

What about Those “Without the Gospel?”

Formally Called: *Destiny of the Heathen (5 main views)*



By Michael Bronson

Don't Assume I'm Correct

Although I have spent many years researching this subject, you should not automatically assume I am correct. Check it out for yourself. Verify that what I am telling you is true. Truth can withstand any investigation. You can use my material as a reference to assist your study, but you must study the subject yourself. The Bible must always be your final authority.

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Edited by *Janet Bronson* and *Jean Prediger*

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This book is a partial printout of my website Bible**Help**.org. Bible**Help**.org has 18,000 new visitors a month from 120 countries. Over 100,000 chapters are accessed every month. Although this website was started as a small personal ministry, it has taken on a life of its own. It has become a ministry in-and-of itself. I still work full-time as a Corrections Officer, but this website has given me opportunities I never thought would be possible.

Now that the website has grown, I feel it is important to raise prayer support for it. Therefore, I am asking you to consider praying for this website on a daily basis. Not only would it be greatly appreciated, it would give your prayers an international impact. You can download a prayer card at:

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- God will lead people to the website who could be helped by the material
- God will meet the needs of the visitors' hearts
- I will have God-given wisdom as I answer people's questions

*Over **18,000** new visitors a month
Visits from over **120** countries*

What about Those “Without The Gospel?”

Formally Called: *Destiny of the Heathen (5 main views)*

Who are the Heathen?	6
Open for Interpretation	7
5 Main Views	8
How We Came up with the 5 Main Views	9
Why Study the Heathen?	10
Christianity is Losing Ground	13
How Many People Die on an Average Day?	14
Most of the World has not Heard the Gospel	15
Signal of Need	17
What about the Seeking and Sincere?	19
Parental Influence	22
The Value of the Soul	24
Questions and Answers	27
Quick Visual Aid of the 5 main Views	33
Breakdown to View 1	34
Breakdown to View 2	35
Breakdown to View 3	36
Breakdown to View 4	37
Breakdown to View 5	38
Implications of the 5 Views	39
Breakdown of the Five Main Views	41
Breakdown of View 1	42
Breakdown of View 2	46
Breakdown of View 3	52
Breakdown of View 4	53
Breakdown of View 5	54
The Christian’s Mission to the World	55
How convinced are you?	58
Putting it all Together	60

Who are the Heathen?



Chapter: 13.01

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The morning steam rises from the dense foliage of the Brazilian rain forest as Yoma, a young brave, steals through this Amazon jungle in hopes of securing a meal. Yoma spots his target. Carefully he inserts a poison dart into his blowgun and fires. Moments later a monkey falls from a tree. As Yoma pulls the dart from the monkey, he thanks his god for supplying his needs.

Yoma's belief in a supernatural being differs greatly from that of fundamental Christianity. The only religion he knows is what has been taught to him by his tribe. Yoma has no knowledge of Jesus Christ or what He has done on the cross.

When the subject of the heathen is brought up, a

picture of a half-naked native running through the jungle usually comes to mind. While it is true a person such as Yoma is without the gospel, these primitive natives are not the only ones.

This section is designed to stimulate your thinking on the destiny of the heathen. We have defined a heathen as someone who has never heard the gospel. Who are these people, though, who have not heard the gospel? You may be surprised!

There are many ways to define the phrase "having not heard the gospel." The ultimate guideline, however, is: Is the person's knowledge of the gospel sufficient for him to accept Christ and go to heaven? If a person is unable to accept Christ because his knowledge of the gospel is either *incomplete* or *inaccurate*, he has not "heard the gospel." Thus, this definition now includes billions of people. Since so many people have not heard the gospel, maybe even your neighbor, it is important for you to understand how God will deal with these unsaved people. We pray that our research will help you in your studies.

Open for Interpretation



Chapter: 13.02

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Federal agents spread out across the basement of the jail. Handcuffed between two sheriffs was a man who had shocked the nation. Lee Harvey Oswald had been accused of assassinating the President of the United States. A man in a dark suit suddenly pushed forward and stuck out his arm. Oswald caught sight of Jack Ruby and jerked his hands up to protect himself. Ruby's .38 revolver discharged and Oswald collapsed, his life's story going down into infamy.

There is no doubt who killed Lee Harvey Oswald. There were dozens of eyewitnesses, not to mention the 20 million Americans who saw it on television. This issue is not open for interpretation. The facts are cut and dried. As to who was involved in the

assassination of John F. Kennedy, there is room for personal opinion. There is enough circumstantial evidence supporting the possibility of a conspiracy to make it unreasonable for anyone to say dogmatically that Oswald acted alone.

