

Unpopular Bible Doctrines #3: God Refuses to Hear Prayers & Gives the Wicked Up

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Unpopular Bible Doctrines

By Larry Wessels

Bible Text: 2 Timothy 3:15-16; Isaiah 40:8

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Christian Answers of Austin, Texas

9009 Martha's Drive

Austin, TX 78717

Website: www.biblequery.org

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/christiananswers

Isaiah 30:9-11: 9 That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: 10 Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits: 11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

Larry Wessels: Greetings and welcome once again to our program. I'm Larry Wessels, Director of Christian Answers and I want to thank you for being with us again. Well, if you've been following our shows recently, we're doing a series entitled "Unpopular Bible Doctrines." We've already done show number 1 and show number 2 in this series and we're just rolling right along with all the stuff in the Bible that people just love to hate and we've got plenty more for you on our table.

My guest, Bob L. Ross. Bob it's great to have you here. We don't do the show for the money obviously because no one hardly gives us any anyway, but I don't worry about that, I just preach the word in season or out of season, you know, let the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God do the work because God says that his word will not come back to him void and the sword of the Spirit, Hebrews 4:12, will cut asunder whatever God wants to cut asunder with his word into the hearts of men out there so that they might come to his eternal living Son, Jesus Christ and so through him have salvation. That's really our bottom line. It's the love of God. It's not seeking after any money or any extra benefits or perks. We just do this because we love the word and we don't care if people don't like what we have to say or even if they don't believe it. If they don't believe it, I can't help that, you know, all I can do is give you the word and like I've said so many times over the last 20 years of television programming, just because I give you bad news that doesn't mean that you shoot the Western Union telegraph boy when he gives you bad news. I'm just telling you what God said and I'll show you the verses as we go. You can get mad but remember, I'm just giving you the message and I'm not trying to get into your pocketbook.

Now, right before we were beginning this show number 3 of our unpopular Bible doctrines, I'd like to just have Bob who is our special guest today, he's director of Pilgrim

Publications in Pasadena, Texas, a great Christian bookstore out there. I got to visit it for the first time just over the weekend and it was a lot bigger than I thought it was. You've got everything in there, Bob. It's exciting. But you are also not only an author in your own right on many subjects, you can contact our ministry for more information on that along with the resource list of Pilgrim Publications. We have that available through our ministry. Contact us and you'll find out all about Bob's stuff but Bob is also one of the leading publishers in the world as far as I know of the great works of the 19th century prince of preachers, Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Many people out there in our audience know who Spurgeon is and Bob, I'd like you to just take a minute or so and kind of familiarize our viewers here with Spurgeon and some of his works.

Bob L. Ross: Well, we do publish the works of Charles Spurgeon. Now Larry, he also had a wife, Mrs. CH Spurgeon and she was a very famous woman in Christian history and this is a biography of her life which we have printed now, published on three or four different occasions and there are those that are in our audience today who are, no doubt, Christian women and if you would want to read an inspiring book, a very deeply dedicated to God type book, this one here is one you'd want to read, Mrs. CH Spurgeon, and we are happy to be publishers of that book. As they say, behind every good man there is a good woman, well, this was certainly true in the case of CH Spurgeon. A wonderful woman stood behind him, Mrs. Spurgeon, she had her own book fund by which she supplied young ministers and poor ministers with free books and she was just a wonderful worker for God on her own. She outlived Charles Spurgeon, by the way, by quite a number of years and was useful even after he went to be with the Lord. So remember this book if you're looking for something inspirational from the standpoint of a Christian woman, with the Christian woman as an example for doing great things for the Lord. This would be a good one to have in your library.

Larry: Excellent. No problem. Like I said, just contact us if you need more information about CH Spurgeon, the book Bob just referenced or any other material that we're going to be talking about here in this show or other shows that we've done on all kinds of subjects. We're more than happy to help. I send out free literature all the time. We get emails. We get phone calls, mail that comes in requesting more information and I'm more than happy to send that out to whoever calls and asks for it or writes for it or whatever.

