study of His Word; and may I extend the BBFA's best wishes to you and your family for 2010.

David Tavender

Editorial

The major article in our last issue for 2009 is larger than usual, but the subject is so important that the extra size is warranted. It is a condensation of studies that Frank Haegler gave at our annual conference in 2008. I appreciate Frank's efforts in preparing his work for publication. What he has to say is not only correct, but is also vitally important if we hope to make any sort of effective witness in our community. All of the philosophies he mentions are being pushed strongly all around us, and the relentless attack on the Bible and the Christian faith is growing all the time. We must avail ourselves, perhaps more than we have ever done, of the whole armour of God so that we might stand faithfully, giving the clearest witness to our Lord and Head that we possibly can.

The other article in this issue is a reply from the Calvinist position to David Milford's article on Predestination. There are many issues between Calvinism and Arminianism, besides the ones mentioned so far, but we won't be able to cover them all. If you want to take up your pen and join in the debate, please feel free.

This issue has fewer pages than usual, because the year's end has arrived faster than I expected, and we are running out of time to get the printing and distribution done.

As another year draws to its close, I give thanks to our Heavenly Father for His guidance, sustenance and provision of opportunities for service. And my prayer for 2010 is that you, with me, will continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. I find I continually need to remind myself that the Holy Spirit's work in me must have the corresponding outworking on my part. If all our reading and studying does not make us better people, then surely we have missed our way. May the Lord use us each one for His glory in the coming year.

Athol Walter.

cont from Pg. 1

Marxism/Leninism is the political and economic philosophy of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in which the concept of class struggle plays a central role in understanding society's allegedly inevitable development from bourgeois oppression under capitalism to a socialist and ultimately classless society.

Marxism/Leninism's Theology is also Atheistic. Marx was an atheist before he became a socialist. Engels and Lenin agreed that religion was a drug or "spiritual booze" and must be combated. To them, putting atheism into practice meant a "forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions," which would include the economy, government, law, etc. The Communist Party has not deviated from its founding fathers' attitude toward God or religion. This explains the persecution of any church in countries with a communist government. Marx said (Collected Works) "*The criticism of religion ends with the teaching that man is the highest being for man...*" Although the religion of Communism may be the same as that of the Secular Humanist, the basic difference between them is that communists are militant in their outlook. Rather than working behind the scenes they seek to control by taking countries over and then banning religion by brute force.

Postmodernism is a mood rather than a strict discipline and as such is hard to define. (It has actually been stated that if you can define it then it is not postmodernism!) Reality is not fixed and all truth must be relative to one's viewpoint or stance.

Postmodernism's Theology is also Atheistic but they are not atheists in the same sense that Secular Humanists and Marxist-Leninists are. They may look the same superficially, but the motivation for denying the existence of God has nothing to do with the lack of scientific evidence. Rather, they would assert that, as Nietzsche said, "God is dead" because He's unbelievable, not because He's unprovable.

Postmodernism is really a knee-jerk reaction against modernism, a time when the traditional representations of the world in the forms of art, architecture, literature, religion, social organization and daily life were becoming 'outdated' in the industrial age. Many say it just grew out of that time so is really the same thing – and it certainly has many similarities.

The emphasis is on subjectivity and this subjectivity has even reached in to the Church. The Emerging Church Movement, for instance, sees the need to radically reshape the church's beliefs and

practices to conform to postmodernist thought. However, with no foundation or boundaries, it becomes practically impossible to say what is or is not Christian truth or conduct, as there are no objective definitions or limits to faith or practice. Culturally arbitrary opinions are all that remain. Any belief or standard may then be questioned or changed. In a postmodernized faith all beliefs are valid to those who hold them.

Put another way, the postmodernist can accept that two or more religions with mutually exclusive truth claims are equally valid. This is called pluralism and is the *correct* view to hold. But if no one view is uniquely correct, how can anyone know that pluralism is correct? The catchcry of the postmodernist is that "There is no such thing as an absolute truth." But that statement is a statement of *absolute truth!*

As a theory, postmodernism was a provocative idea. As a workable model for life it is useless; the folk who deny the existence of an absolute moral law still become upset when you push in front of them in a queue.