Likewise, when we approach the subject of the heathen, we have to understand that the Bible is clear on some aspects concerning the heathen (those who have never heard the gospel). However, there are other areas that are open for interpretation. It is not our intent in this study to be dogmatic, or show that there is only one correct interpretation. Our intent is to point out the problems that arise with some of the views, and to show what "appears" to be most consistent with the Word of God.

Through our study, Stevan Huntoon and I have come to the conclusion that the Bible teaches the heathen are going to hell (View 1), but you decide for yourself. On the following page is a list of the five views most often encountered in Christian circles.

Here is an interesting variation of the above photograph



5 Main Views

Chapter: 13.03

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- View 1** Every person is accountable for his sins, and unless he has personally accepted Jesus Christ as his savior, he will go to Hell and be punished for those sins.
- View 2** Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is essential for a person to have his sins forgiven. If a person is seeking (living up to the light that he has) *God will* then send a Christian to him.
- View 3** Same as view 2, except if there are no Christians available, God will send the gospel message to the seeker via a “supernatural” method (i.e. an angel or a voice from Heaven, etc.).
- View 4** If a person “lives up to the light he has,” God will allow him into Heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the person who has never heard the gospel.
- View 5** Every person who has not heard the gospel will be allowed into Heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the person who has never heard the gospel.

How We Came up with the 5 Main Views



Chapter: 13.04

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The night glowed as the barn was consumed by flames. From all indications, it was another fire set by an arsonist. This made thirty-seven barns burned in less than a month. The FBI had been called in to investigate what appears to be a conspiracy of hate crimes. At first, it was pretty much assumed one group was responsible for all of the burnings. Basically, it was just a matter of identifying the responsible party. But as the agents began to compare notes, they found more questions than answers. Nothing seemed to make sense. There were so many inconsistencies and overlaps. Just when a pattern seemed to be developing, some other evidence would directly contradict it.

It was not until the FBI discovered the burnings

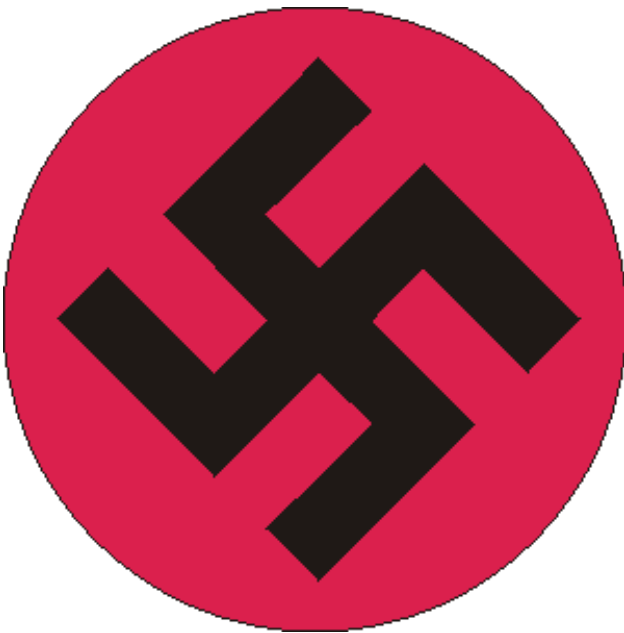
were not the work of *one* group, but multiple groups (with different motives) that the pieces fell into place. As it turned out there were four categories that the burnings fell into: Accidental, revenge of a family member, hate groups and copycats.



When Steve Huntoon and I first started studying the subject of the heathen, we ran into the same problem of conflicting information. We wrote to over 100 Christian organizations asking them for their opinion on this subject. When we first started reviewing the responses from the Christian leaders, we found it difficult to get a firm understanding of the information being presented to us. It seemed they were saying one thing and then in the next breath, it appeared they were saying just the opposite.

Originally, we thought there were only two views concerning the heathen; either you felt they were lost or you did not. What we did not realize was that there were three other views that fell in-between. The pieces did not start to fit together until we realized there were five main views. Although there are more views, we have found these five to be the most common.

Why Study the Heathen?



