

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY GOD

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In the year 1802, Richard McNemar was taken before a tribunal of the Washington Presbytery, found guilty as charged, and excluded from fellowship in that body. One of the crimes which he was charged with was: "He has expressly declared, at several times, that Christ has purchased salvation for all the human race, without distinction". Mr. McNemar wasn't preaching universal salvation, nor was he charged with that. He was preaching UNIVERSAL OPPORTUNITY! This contradicted the pet belief of that denomination that the destiny of all men has been fixed; some being predestined to be saved, others being predestined to be lost, with no alterations possible.

This hideous doctrine of predestination is still being preached today. People are still being taught that there is a class of people for whom the death of Jesus can have no benefit. What an insult to the God of Heaven! What a slap at the gracious Son of God. The doctrine is both noxious and obnoxious! How thankful we are that this message of hopelessness does not have the endorsement of heaven behind it! It leaves mothers in the dark as to the destiny of their dead babies, it cheapens the purpose for the cross, it weakens the power of the gospel, and puts question marks on a multitude of passages in the New Testament. When will men learn not to put a question mark where God has put a period?

There are a number of reasons for rejecting the doctrine of predestination as described above. Permit me to list a few of them.

- *The great commission.* The gospel was designed for, and to be preached to, "every creature" (Mark 16:15), in "all nations" (Matthew 28:19). When Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16) he meant everyone.
- *God is no respecter of persons.* Peter declared in Acts 10:34-35, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him". In Romans 2:11 (in a context of discussion concerning blessings and punishment depending upon obedience or rebellion, not on race or any other form of selection) Paul wrote clearly, "For there is no respect of persons with God". Respect of persons is something Christians are warned against (James 2:1,9). Why? Because it is ungodly! God doesn't practice such! He is an equal opportunity God!
- *Jesus died for all men.* He "tasted death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). God loved so much that he gave his only begotten Son that WHOSOEVER believes might have opportunity for salvation. How can one, anyone, look at John 3:16 and see the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination? None are so blind as they who refuse to see. Jesus "died for all" (2 Corinthians 5:15).
- *God desires the salvation of ALL men.* Paul clearly wrote that God wishes for "all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). The fact that God desires the salvation of all men does not imply universal salvation, it does imply universal opportunity.

Certainly it is true that some will be lost. It is even true that most will be lost. However, the responsibility for such cannot be placed upon God. Men and women are lost because of personal choice to persist in sin. It doesn't have to happen. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and

godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12). If you're willing to be taught you can be saved. Your destiny is not fixed. You have a say in the matter. Jesus died that you might have life. He went to the cross so that you could go to heaven. Don't let his death be in vain for you. Our God is an equal opportunity God. Seize the opportunity!

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