A quick review of unpopular Bible doctrines in show number 2. Unpopular Bible doctrine number 16: Very few people on the earth will be saved by the mercy of God including those who actually claim to be Christians.

References are Matthew 7:13-15, 21-23 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful

works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Unpopular Bible doctrine number 17: God loves judgment. Isaiah 61:8; Revelation 20:11-15; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Revelation 6:9-11; Hebrews 9:27, 10:27-31; 1 Corinthians 5:10; Jude 14-16; John 9:39 cross referenced with John 12:39-41 etc.

Isaiah 61:8 For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Revelation 6:9-11 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

Jude 14-16 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

Unpopular Bible doctrine number 18: Some people will never receive forgiveness from God. This is found in Matthew 12:31-32; John 17:12; Matthew 7:21-23; Jude 4 etc.

Matthew 12:31-32 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

Unpopular Bible doctrine number 19: God hates religious doctrine that contradicts his word. Scripture references: Revelation 2:6, 14-16; Ezekiel 13:3, 14:10; Deuteronomy 8:19-20; Matthew 15:3-9; 1 Timothy 4:1-6, 13, 16; 2 John 9-11; 1 Timothy 1:3-4, 10, etc.

1 Timothy 4:1-3 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

1 Timothy 4:6, 13, 16 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

2 John 9-11 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Anyway, we're going to pick up where we left off from last time. I did quite an extensive review of show number 1 in show number 2 last time and we didn't get as many new doctrines in there as I would have liked in show number 2 although I think the show was still very beneficial to our viewing audience and there were plenty of unpopular Bible doctrines there for people to get astonished by. But all they have to do is open their Bible and look and they're going to find these things for themselves. But as you'll see in our show, we try to put those Bible verses right up on the screen so that you can look at them for yourself and then go, "Gee or golly, I didn't know that was in there." But it is and this is why it is unpopular.

Beginning today then, we will just pick up where we left off and just keep moving right along for as long as it takes to go through all these things. But you'll find that particularly Bob, I find it interesting that the more unpopular doctrines you bring up, the more hostility you generate from people out there and it doesn't necessarily have to be people that are of other religions like Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, you know, people of pagan or animistic or world religions that have nothing to do with Christianity. Of course, you're going to get them upset anyway but they don't believe the Bible anyway but you get all these people upset that claim to be believing the Bible. Do you have any comment on that?

Bob: Well Larry, that's the problem we have as Christian ministers and Christian churches. We have this broad branch, you might say, this tree with many branches and all kinds of birds sitting in it and their excrement covering the limbs of the tree and causing a lot of, you might say, image of the Christian church and the Christian message to be misunderstood and rejected. How many times do we hear hypocrites in the church or hypocrites in the ministry or insincere Christians or something of this sort. We all have this reputation that attaches to Christianity sometimes and some of us don't deserve it, some of us do but the main thing is that we will always have a problem with those who are hangers-on for whatever they can get out of it, that are insincere, that are not really into it for, as you said a while ago, not for the money but in for the real purposes of helping do what God has ordained: preach the Gospel to every creature; spread the word throughout the world. So we just have to live with that unpopularity and depend upon the grace of God to convince those to whom the message comes that this is the truth and walking in it.

Larry: That's right. Very good. Well, let's begin our show today, Bob, then with the next series of unpopular Bible doctrines. I'm sure these will always be a hit with our fans at home but the first one we see here on the screen is called: The importance of God's word, and what we see here is that God's word is to be considered very important. From God's word, God actually seems to be serious about what he has revealed in places such as 2 Timothy 3:15-16; Isaiah 40:8; Psalm 138:2; Luke 4:4, where Jesus is in the wilderness being tempted by the devil himself and the devil is coming up with all these arguments, even using the word of God to try to mess Jesus up and yet Jesus uses the word of God in context hermeneutically, with the proper exegesis, to refute the devil.