Chapter: 13.05

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Terror of the Nazis' Third Reich had spread across most of Europe as the Second World War moved into full swing. Rumors of concentration camps were filtering back to the United States. People fortunate enough to have escaped these death camps were circulating eyewitness accounts telling of mass extermination of Jews. At this point, the world had to ask itself, "Are these rumors true, or are they just part of a 'smear campaign' against Germany?" However, the issue soon encompassed millions of people, and it was necessary to take a closer look. When it appeared that the rumors might be true, a full investigation was initiated. As it turned out, Nazi Germany was committing whole-sale genocide.

Hindsight allows us to see the magnitude of the Nazis' war crimes, but when the rumors first started, it was unclear how widespread the problem actually was. The world we live in is full of alleged injustices, but we do not have the time to pursue thoroughly the validity of each. When prioritizing the issues to be studied, we have to determine the potential scope of the problem. A problem that affects millions of people takes a higher priority than a problem that affects only one person.



Since most people didn't believe the reports of mass killings, little was done to intervene. As a result 12 million people were allowed to be murdered. Since most Christians don't believe the heathen are going to Hell, little is done to intervene. If the heathen are going to Hell, what do you think will be the final spiritual death toll? (Imperial War Museum, London, England. Courtesy of Hadassah Rosensaft)

This same principle applies to the study of the heathen. We must determine what priority should be given to this subject. When talking about the heathen, are we only speaking of a few thousand people, or billions. As you will see from this study, the classification of heathen could include several billion people.

Is the study of the heathen just another complicated doctrine over which we Christians can split hairs? While it is true we are to study and be familiar with all the doctrines in the Bible, should we consume much of our time and energy doing an in-depth study of something that "doesn't really concern us"? There is only one good reason to do an in-depth

study of the heathen. That reason is: *The heathen are destined to Hell, and we as Christians can make it possible for them to go to Heaven.* If this is true, then this issue is extremely important.

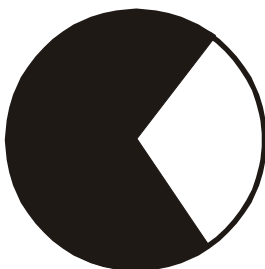
While it is true that the Bible is unclear on some aspects of the heathen, it is clear on many important issues concerning the heathen's fate. After several years of research, we have come to the conclusion that the study of the heathen warrants serious consideration. Because of the importance of this issue, we have decided to print our findings and present some aspects you may not have considered. We recognize there are still many unanswered questions, therefore, we are attempting to present this as non-dogmatically as possible. You decide for yourself.

One of the most commonly asked questions is: "What about those who have never heard the gospel?" Although this seems a very simple question to ask, the answer is difficult. To answer this emotional question, you must look closely at what the Bible teaches, and not at your feelings. Your *feelings* on this topic must carefully be separate from the *facts*. The destiny of the heathen is not dependent on how *you* feel, but on how *God* operates. Isaiah 55:8 states plainly God's ways are not our ways.

As with any doctrinal study, it is extremely important to be consistent with all the teachings in the Bible. No major doctrine should be based on only a few isolated verses. When studying a doctrine, all Biblical passages must be considered. We have discovered several issues concerning the heathen that many Christians have never thought about. These questions must be asked and answered. They cannot be ignored if we are to remain fair and objective in our research.

To help you understand what is involved in each of the five views, we have broken them down into simple and understandable modules. No viewpoint stands alone. Every viewpoint has hidden implications that must be considered. For example, let's say a stranger came up to me and said that he hated *all* dogs. Though he has not said it, he is implying he hates *my* dog. In this situation, the implications are easily seen, but they are more difficult to distinguish when discussing the complicated subject of the heathen. Therefore, when considering the view of the heathen to which we adhere, *all* the hidden implications of that view must be taken into account. Since the subject of the heathen is so closely tied to the plan of salvation, it is important to consider carefully the view to which you adhere. Some of these views imply things that are contrary

Translation Needs of the 6703 Languages



59% of the languages
have translation needs

Languages with needs	3985	59%
Translation in progress	1206	18%
Have adequate NT	801	12%
Nearly extinct	391	6%
Have adequate Bible	320	5%

Source: Bible Translation Needs -Bulletin 3 1996 and Ethnologue 1996

Note: As of July 2000, these books are the most current source of this information.

to the Word of God.

For several years Stevan Huntoon and I have spent large amounts of time and energy looking for any information available on the heathen. We bought every book and tape we could find. We wrote to over 100 Christian organizations and leaders asking them for their input and views. From this, we realized there were five main categories or opinions on the destiny of the heathen. Thus, to simplify this confusing topic, we have formulated these five views and created this section, “*Destiny of the Heathen (Five Main Views)*.”