Buddhism developed out of the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama who, in 528 BC, reached "enlightenment" and assumed the title Buddha. He promoted 'The Middle Way' as the path to enlightenment rather than the extremes of mortification of the flesh or hedonism. Buddhists believe in reincarnation and that one must go through cycles of birth, life, and death.

After many such cycles (possibly thousands), if a person releases their attachment to desire and the self, they can attain Nirvana, which is a transcendental, blissful, spiritual state of nothingness....

Buddhists hold to the Four Noble Truths:

1. Life Means Suffering. Because we are not perfect we will endure physical and psychological suffering, ultimately ending in our death. Although there may be times of happiness, everything we strive for will ultimately pass away.

2. The Origin of Suffering is attachment to the above transient things. The reasons for suffering are *craving* and *clinging* to the things which must pass away, thus causing suffering when they inevitably do.

3. The Cessation of Suffering is attainable by extinguishing all forms of *clinging* and *attachment*. By becoming dispassionate (through our own activity)

we can remove the cause of suffering and ultimately reach the state of Nirvana.

4. The Path to the Cessation of Suffering is a path of self-improvement as described in more detail in the Noble Eightfold Path below. It results in the end of the cycle of rebirth and the attainment of Nirvana.

The Noble Eightfold Path of Right Views is:

1. Right Understanding: accepting the Four Noble Truths.

2. Right Resolve: renouncing the pleasures of the body. Change your lifestyle so that you harm no living creatures and have kind thoughts for everyone.

3. Right Speech: do not gossip, lie or slander anyone.

4. Right Action: do not kill, steal or engage in an unlawful sexual act.

5. Right Occupation: avoid working at any job that could harm someone.

6. Right Effort: heroically work to eliminate evil from your life. Through your own effort, develop good conduct and a clean mind.

7. Right Contemplation: make yourself aware of your deeds, words and thoughts so that you can be free of desire and sorrow.

8. Right Meditation: train your mind to focus on a single object without wavering, so as to develop a calm mind capable of concentration.

In general, Buddhists do not believe in any type of God, the need for a saviour, prayer, or eternal life after death, although this is no longer true for all Buddhists. This subtle shift has occurred with little conflict due to the philosophical nature of Buddhism.

But without a personal God, on what basis can there ever exist any human moral standard or ethic—and therefore, in what sense does Buddha mean for people to understand the terms *noble* and *truth*, as in the Four Noble Truths, or the term *right* as in the Eightfold Path of Right Views? And if, as Buddha is reported to have said, Nirvana is “beyond...good and evil”, then, in the ultimate sense, there is really no difference between Hitler and Mother Theresa, or between helping an old lady across the street or running her down.

Cosmic Humanism (The New Age Movement) *sees man as the measure of all things. Everything is ultimately energy that will allow people to achieve unity with others in a kind of collective consciousness.*

They see man as having virtually unlimited potential because of his “inner divinity”.

Cosmic Humanism’s Theology is that of pantheism. The New Age movement believes that all things—people, rocks, trees, stars, etc, are divine, or a part of god. Since everything and everyone is a part of god, we have to get in touch with the “god within” to achieve total cosmic unity. Some adherents of Cosmic Humanism resort to channelling, meditation, Ouija boards, or hallucinogenic drugs to contact the “god within”. The New Age movement is an extremely large, loosely structured network of organizations and individuals bound together by common values (based in mysticism and monism—the world view that ‘all is one’—and a common vision (a coming ‘new age’ of peace and mass enlightenment, the ‘Age of Aquarius’).

All New Agers assume that everything that exists consists of one and the same essence or reality. A second assumption is that this Ultimate Reality is neither dead matter nor unconscious energy; it is Being, Awareness and Bliss. The first two assumptions imply two more: “all that is, is god (which is pantheism); and man, a part of ‘all that is,’ is likewise divine.”

If we fail to realize our godhood in this lifetime, fear not! We will soon have another incarnation and so another chance to achieve “christ consciousness”. Ultimately, every person will achieve godhood and total unity will be restored. New Age theology, like fairy tales, guarantees a happy ending.

Morality is a nebulous thing for the New Ager. Everyone must listen to the “god within” to determine his or her own ethics, but we must never hold anyone else accountable to *our* system. Ironically then, nothing is ever wrong except judging others’ moral beliefs and actions. But wait, even that can’t be all bad because it is part of the “unity”; so even horrible mistakes—like murder—are part of the manifestation of God. And on it goes, individualizing good and evil, until skewed thinking becomes the ‘norm’.

