

# The Bulletin

## Meeks St. Church of Christ

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### “Why Believe In The God Of The Bible?”

by Billy Norris

One may be a believer in the One God; or an atheist, a disbeliever in any god; or a heathen, a believer in many gods. Let's examine each of these positions:

#### Heathenism

In its plural number of gods heathenism is confusing and divisive. As a young man Solomon believed in and had the favor of God. His kingdom prospered and became the wonder of the world. The queen of Sheba having heard of the wisdom of Solomon and of the greatness of his kingdom, came to see for herself. After she saw, she said, *"However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard"* (I Kings 10:7). However, Solomon proved himself unwise in turning away from the God who had so wonderfully blessed him. Contrary to the law of Moses, under which he lived, he married many foreign wives. *"For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David"* (I Kings 11:4). In turning away from God he built places of worship for the false gods of his wives. Now his kingdom was divided in the worship of numerous gods, and with the passing of time it was politically divided by rebellion, with ten of the twelve tribes forming a separate kingdom (I Kings 12).



Heathenism is obstructive to material progress. Loyalty to the practice of heathenism has unquestionably been a deterrent to material progress in many of the nations of the world today. Further, it is obstructive to moral progress. Some of the lowest moral standards of the world today are generally practiced in the heathen nations.

Heathenism is unintelligent. Isaiah depicts the foolishness of one making an idol and worshiping the product of his own hands. The fellow cuts down a tree, uses part of it to warm himself and to cook his food. *"And the rest he makes into a god, his carved image. He falls down before it and worships it, prays to it and says, 'Deliver me, for you are my god'"* (Isaiah 44:13-17).

Heathenism offers no superior philosophy of life, gives no satisfactory explanation of the existence of the universe, nor the origin, purpose, and destiny of man.

#### Atheism

The atheist cannot prove there is no God. To do so he would have to be omniscient -- to know all things in heaven and on earth, in the material and spiritual world, in time and eternity. He would have to be omnipresent. Otherwise God could be in the place where he is not. Atheism assumes the eternal existence of matter. Its beginning point of the universe is Unintelligence rather than Intelligence. Atheism assumes that life came from dead matter without outside stimuli. This is contrary to fact. Someone has proposed that the scientist take a grain of corn, that he carefully separate it into all its component parts, that he reassemble all these parts, and make it again into a grain of corn as it was before. In appearance it is exactly like the original grain of corn. Yet there is a vast difference, for when it is planted it does not generate. Something within has been disturbed. The life has gone. It is nothing more than unproductive dead matter.

Atheism argues that the universe exists by chance. Automobiles are now produced by the millions. Each year there are improvements. Were they produced by chance through millenniums of time? Or did they come into existence more than a hundred years ago because engineers conceived the idea of such a machine and deliberately began work to produce it? Atheism offers no constructive philosophy of life, no original moral code, no spiritual guidance, no handkerchief for the tear-dimmed eye, no hope.

## **The God of the Bible**

Surely it is more reasonable to believe in an eternal, intelligent, omnipotent God than to believe in the efficacy of dead matter. The universe must be the work of supreme intelligence and power. Its functions are too precise, too orderly, to be the product of chance. For example, the sun has a surface temperature of 6000 degrees centigrade, with an internal temperature of perhaps 40 million degrees. The explosion of a distant star may mean nothing to us, but if the sun exploded 93,000,000 miles away, it would be the ultimate catastrophe for man. Heat and radiation would reach the earth in about 8.5 minutes. The entire surface of the globe would be burned to a crisp with such speed no one would know what hit it. However, an explosion of the sun would not be needed to destroy all life on the earth. A change in the sun's radiation by even as little as one percent, either to increase or to diminish would probably suffice to destroy all life. If the sun's radiation depended upon fickle chance, the earth would be in jeopardy every moment.

The Bible must be the work of supreme intelligence. The composition of the Bible shows order and organization beyond the grasp of mortal man. It is made up of 66 books, written by 36 to 40 different men, many of whom never saw the others, from three different continents, primarily in two different languages, written over a period of approximately 1600 years. Yet when these books, written under such varying circumstances, are brought together, they unfold without contradiction one unified story of man's fall and God's plan for his salvation. No other collection of books in all the world written under such circumstances could be characterized by such unity. Fulfilled promises, fulfilled prophecies without any failure show the hand of God in the revelation of His Word.

Further, the influence of the Bible shows it to be the work of a supreme being who revealed His Will for the good of mankind. The greatest characters, the noblest men and women, have demonstrated the influence of the Bible in their lives. The very thought of God gives an inspiration that can be derived from no other source than this marvelous book that reveals the will and the love of God for us all.

We would do well to believe in the God of the Bible, and show that we do by obeying His Word. Our eternal destiny depends upon it.

*(via Gospel Guide, Nov. 1995)*

**News and Notes:** Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Clois Wright, and Dan & Linda Hunt, Mollie Harris, David Taylor,, Danny Cottrell, Gary Doles, Joe Felks, Randy Beaty, Sam Johnson, and Fred's grandson Mason.  
Update: Sherry Doles has a few cracked ribs causing her some pain. The doctors are working on that before starting treatment.

### **Those Who Serve:**

<b>Announcements:</b>	Russell Briggs
<b>Opening Prayer &amp; Scripture Reading:</b>	Paul Busby <i>Acts 17:30-32</i>
<b>Song Leader:</b>	J D Griffin
<b>Lord's Supper:</b>	Jerry Kennemur
<b>Preaching:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Sermon:</b>	<i>"Repentance: Gift Or Command?"</i>
<b>Closing Prayer:</b>	Tim Harris Jr.

# ***“Repentance: Gift or Command?”***

Lesson Text: **Acts 11:18— Act 17:30.**

## **I. Repentance Is A Major Part Of Our Conversion.**

A. **Acts 3:19**, *“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,”*

B. Repentance defined: *“To change one’s mind or purpose.”* (Vine’s)

C. Many misconceptions about repentance:

(1) One cannot repent until regenerated.

(2) One cannot repent without the Holy Spirit from God.

(3) One has no ability to repent until God acts directly on their heart.

D. That’s what Calvinism teaches; Quote by John MacArthur: *“Repentance is not a human work. Jesus said in **John 6:44**, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.” (**Acts 11:18; 2 Timothy 2:25**)*

## **II. Repentance As A Gift.**

A. It is based on two premises:

(1) That we actually are born depraved and cannot repent without help.

(2) That anything I do in my salvation nullifies God’s grace (**Romans 4:4**).

B. If repentance is a gift that must come from God, then why don’t all repent?

**(2 Peter 3:9; Ezekiel 18:31; Luke 7:30; Matthew 14:3-5).**

C. Illustration of a father who wants his children to succeed....

D. A closer look at **John 6:44 (and 45); Acts 11:18; 2 Timothy 2:25.**

E. If repentance is only given as a gift, why does God command repentance?

## **III. Repentance As A Command.**

A. **Matthew 3:2,8; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30.**

B. God’s commands are personal, not optional, and demand action!

C. Illustration of this in **Matthew 25:14-30** (parable of the talents).

D. If repentance is a gift only, then why does God hold men accountable?

**(Matthew 11:20-24; Revelation 2:1-5).**

## **IV. A Proper View Of Repentance.**

A. It is both a gift and a command— **Titus 2:11-12; Ephesians 2:8-9.**

(1) God does help us to repent by:

— Giving us instruction on how to repent (**vs. 12**).

— Giving us the incentive to repent (**Jonah 3:4; Luke 13:3**).

— Giving us the opportunity to repent (**Revelation 2:18-23**).