Christianity is Losing Ground



Chapter: 13.06

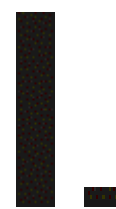
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“Mayday! Mayday!” cried the voice over the international distress frequency. “We’re taking on water ...” That was Captain Helsman of the trade ship, *Golden Beauty*. For three days, an Atlantic tropical storm had relentlessly pounded his ship. The 50-foot waves were dumping thousands of gallons of water into his ship. Until now, the ship’s eight pumps had been able to keep the flood under control. Captain Helsman, already concerned about structural fatigue, was informed that they were taking on water portside. Some welds in the seams had broken loose creating another avenue for water to rush in. As the welds continued to break, the pumps became overwhelmed. The *Golden Beauty* was now in trouble. For every gallon pumped out, three gallons flooded in. The ship was sinking.

Christianity is faced with this same kind of problem. There are more people being born into the world than there are people being “born again.” In fact, in the past 64 years, the world’s population has increased 19 times faster than the Protestant population. This means only one out of every nineteen people born today will accept the gospel. As of the year 2000, there were approximately 5.7 billion souls on their way to Hell. That means Protestant adherents (*1) make up only about 7.0% of the world’s population, and this includes those who are Christians only in name. Many people claim to be Christians because their parents were Christians, they live in a Christian nation or they go to church. It is often hard to determine how many of those so-called Christians are actually born again. The only way to determine if a person is a true believer is to compare their method of salvation to what the Bible teaches. Using this as a guideline, the number of true believers has been estimated around 400 million, but could be as low as 300 million.

**1 NOTE: “Protestant” adherents are generally not the only group classified as “Christian.” However, since the other groups usually do not teach the “Biblical” plan of salvation, they are not included under this heading.*

Increases From 1934 - 2000 (World Population verses Christian population)



19:1 ratio

In the past 64 years, the world’s population increased by 3,980 million (199%)

but, the number of Protestant adherents increased only by 209 million (101%).

Source: World Almanac and the Book of Facts 1935, 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, and the Center for International Research

How Many People Die on an Average Day?



Chapter: 13.07

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If you were to ask, "How many people die on an average day," you would get a wide variety of answers. Typical answers would range around 300 to 5,000 people. Surprisingly, over 150,000 people die every day. On average, 1.8 people die every second.

What is the spiritual destiny of these people? Obviously, no one really knows for certain how many people are going to Heaven and Hell. We can, however, come up with a ballpark estimate. There are many comprehensive studies that break the world's population down by religion. If you compare these belief systems with the Bible, you'll have a basic idea as to how many people believe in the Biblical plan of salvation.

Based on these studies, it has been estimated that only 7% of the world's population is going to Heaven (that means that 1.68 people are going to Hell per second). Even if this research is wrong and 75% of the world is going to Heaven; we still have 38,000 people going to Hell every day.

I realize that some of you are thinking that it is morbid and inappropriate to talk about this. You're thinking that talking about this topic in public shows a lack of sensitivity. Yes, in a sense I guess it does appear morbid. It is, however, necessary. It serves a very important purpose.

The Cancer Society tells us that over 160,000 Americans will die this year from lung cancer and 40,000 will die from breast cancer. We are also told that almost 3 million people worldwide will die from AIDS this year.

Are these pronouncements morbid or inappropriate? No, of course not. They serve a valid purpose. They inform us of a serious problem that needs to be addressed. It tells us that millions of people are dying needlessly. These pronouncements are intended to bring a serious problem to our attention. They are intended to challenge us to action.

Likewise, this poster tells us about a serious problem; a problem that many of us would like to forget. People are needlessly dying and going to Hell. Although curing people of diseases is important, isn't being concerned about a person's eternal destiny even more important? Yes, this poster may make us feel uncomfortable, but hopefully it will challenge us into action."

To get a printer friendly poster of this page, go to: BibleHelp.org/dieday.htm.

Most of the World has not Heard the Gospel



Chapter: 13.08

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The command was given and they began their historic descent. There is no turning back now. Descending at 65 feet per second, they are attempting to do something that has never been done before. In a few moments, there will be either a victorious landing of NASA's lunar module, the *Eagle*, or a tragic disaster. Houston control waits anxiously for what seems like hours. Suddenly, over the loud speaker comes Commander Armstrong's now legendary phrase, "The Eagle has landed!"