2 Timothy 3:15-16: And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Psalm 138:2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

Luke 4:4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written in, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

Luke 16:29-31 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Proverbs 30:5-6 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

Jeremiah 23:29 Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

John 10:35b The scripture cannot be broken.

So what we find is the word of God according to God and of Jesus is very important to be taken seriously yet this is an unpopular doctrine in our day because people think the Bible is full of errors. You've got this Jesus Seminar where they have little beads they draw, these so-called Bible scholars and they have a vote on, "Well, I don't think he said that.

No, I don't think he said it." And you've got all these other critical scholars that say, "Well, Moses didn't write Moses and Daniel didn't write Daniel and Luke didn't write Luke and Matthew didn't write Matthew," and all this criticism and you've got all the liberals in the church that don't believe the Bible anyway: they don't believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ; they don't believe he was deity in the flesh. In other words, they don't take the word of God seriously and to say that you should take the word of God seriously is very unpopular. What do you have to say?

Bob: Well, the devil works through means and what better means could he have than Christian ministers, those that appear as angels of light, messengers of knowledge? So the devil is very happy to have these kind of fellows come along and volunteer their intellectual prowess, their personalities, their handsome bodies or wonderful voices or whatever. The devil is very happy to have those men volunteer themselves for use in the mission work of the devil. But Larry, once they cross that word of God, once they contradict that truth of the Scripture and once they trample underfoot the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit and God the Father, once they do that, why they more or less expose for whom they are doing their work, the one that they're serving.

Paul warned against those that come preaching another Jesus, another Spirit and another Gospel and if they come preaching to you, even if they come in the name of the Lord, even if they come with their collars turned backwards implying that they're in the ministry, even if they come with a Revered Dr. So-and-so with a lot of pigtails on the end of the name, beware if they preach another Jesus than the one recorded in God's word. If they want to say that we can't go by this Jesus, we have to go by what we have discovered otherwise, if they preach to you another Gospel, we can't go by this Gospel, we've got to go by what this one said and that one said, then you can know that these are indeed angels of lies and servants of Satan and you should turn from those false teachers.

Larry: Very good. In fact, the viewers at home can see this little truism and I kind of came up with this myself. A truism, you might say, that applies in our wicked world that we live in but as you can read it, it says: The more an unsaved and unrepentant sinner knows about the true and living God, the more that sinner hates the living God. So as we talk about these kinds of doctrines and a man is not born again through the power of the Holy Spirit and has that love for Christ and his word in his heart to where he with all his mind and soul and strength loves God and wants to follow God, if he's rebellious against that, has not the Spirit of Christ, has a carnal mind, is at enmity with God, Romans 8:7, then you can be sure that every unpopular doctrine we bring up, he's going to hate God more and more and more and that's because as truth is revealed to someone like that, the more that enmity, that hatred towards God and his word comes out.

Now, as long as they try to stay ignorant of it, it's not as obvious but as we do a show like this one, Bob, it starts to magnify that hatred they really have in their hearts for God while at the same time these kind of people are saying, "Oh, I love God. I believe in God," and all this stuff but it goes back to Titus there in chapter 1 toward the end of the chapter where Titus himself there, Paul says in Titus there, he says that, "Well, they say

they love God but in works they are reprobate, they are disobedient and all these types of things." So they don't really love God even though they say they love God.

Bob: Well Larry, there is such a thing as what Paul calls the hiding of the Gospel, the Gospel is hid and I'm reading here in 2 Corinthians, "If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," which you mentioned a while ago. The unregenerate person learns more and more and more but he hates God more and more and more. He rejects God, the true God more and more and more. And Paul said the reason for that is "In whom the god of this world," Satan, "hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." So if the Gospel is hid to these people and then it's obvious that the devil is the one that is blinding their minds and they're following after false teachings and all these false teachings are going to do will be to reinforce their rejection of the Gospel.

Larry: That's right and very well said. You can't go wrong by just quoting the word of God like you just did to back up your point. That's the whole idea of this.