Hinduism *can be traced to the Indus Valley civilization about 1500 BC. The basis of Hinduism is the belief in the unity of everything. This totality is called Brahman.*

A Hindu may have many gods but they regard them all as being manifestations of the Ultimate Reality.

Although embracing a wide variety of beliefs, all Hindus will hold to the four following beliefs:-

1. Dharma – fulfilling one's purpose
2. Artha – prosperity
3. Karma – desire, sexuality, enjoyment
4. Moksha – enlightenment

The purpose of life is to realize that we are part of god and by doing so we can leave this plane of existence and rejoin with god. This enlightenment can only be achieved by going through cycles of birth, life and death. One's progress towards enlightenment is measured by his *karma*. This is the accumulation of all one's good and bad deeds and *this* determines the person's next reincarnation.

Selfless acts and thoughts, as well as devotion to God, help one to be reborn at a higher level. Bad acts and thoughts will cause one to be born at a lower level, as a person or even an animal.

Hindus follow a strict caste system which determines the standing of each person. The caste one is born into is the result of the karma from their previous life. Only members of the highest caste, the Brahmins, may perform the Hindu religious rituals and hold positions of authority within the temples.

Islam *reveres Allah, whom they consider to be the one and only God, the only creator and master of the universe. This can be seen in their primary declaration of faith: "There is no god but (one) Allah, and Muhammad is the messenger of God."*

Islam teaches that the Qur'an is the literal word of God (Allah) and it is the culmination of God's revelation to mankind.

There are five pillars of the Islamic faith which are: Saying the declaration of faith (above), Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving and Pilgrimage—with a possible sixth, that of Jihad.

1. Saying the declaration of faith (with sincerity of mind and heart) is enough to become a Moslem.
2. Prayer must be said facing Mecca five times a day, and on Friday one must go to a mosque at noon for prayer.
3. Fasting is not done on a regular basis but is done during the month of Ramadan. This involves refraining from food, smoking and sexual relations during daylight hours, though these may be enjoyed after sundown.
4. 2.5% of one's annual capital is to be given to the poor, either directly or through Moslem charitable organizations.

5. One must (finances and health permitting) go to Mecca at least once in their lifetime.

6. Although I believe there has been a playing down of Jihad since 9/11, some say it is a sixth pillar against sin and temptation—and against the infidel.

Although the God of Islam has revealed his will through the prophets, his actual nature remains ultimately unknowable. God himself is transcendent (i.e. beyond human perception) and not part of his creation.

Capping off the central beliefs of Islam is the Day of Judgment, a day when every human being will face a weighing of deeds, both good and evil. Only if the weight of one's good deeds surpasses that of one's bad deeds can each person hope to enter Paradise rather than descending into Hell. "To those who believe and do deeds of righteousness hath Allah promised forgiveness and a great reward" (Qur'an 5:9).

As with Christianity, these religious viewpoints claim exclusivity. And they all make different claims on even basic issues.

The Uniqueness Of Christianity

So what then is the real difference between the other major religions and Christianity?

Christianity *can be summed up in one word, Christ. True Christianity is not really a philosophy or a religion; it is a person, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Christian Theology, *unlike the other theologies*, affirms the existence of an intelligent, powerful, loving and just God.

From the Christian perspective, "In the beginning God" is the foundation of all meaning. Christianity further proclaims that this powerful, intelligent God who created all things in heaven and earth is the same God who took upon Himself human form in the person of Jesus Christ and died for our sins. Christianity proclaims a God who is both Mind and Heart—who not only created the world, but also loves it so much that He sent His only begotten Son to die for it.

Christian theism declares in large letters, "God is," "God created," "God loves," and "God judges."

Only in the Bible is God revealed as the one eternal, personal Creator, who brought the entire universe into existence by His own Word.

All other religions start with the material universe as the only eternal reality, with their "gods" being essentially personifications of the natural forces

which have developed the universe into its present form.

On the other hand, the Creator-God of the Bible has all power and is, therefore, not only the One who created the universe but also the One who establishes the basis for human salvation.