Man had landed on the moon. Advancements in technology and transportation allowed America to accomplish what mankind had dreamed about for centuries. Technology has spread its influence all

over the world, even to areas that we consider "primitive." Because of this global influence, many Christians assume the gospel message has also permeated the world. They view the world as basically evangelized and the subject of the heathen as involving only a small population of natives in some distant jungle. Yet, this subject of heathenism involves a much larger spectrum.



As mentioned in the previous chapter, less than 7% of those living today are born-again Christians. About 50% of the world's population still does not even know *who* Jesus Christ is. China, with 1.2 billion people, has only a limited gospel witness. Approximately 75% of the world's population does not have a clear understanding of the gospel.

Just because a person has *heard* of Christianity or Jesus Christ does not mean he has a clear enough understanding of the gospel to go to Heaven. Many of us have heard of Buddhism, Hinduism or Confucianism, yet very few of us understand their methods of salvation. This vagueness with which we view other world religions is the same vagueness with which the world views our religion, Christianity. Therefore, can we say these people have truly "heard the gospel?" If the answer is no, then most of the world must be classified as heathen.

Our heavily exposed "Christian nation" can be used to illustrate this point further. Much of our popula-

tion does not understand the salvation message. Conduct a survey yourself. It will surprise you to see the lack of understanding Americans have concerning the gospel. Many of them will be able to parrot the familiar cliches such as “Jesus died for our sins” or “you have to accept Jesus as your savior.” Yet, if asked to explain the mechanics of how a person dying on a cross could save them from their sins, few could explain it. Moreover, if questioned further, many of the people surveyed will add “live a good life, keep the Ten Commandments, go to church.”



1/2 of the World has never heard of Jesus

Thus, just because a person knows about Jesus Christ and Christianity does not mean he has a clear understanding of the gospel. Being aware Jesus Christ existed and died on a cross is *not* enough to save anyone. People in America are saturated with the gospel message, yet it is still often misunderstood. These misunderstandings are even more prevalent in areas where exposure to the gospel is less.

Many people remain unreached due to barriers in language, geographic location or technical deficiencies. Others are “happy” with their religion and do not feel it necessary to listen to differing ideas. Take yourself, for example. Can you truly say you have taken the time to *carefully* examine the other major religions? If you haven’t, how can you expect the rest of the world to carefully examine Christianity?

World's Major Religions -1999

(number of adherents in millions)

Atheist	2.4%	146
Non religious	12.8%	766
Islam	19.7%	1,179
Hinduism	14.5%	865
Protestantism	7.0%	416
All others	60.3%	3,608
	100.0%	5,980

Important Note: Accurate Statistics

It should be understood that the numbers in the above chart may not fully represent the actual numbers in each of these religions. They are only considered approximates. The various books I looked at to find these numbers say that it is difficult to get a precise count because most religions do not maintain these types of records. Even different groups within the Christian community has various methods of identifying members, and as a result, the number of Christians differ. The above chart, however, does provide a solid ballpark idea of the world’s religious makeup.

Interesting Side Note

A picture of one of our astronauts having fun.



Signal of Need



Chapter: 13.09

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The flashing blue or red light on top of an emergency vehicle is a signal of need: The emergency could be a fire, a crime or a person in physical duress. Whenever you see the flashing light, you know there is a need. The flashing light is symbolic of something else too. The speed at which the light flashes is approximately the average rate in which people are dying and going to hell. That's about 1.7 people every second. Of course, there is no way of accurately knowing how many people are dying and going to hell. Only God knows for certain. We can, however, make some general calculations based on facts we do have. *(You'll find the data and the calculations at the end of the chapter.)*

Based on the world's population, mortality rate and an estimated number of true believers, a yearly average can be estimated. Based on this rate, here is how the numbers add up:

1.68	per second
101	per minute
6048	per hour
145 thousand	per day
53 million	per year
3.7 billion	per average lifetime (70 years)

As with any statistic, it is easy to forget each number represents a person, an eternal soul, someone just like you. Although we cannot fully comprehend it, God has a personal and deep love for each person. The harvest truly is great and the laborers are few. Hosea 4:6 says, "For a lack of knowledge, my people perish."

The next time you see a flashing light, remember it is symbolic of someone entering into a Christ-less eternity. Also remember, if it were not for the faithfulness of another believer, that flashing light would have been symbolic of your fate. The flashing lights are declaring a need; a need for us to pray, give, and go.