Okay, now, let's go to the next unpopular Bible doctrine. We've got zillions of them to go through but as you can see on the screen there: The wickedness of man. You've got Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:9-18, 23; John 3:19; 2 Corinthians 1:9; Ephesians 2:1-3. It goes back to what you said many times: men love darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not.

John 3:19 And this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Ephesians 2:1-3 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Jeremiah 13:23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.

Romans 3:9-12 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Romans 3:13-18, 23 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

So, Bob, wicked men don't like to be told that they're wicked and so, therefore, when the Bible expounds on the wickedness of man, wicked men don't like to hear that. They like to think, "Oh, man is basically good. There is some good in everybody," and all this type of stuff but we don't find that kind of doctrine in the word of God.

Bob: Well, one of the first things Satan did, the serpent in the Garden of Eden, was that he tried to pit Adam and Eve against God by putting things into their mind that was suspicion that God had their best interest at heart. In fact, Paul talks about the serpent beguiling the minds of people and corrupting them from the simplicity that's in Christ and one of the things that Satan works very hard and his followers or his teachers work very hard is missionaries work very hard in convincing men of is that God has not told the truth to you about your condition. "God has said you're sinners and God has said that you are depraved and God has said that you have a carnal mind and God has so described you that you are dead in trespasses and in sins. You know that you're not as wicked as God has described and so let's have a little more self-esteem here. Let's have a little better self-image here." And then all these psychological ways of improving man's image of himself is generated and so we have a whole school of doctrine here and people making money off of it, helping people to improve their image of themselves when the truth of the matter is, they do not want to accept what God has declared about them, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is none righteous, no not one," and on and on and on there in the third chapter of Romans where he describes the depraved activity of men. Men do not want to accept it. "Oh yeah, I've made a few mistakes. Oh yeah, every once in a while I make an error but I do the best I can. I'm doing the best to keep in the commandments and I'm not as bad as Saddam Hussein or I'm not as bad as John Dillinger," and so on. But you're right, Larry, they just don't want to accept the decree that God has placed, "All have sinned," over their forehead here and would mark them as a criminal in the sight of God.

Larry: That's right and it takes me back to all this modern psychology like you mentioned that we have in our day and age where the modern psychologists which are basically going back to Sigmund Freud and Karl Jung, of course Karl Jung said in his own autobiography that he lived in a haunted house and he saw spirits and, of course, Sigmund Freud didn't like his wife so he moved in with his own sister; moved his wife out of his bedroom. So here all this modern psychology is coming down to these kind of individuals: a haunted house guy and this guy that lives with his own...

Bob: If he lives in a haunted house, it's haunted because he lived in it. He haunted it.

Larry: Yeah, he's the one that said it. Anyway, they come up with all these psychological reasons to get away from what the core matter is: we are sinners; we are wicked; we hate the ways of God. But the modern psychologist says to that thief over there, the Bible would say he's a thief and a robber but modern psychology would say, "Well, he's not a thief and a robber, he's a kleptomaniac and he just has this psychological problem with taking things. It probably goes back to his early childhood but how can you say he's a thief and a robber? No, he's a kleptomaniac. It's a psychological condition." Then they come up with all these clinical terms for all these sins that the Bible clearly describes as sins and wickedness but yet in our day and age, they change everything to modern medical terms to make it sound like it's okay but this is just one of your typical examples.

Bob: Well, the clash between modern psychology and the Gospel comes in that point of where how do you deal with guilt and in this area, we won't repeat all that modern psychology offers because it's useless to go that route anyway, but the Gospel offers the correct way and the appropriate way they're to deal with guilt. It's not to deny guilt, it's not to try to blame your transgressions on someone else, it's not to try to impute your own guiltiness to your mother and your father or your peers or some other scapegoat, it's to simply admit to the truth, "Yes, I'm guilty. I've done this yet God has been merciful to me and the Lord Jesus Christ's blood on the cross, the atonement, it will wash away all my sins and my guilt will taken care of, put behind me, through the mercy and forgiveness of God."