Christianity alone is centred in the historical events associated with a Person—the birth, death, resurrection, and imminent, glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Other religions are invariably based on the teachings, rather than the acts, of their founders.

The Lord Jesus *did not* come just to be an example for us.

Jesus Christ alone, of all men in history, has conquered man's greatest enemy—death. The founders of other religions are all dead and it is their tombs that are venerated. The tomb of Christ is empty, and His bodily resurrection from the grave is the best proved fact of all history. The fact that He alone could overcome death demonstrates that He alone has all power.

He Himself said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

None of the other religious leaders claimed to be God.

In John 10:22-30 it says this, "*And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: **And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.** So they took up stones to kill Him."* (Emphasis mine).

And Colossians 1:16, 17 says of the Lord Jesus, "*By Him, and for Him, were all things created.*"

All other religions of the world are fundamentally one and the same—that of salvation by works. In

the final analysis, all of them are trying to pull themselves up by their own bootlaces.

Each religion, apart from Christianity, sets up a particular set of religious rites, commands and restrictions, with ethical principles to follow, and then teaches that if a man does these things he will be "saved". The human origin of each of these systems is indicated by the fact that each is humanly attainable.

The Bible, however, sets the very holiness and perfection of God Himself as its moral and ethical standard, and demands nothing less than this for salvation. Obviously, no man would invent a standard which was utterly impossible for anyone to keep.

The man Christ Jesus, alone of all men who ever lived, maintained in every respect, a life of perfect holiness and full obedience to the Father, thus demonstrating that He was the God-Man. He then died for the sins of all men and thus can offer full pardon and His own nature of perfect holiness to anyone who receives Him.

Christ alone offers salvation by grace alone, to be received only through faith in Him.

To the one who truly believes on Him, He then gives, through the Holy Spirit, a new nature, enabling that one to live a life pleasing to God.

Mark 10:45 – *For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

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

John 12:47 – *And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.*

Jesus was not just a good man. He was, as He claimed to be, God. If He was not God, then he could by no means be called "good". As Josh McDowell has well said, Jesus was either a Liar, a Lunatic or the Lord of all.

Lastly, the Bible itself claims to be the Word of God. The phrase '*Thus saith the LORD*' is found 413 times in the Bible. The phrase '*the word of the LORD*' (as in '*the word of the LORD came to Isaiah*' etc.) is used 255 times. The Bible is either true or it isn't.

My contention is that it is the truth and that it, and all it speaks about, can utterly be trusted. ■

Predestination: A Reply by Martin Walter

In his article on Predestination, David Milford discussed some of the Arminian arguments against Calvinism. I would like to give some reasons as to why I think Calvinism gives a better understanding of the Bible than Arminianism. One of the main differences between the two systems is that Arminians believe unsaved people have the ability (or free will) to accept the Gospel, while Calvinists hold that they do not. Arminians, therefore, argue that people can accept the Gospel of their own free will, while Calvinists argue that people need God to enable them to accept the Gospel, before they can accept it. It is this issue that convinced me that Calvinism was basically correct so, while there are many other differences, I will start with this one.

It is important to remember that, at birth, we only have an 'old nature' or 'the flesh'. It is not until we are regenerated – or born again – that we receive a new, spiritual nature. So to understand what our abilities are before regeneration, we must look at the abilities of the flesh. Arminians cannot rely on the abilities of the spiritual nature to enable us to believe, because they think that regeneration is subsequent to belief.

Now the Scripture tells us:-

1. that the old nature is a slave to sin. John 8:34, "Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say unto you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin'".
2. that the old nature doesn't understand God, isn't interested in Him and does not fear Him. Rom. 3:10–18, "None is righteous, no, not one: no one seeks for God."
3. that before salvation, the flesh was a slave to sin and ruled by it. Rom. 6: 6 & 9: "... so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin; ... death no longer has dominion over him."
4. that the only end of the flesh is death, and it is only the spiritual nature that can put our mind on spiritual things such as salvation. Rom. 8:5–8, "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ...". See also John 6:63.
5. that the old nature is hostile to God and cannot do anything to please Him. Rom. 8:7, 8, "For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, Those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

Given these handicaps, I cannot see how the old nature would want to, or could believe the Gospel. And even if the flesh did overcome these handicaps, it would be a significant achievement that would disqualify it from grace.