How the statistics were derived

It is difficult to determine the exact number of true believers in the world. There are many that are labeled "Christian" because of the country they live in. Others view themselves as Christians simply because their parents were Christians or because they attend a church. The only way to determine if a person is a true believer is to compare their method of salvation to what the Bible teaches.

Using this as a guideline, the number of true believers has been estimated around 340 million, but could be as low as 230 million. To provide for a margin of error, we will say there are 410 million true believers. Even if there were twice as many true believers (820 million) the number of people dying and going to hell would still be high, around 1.57 instead of 1.68 per second.

The source of the “mortality rate” (.883%) was the *CIA World Fact Book, 2003*. A mortality rate of .883% means that 1 out of every 113 people in the world will die this year.

The Raw Statistics

Number of people in the world (as of Jan 2004)	6.339 billion
Number of true believers	410 million
Number of non-believers	5.989 billion
% of the world’s population which will die this year	.883%
# of the non-believers who will die this year	52.9 million
# of seconds in a year	31,536,000
# of the non-believers who will die each second	1.68

What about the Seeking and Sincere?



Chapter: 13.10

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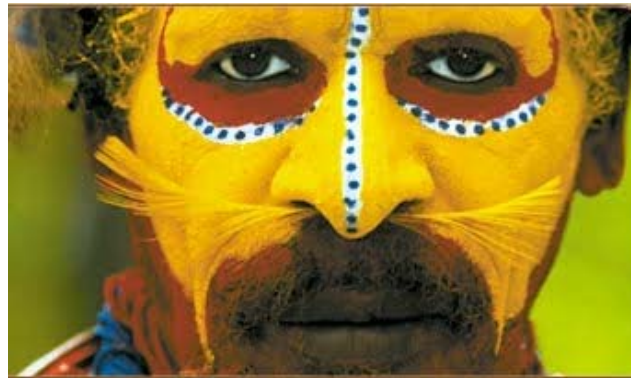
The platoon cautiously moved down the trail as the Americans searched for the Vietcong. Intelligence reports indicated that “Charlie” had moved into the DeTung valley over the night and were setting up a major offensive. Suddenly, there was the familiar whistle and then a yell, “Incoming!” Private Jackson dove for cover as the ground exploded around him. It was an ambush and his platoon was taking heavy casualties. As Jackson jammed another clip into his M-16, he began to realize he might not make it out of this scrimmage. He had never given God or death much thought in the past, but now his thoughts were consumed by them. He prayed, “God, if you get me out of this, I promise to go to church and live a good life.”

This, of course, is the classic example of “fox hole religion.” On the *surface*, Private Jackson was “seeking God” and “sincere.” However, history has

shown most “fox hole” conversions produce little lasting change. There is much confusion surrounding what is “seeking” and “sincerity.” An understanding of these issues will help you in your study of the heathen.

From our research, we found most evangelical Christians agree personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is essential to go to Heaven. The overall consensus was this applies to *everyone* including the heathen.

The question that causes the most confusion and heated controversy is, what will happen to the person who starts seeking God, but is isolated from the gospel? Is God obligated to send him the gospel? We found the subject of the heathen pivots around this issue. However, the issue of “the seeker” raises some very interesting problems. More problems are created than answered when we say God will provide the gospel to those who are seeking. Thus, it is important for you to take an in-depth look at this topic. There may be several problems you have not considered. (For more information, refer to the chapter *Breakdown of View 2, Implication C.*)



*The “heathen” is not limited to some isolated jungle.
He could be your next door neighbor.*

Are there certain factors that cause a person to want to seek God with a “sincere” heart? If there are certain factors, if they are applied to everyone in the world, would these factors cause *more* people to seek God? As we will soon see, some factors do influence people to seek God, and these factors

are not evenly distributed. If they were more evenly distributed throughout the world, there would be many more Christians.

The reason a person chooses to do good or bad ultimately stems from the person's *will*. This also applies to whether a person chooses Christ or not. There are many factors that influence the formation of a person's will. Two very powerful influences are parental support and peer pressure. Great strength and guidance can be instilled in children during their formative years. The way parents bring up their children plays a major role in how they turn out. If a person has had solid parental support and several positive role models, he will choose, out of his free will, not to get involved in drugs, premarital sex, etc. No one forces him to make these decisions, but others influence his values. However, these influences also can work in a negative direction. A person in the inner city who is pressured to commit crimes probably will choose, out of his free will, that type of lifestyle. Statistically, a large percentage of inner-city children choose to lead a life of violence and crime.