Now, if you're guilty of something and you're going to recover kind of from it, you have to be forgiven, don't you? Someone has to forgive you and the only person who can effectively and forever forgive you with any meaning is God. When God forgives you, it doesn't matter if anyone else forgives you or not. I've heard people say, "Oh, I just can't forgive that. That's just too bad. I can't do it." God can forgive any sin and in your conscience give you the peace of God that passes understanding so that you realize that you've been forgiven. Now, that's the way to deal with your guilt and this thing with modern psychology, Larry, where the conflict comes in basically is where they try to solve the guilt element in man which is really what's bothering them, that's really where the root of their problem is, that they are dealing with guilt and when modern psychology tries to deal with that in ways that avoid facing up to the fact that they're indeed guilty before God, that's where the problem comes in with the conflict between psychology and Christianity. Sometimes they can do a pretty good job of analyzing people and all this but they can't do a good job in dealing with the matter of the guilt. The guilt has to be solved through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ by which we mean you accept Christ and you have the all benefits of the atonement which answers to God for your sins. All your sins are put away by the death of Christ.

Larry: Amen. Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and his shed blood for our salvation is really the only psychological help you need because once you're born again in the spirit and you have that trust and love in Christ, you don't need all these psychological counselors telling you all the reasons why all your wickedness is okay.

Anyway, let me move on here before we burn up too much or we could do a whole show on this topic.

Bob: The best image one should have of himself, the best image, people talk about self-image, the best image you could have of yourself is that you are a sinner and you are forgiven. That's the best image because that's the true image.

Larry: And you're only forgiven through the shed blood of Christ and the faith in his name for what he has done for you.

Bob: Right.

Larry: Alright now, let's go to some more unpopular stuff. You see on your chart it says: God gives people up to sin and wickedness. You find this in Romans 1:24-32, so you've got quite a few verses there and they go into quite extensive detail.

Romans 1, starting in verse 24, going through verse 32: Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Psalm 18:40-42 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me. They cried, but there was none to save them: even unto the LORD, but he answered them not. Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

Proverbs 16:4 The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

What do you have to say on this, Bob?

Bob: Well, it's a very unpopular doctrine, that topic. That's all I can say on that, Larry. But it is true. The end can so go down the path of rejecting the truth, twisting the truth, turning from the truth and whatever else you can describe by way of not receiving the truth. They can persist in that until they are outside, you might say, the means that God had ordained for the truth to become effective.

Now, what are those means? Well, first of all, there's preaching, there's teaching. There are books like the Bible and books on the Bible and there is the personal testimony of others. Sometimes men can so put themselves beyond the reach of these means that they are in effect given over to a reprobate mind. We can be thankful that God puts barriers in our way to keep us from going to the extremes that some people go to in running away from God and hiding from God and resisting God. Thank God, I've had lots of people say, "Thank God that he caused this thing to come into my life because he stopped me in my tracks and made me realize where I was headed and I turned back. But sometimes people get out beyond those limits and they're out beyond the reach of the means that God uses to bring them to Christ and so they're given over to a reprobate mind, to a rejected mind and God has even sent strong delusion by getting outside of the means that God has ordained for them to know the truth. They have subjected themselves to the delusions that are out beyond. It's almost like comparing us living in the United States, we have all kinds of means around us to keep us in bounds with the truth of God: we have preaching accessible; we have churches accessible; we have Bibles accessible. But suppose you went over into a country like Africa, into the darkest of Africa, and all you had was the false idolatry over there and the Bible was forbidden and there are no preachers or no churches and you were only subjected to that all the time, Larry, what would be the outcome? You would be given strong delusion and you would be damned because of it. So when men are subject to the truth and they resist it, what happens is they grow further and further and further away and so they are given over to strong delusion that they would believe a lie and be damned, that the God of this world would blind their minds, corrupt their minds.

Larry: That's right and so a lot of people don't, you know, they can't possibly believe that God would actually do that. They think that everything will be alright, he's just a big Grandpa or Santa Claus in the sky but God, that's part of that judgment that God loves, one of the other unpopular doctrines that we already mentioned from Isaiah 61.