On the other hand, Arminians rely on the assumption that the unsaved have free will, i.e. the ability to make a free choice to believe the Gospel. They also assert that if we do not have free will, it means that God forces our decisions against our will, and this would be terrible,

unjust or at least, unfair. I accept that the idea of us not having free will just doesn't seem right, and I think there are several reasons for this. Firstly, we don't really notice either being controlled by God, or being controlled by sin, so we act as though we do have free will. Secondly, we only understand control over people in human terms, where we have to make people do things against their will. And thirdly, we as sinners, naturally rebel against the idea that we are not autonomous.

But as Bereans, we do not rely on our intuition for our beliefs; we base them on Scripture. You may be surprised then that the concept of free will is not supported by Scripture. There is no Scripture that says we have free will or free choice. There are many biblical passages that give us choices to make and hold us accountable for our choices, but that is not the same as saying we have the ability to make the right choice. Arminians argue that it would be unjust of God to hold us accountable for our bad choices if we were unable to make the right choice. To support this, they rely on what they think is fair and just, or on analogies like buying cars, but I have never heard them try and argue the point from Scripture. I guess this is because it is not found in Scripture.

So, in summary, the Bible tells us that our old nature is in bondage to sin, is hostile to God, cannot do anything to please Him, is blind, does not understand God, is not interested in Him, does not fear Him, and has death as its only end. Arminians tell us that our old nature has free will and can do nice things like looking after their children. I think, however, that the scriptural evidence disproves the idea that we have free will and that this is a factor in our understanding of how God deals with us.

What, then, does the Scripture say about how we believe? If the Calvinist understanding is correct, then we should see references to God taking the initiative in our belief. The John's Gospel was written "so that we might believe", and in John 6, he shows us the relationship between our making a choice and God enabling us to make the choice.

Look at John 6:29, 35, 40, 47, 51, 57, 58 and 69. These show that whoever believes has eternal life, and that our salvation depends on our belief. There is no indication that we are forced to believe against our will.

Now look at verses 37, 39, 44, 45, 63 and 65. Here we are told that it is the ones who the Father gives to Jesus that come to Him, that no one can come unless they are drawn, that no one can come unless it is granted to him, that Jesus speaks the words of life and that everyone who has heard comes to Him. So, John tells us that we receive life because we believe, but that we believe because God gives us to Jesus and draws us to Him by speaking to us.

Continued on next page

Predestination: A Reply. Cont. from previous page.

A quick final point.

While the Bible tells us that God wants to save everyone, both Calvinists and Arminians agree that not everyone will be saved. Why not? Calvinists say that God's desire to save all is over-ridden by His desire to glorify Jesus. Rom. 9:14-23 tells us that this includes showing His wrath, power and glory. And it is significant to note that this passage, together with Exodus 33:18, 19, also shows us that it is God's glory to have mercy on whoever He wants to, independently of human will or exertion. Arminians say that God's desire to save everyone is not fulfilled because He won't or can't violate our freewill. My question to David is this: how do you establish the view that our freewill overrides God's desire to save us?

BBFA Regular Meetings

You are invited to attend

Regular Bible study meetings are held in Brisbane, Sydney, Newcastle and Maitland. Meetings include some singing, prayer, and a Bible study, approx. 45-60 mins. in length, followed by refreshments. Questions and comments about the study are encouraged. These meetings are free of charge and everyone is welcome.

Brisbane:

Every Monday, 7pm.
231 Andrew Rd, Greenbank.
Group Co-ordinator: Frank Haegler (07) 3297 1981

Sydney:

4th. Sunday each month 3pm.
45/45 Philips St., Cabarita.
Group Co-ordinators: Peter & Anne Ward, (02) 9743 3452.

Newcastle:

Every Monday, 7:30pm.
34 Aroona St., Edgeworth.
Group Co-ordinators: David & Janelle Tavender, (02) 4950 6708

Maitland:

Alternate Wednesdays, 10.am.
20 Short St., Lorn.
Group Co-ordinator: Susan Hall, (02) 4933 9009

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1. Full Inspiration of the Scriptures.
2. The Deity of Christ.
3. All sufficiency of Christ's One Sacrifice.
4. The Bible study principle of right division.

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