The conclusion may be drawn that increased exposure to a Christian witness and intercessory prayer can increase the number of believers in a given area.

While parental guidance and peer pressure play a major role in our value development, we are still in control of our destiny. Our response is our responsibility. We are accountable for our decisions and actions. Though influenced by others, we still choose between right and wrong. We can be conditioned, but we cannot be controlled. When standing before God, we will be unable to say our wrong choices were someone else's fault.

A person's decision to accept Christ is also influenced by several factors. Again, parental guidance and peer pressure play a major role. Just as a

strong negative influence can lead a person to a life of crime, a strong Christian example can influence a person to desire Christ. Inversely, a Christian who is backslidden and hypocritical may offend a person and turn him off to Christianity. Proverbs says a person offended is harder to reach than a fortified city. Jesus, when speaking of the hypocritical Pharisees, said their lives were so offensive that many people were kept from going to Heaven. In Matthew, Jesus said it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to Heaven. This implies that if this same man did not have the stumbling block of his wealth, he may have chosen to accept Christ.

The sooner a child is exposed to a consistent and loving Christian example, the better his chances of becoming a Christian. This is why a higher percentage of Christian children are found in Christian homes than in atheist or Hindu homes. The more consistent the parents are in their spiritual walk, the better the chances all their immediate family will be Christians. Christian parents, though not always sensitive to the Spirit or the needs of their family, still influence the lives of their children.



A nurse accidentally put sulfuric acid in a new-born baby's eyes (instead of silver nitrate) causing permanent blindness. Although the nurse was sincere in her effort, she was sincerely wrong.

The conclusion may be drawn that increased exposure to a Christian witness and intercessory prayer can increase the number of believers in that given area. Areas with a strong Christian witness have a high percentage of believers when compared

to areas with a weak Christian witness.

When looking at the world, we may question why only 7% of the population has accepted Christ. What reasons could explain this small percentage? As illustrated above, Christian parents have a very high percentage of Christian children. Thus, it cannot be said that 7% is the “norm.” Could it be that most of the people in the world are not Christians because they have not had Spirit-filled Christian parents and peers guiding them and praying for them? Is it possible that they were influenced by their parents and peers to choose values other than Christ?

Pretend that 100 years ago everyone on the Earth was a strong Christian. These Christians were very sensitive and caring parents, spending a large amount of time in prayer and in meeting the needs of their children. Two generations later we are in the present. All the original Christians from 100 years ago have died, and the people living today are their children, and their children’s children. What percentage of the world’s population would be Christians? Would it be higher than 7%? If we admit the number of Christians would be higher in this situation, then we have to conclude there are people dying and going to hell simply because of their surroundings.

Originally, we were discussing what will happen to the heathen who are “seeking.” The question now encompasses more than just the person who is seeking. Everyone in his formative years may have the potential of being open to the gospel. However, as he grows older, his heart hardens and becomes less receptive. At this point, he is not unreachable, but just less responsive.

Why are there so many places in the world with few or no Christians? Is it because there are no “seekers” in these locations or simply because no one has taken them the gospel?

God might make a few exceptions in sending the gospel to a specific seeker. However, as a general rule, the evidence strongly suggests He will not do that for the world. Thus, now the question is, what will happen to the 3 billion people who have not “heard the gospel?” They will only hear the gospel if we take the initiative to bring it to them. Therefore, our attention must not be focused on the few with whom God might make special intervention, but rather on the billions who will go to Hell unless we reach them.

Where does all this lead? It leads to this sobering fact; people *have gone* and *are going* to Hell needlessly. There is nothing we can do about those already in Hell, but there is something we can do about those who are on their way now.

Although God seems to have chosen to limit Himself by using human vessels to spread the salvation message, He has not left us to do the job alone. The real power is not our lives, but God flowing through our lives. We are like a pipe that carries God’s power, and wherever we go, we take the supernatural, heart-changing power of God. The “written” Word, the Bible, and the “living” Word, Christ living in us, are the catalysts that draw people to Christ. It is the power of the Word of God and our prayers that will melt hardened hearts and influence people to desire God.