Bob: When we say that God does something, sometimes people might think, "Oh, you mean that God just picks them out by the hair of the head and does this." No, that's not necessarily how God works. God has things engrained into our lives in such a way that we reap what we sow. In other words, God never did force a man to take the poison of false doctrine against his will but, rather, that man chose to go into that path of drinking that poison of false doctrine and that's generally how it works, Larry. Sin becomes its own punishment and righteousness becomes its own reward according to the normal laws by which God has created and placed in this world. If you go out here and jump off of a 50 foot building, well, the law is that you're going to come up with not only broken bones but probably a broken neck and you'll be taken out where it's dead on arrival, DOA.

But the point we're making is: when we say that God sends strong delusion or God does this, we're not doing away with the fact that there are means to this end and men go into those ways of their own choosing and it's their own choice. It's like they told Jesus, those demons, "Put us in these swine. We will run over the cliff to get away from you. Get away from us. We don't want you." So they are perfectly willing to do what they're doing, Larry. It's not against their will.

Larry: That's right. It's just like those guys in Revelation that when they saw the wrath of the Lamb coming, rather than seeking the mercy of God, they asked the rocks to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. They're going to the rocks to look for protection rather than God himself and the saving mercy of his Son.

Bob: Spurgeon once said that men will have God everywhere but on the throne.

Larry: Amen. They don't want God to be God. They want to be God themselves.

Bob: They do not want to submit to the sovereignty of God and that's the problem with mankind. They'd rather have the rocks fall on them and cover them up as to be submissive to the sovereignty of God and his rules of order.

Larry: That's right and that's why all these doctrines really tie back into what you just said because these doctrines are unpopular because it does go back to God being on the throne and calling the shots rather than wicked men.

So with that, let's go on to the next one: God does not hear the prayers of unrepentant sinners and you have all your references there. These are just a few of them: Psalm 66:18; Psalm 109:7; Proverbs 1:24-29; Proverbs 15:29; James 4:3 and so forth.

Psalm 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

Psalm 109:7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned; and let his prayer become sin.

Proverbs 1:24-29 [This is God speaking] Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD.

Proverbs 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

James 4:3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Matthew 6:7-8 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

Well Bob, we've got all these people, in fact, I remember after the terrorist attack at the World Trade Center back in the year 2001, you had these joint prayer sessions at football stadiums and stuff and baseball stadiums where you got all these religious guys coming together to pray together to God for this tremendous calamity. So you've got a Muslim imam, you've got a Hindu priest, you've got a Buddhist monk, you've got a Christian minister and you've got all these other religions, world religions there, Tibetan Buddhists and so forth, different shades of religions, all coming together to pray to God. But yet when we look in the word of God, if a man is an unrepentant sinner, unwilling to follow God's truth, unwilling to come to the Lord Jesus Christ and his truth and his Gospel, the Bible is telling us that God's not hearing that man's prayer. Do you care to expound?

Bob: Well, when the disciples asked Jesus, they said, "Lord, teach us to pray," and Jesus said, "When you pray, pray 'Our Father, which art in heaven.'" Now, that opens up the whole scope of what is prayer and how people can pray with acceptance to God. "Our Father, which art in heaven." Now, Jesus taught us that no man comes to the Father except by me so, therefore, to call God your Father, you have to come through the Lord Jesus Christ and then you have access unto the Father through him. He is the Mediator between God and man. Now, unfortunately, there are people in the world that do not accept Jesus Christ as the Son of God. There are people in the world who do not accept that he is the Mediator between God and the people but on the other hand, they want to pray so they want to emulate the Bible teaching, Jesus' own teaching, and say, "Well, we're going to teach our disciples to pray." But now, how can you really have prayer that is acceptable to God, approved of the Father, and has any consequence to it if you do not go through the one way that the Lord Jesus Christ said that, "No man comes to the Father except by me. I am the way," and he taught his disciples to pray, "Our Father." Not, "Oh Buddha." Not...

Larry: "Oh Mohammed."

Bob: ...whatever, Akbar.

Larry: "Allahu Akbar."

Bob:"Allahu Akbar," or whatever. I'm not all that schooled on the Muslim religion. But all I'm saying is: these are foreign addresses to God. Jesus said, "Pray, 'Our Father,'" and to do that, you're saying, "I'm the brother of the Lord Jesus Christ. I've accepted him. He's my elder brother." So that's the only way that we can look at it as Christians, Larry, and if they want to take their chances praying in the name of some other, then that's their prerogative.

Larry: But the clear Bible teaching, though, Old Testament and New Testament is that you will not have your prayers answered by God and, in fact, in some cases, you find like, particularly in Proverbs 1, God laughs and mocks at you when you pray. You're trying to avoid a calamity and he's going to laugh and mock at you. He's not going to listen to your prayer and he's going to destroy it at the same time. That's hard doctrine. That's unpopular doctrine but that's what the Bible says. Old Testament, New Testament. It's unavoidable. Therefore, we have to understand that we're dealing with a God who is on the throne. He's not off the throne and that anything is going to work. Even, that takes me back to Cain and Abel. Cain thought his sacrifice should be good enough for God. God only accepted Abel's, though, and it made Cain so mad even though in Genesis 4, God says, "If you just do what's right, it will all be well." But Cain wouldn't do it. He just wouldn't do it. He went out and killed Abel instead. So this is the problem we have here with these people that are intent on not doing it God's way yet at the same time, they think God's going to hear their prayer and that is exactly not the case.

Bob: You know, Larry, we have a tendency to think like Cain that we can alter something and change it a little bit and make it a little better or God will at least not hold it against me. But Cain learned that even though he could bring the best fruits of the ground and the best farm produce that he could have there, I mean, he could've probably had some, you know, the best black-eyed peas and the best ears of corn and the best watermelon and the best squash and all this that was available to be had but without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins and that Cain offering was not bloody. The Abel offering was bloody, therefore, God testified of the gifts of Abel that he had the gifts that spoke of redemption, the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and that's why he was accepted above Cain. You just can't alter the message of God and expect to come out with approval.

Larry: That's right. At this point, it should be noted that if this series of unpopular Bible doctrines is true, then the following observations can be made: The God you believe in may not necessarily be the God who is actually there. The God you believe in is quite probably not like the God of the Bible. The God you believe in is perhaps not at all like the biblical God. Your God may not be God at all but simply a figment of your imagination.

The prophet Isaiah in chapter 55:8-9: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

Psalms 96:5 For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

The prophet Ezekiel, chapter 13:2-8: Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith it; albeit I have not spoken? Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord GOD.

Romans 1:21-22 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

Anyway, we are out of time for this particular program in this series on Unpopular Bible Doctrines #3 so what we will do is pick up on this next time because there is plenty more where that came from from the word of God; plenty more unpopular doctrines that we're going to go over and elaborate on for our viewers. Therefore, as we end the show, Bob, I want to invite our viewers to call or write. We have newsletters available free upon request. We have literature. We have tapes, audio cassettes, video tapes. Literature here from Pilgrim Publications of which Bob is the Director of Pilgrim Publications in Pasadena, Texas, one of the world's leading publishers of the works of C.H. Spurgeon, the Prince of Preachers from the 19th century. This is one of his works right here, "The Prayer of Jabez," the sermon on that topic. So please contact us if you'd like free information. We get requests all the time and we're more than happy to send you any Gospel literature we can to magnify the Lord Jesus Christ and show you the validity of his claims.

Anyway, with that said, I'm Larry Wessels, Director of Christian Answers and thank you for being with us. Thank you, Bob, for being here, brother.

Bob: God bless.

Larry: We'll see you next time. Remember, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Amen.

If you would like a free newsletter on this or other subjects, just give us a call at Christian Answers, the phone number is area code 512-218-8022 or you could email us at cdebater@aol.com. Thank you.