Parental Influence



Chapter: 13:11

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As I mentioned in other chapters, it appears that exposure to the written Word (Bible), the living Word (the Bible living in our lives), and prayer increases a person's likelihood of becoming a Christian. Statistically, this is backed up by the fact that areas with high concentrations of Christians have a higher number of new believers and areas with a low number of Christians have a low number of new Christians.

The reason this issue is important is because it affects the way we will respond to the world's needs. If exposure to the three things listed above does not increase a person's likelihood of becoming a Christian, then we do not need to sacrificially give to send more missionaries. However, if these three

items do increase a person's likelihood of becoming a Christian, then people are going to Hell because of an absence of these three things. Therefore, if this is true, we should make every effort to bring the gospel message to them.

Many people (understandably) feel it would be unfair for God to decrease a person's likelihood of becoming a Christian simply because he didn't live in an area where the gospel was readily available. Yet, these same people probably feel that exposing their children to solid Christian teaching will increase their child's likelihood of becoming a Christian. This is why so many of them buy books on child rearing and ask friends for advice. They also spend a great deal of time praying for their children, asking God to prepare their hearts to become Christians.

If exposure to the gospel does not increase a person's likelihood of becoming a Christian, then all of the extra measures these parents are taking are not necessary. Children born in solid Christian homes are no more likely to become Christians than children born in atheist or Buddhist homes. In fact, Christian parents should not expect any of their children to become Christians. Statistically, only one out of every 14 people (7%) in the world ever become a Christian.

Yet, it is obvious that children of Christian parents are much more likely to become Christians than the children of non-Christian parents. This is something even the casual observer can see. Is there, however, any *clinical* proof of this influence? Unfortunately, I don't know of any comprehensive study involving thousands of families that would clearly *prove* this influence. There is one study, however, that compares the offspring of the eighteenth century American evangelist, Jonathan Edwards, with his American contemporary, Max Jukes, a drunkard of ill repute.

Edward's descendants include 100 preachers or missionaries, 13 college presidents, 3 U.S. Senators, 30 judges, 60 doctors, 60 prominent authors, and one U.S. Vice President. Jackson's offspring included 200 thieves and murderers, and 90

prostitutes. I am not saying parental influences were totally responsible for the differing legacies. I'm sure genetics and cultural factors also played a part. However, I believe the firm family foundation Edwards established lasted for several generations.

The life of William Carey, pioneer missionary to Bengal, drives this point home. Carey was an incredibly successful missionary whose life influenced hundreds to become missionaries. Yet, it appears he worked so hard on the Lord's vineyard his own vineyard suffered.

Dan Alban, Jr. who wrote his thesis on William Carey, says Carey's great work on reaching the lost was "at the expense of his own family's spiritual well-being." Alban says Carey "spent so much time in ministering and so little time disciplining his own sons that their father may as well have been Max Jakes." Alban says that although most of Carey's descendants are not prostitutes or murderers, only a few descendants are known to have attended Bible-believing Churches. (Source: *Power for Living*, March 29, 1998)

If we conclude a parent can increase the likelihood of their children to become Christians, we have to conclude we can increase the likelihood of others in the world to become Christians. This means we need to send missionaries to those who are still without the gospel.

Is it "fair" that people born in non-evangelized areas of the world will probably go to Hell? In my opinion it is not "fair" at all. I don't like this doctrine and I don't like teaching it. I have great difficulty in understanding how a "loving God" could do such a thing. There are times it makes me angry.

Yet, who am I to tell God Almighty He is wrong? What right do I, this small piece of dust, have to criticize the Creator of the universe? It does not matter what *feels* right or fair. The only thing that matters is what does the Bible say? My parents' pastor once said, "I don't always agree with everything that is in the Bible, but I know who's wrong."

If the Bible is God's inspired Word (which I believe it is), we are then obligated to follow its teaching. Although I don't like it, the Bible does clearly teach this doctrine. Trust me, I am not biased toward this teaching. If anything, I am biased against it. Yet, I have come to the conclusion we must completely follow the entire Bible or none of it. Besides being clearly taught in the Bible, this doctrine is also backed up statistically. I have a choice: I can either criticize God for what I perceive as unfairness or I can accept it and spend my time and energy bringing the gospel to those who are still without it.

Footnote: Source of the study concerning Max Juke and William Carey

·*Power for Living*, March 29, 1998

·*The Jukes: A study in Crime, Pauperism, Disease, and Heredity* by Richard Louis Dugdale (Published by *Putnam's Sons* in 1877 and *Arno Press* in 1970)

·*The Main of Genius* by Cesare Lombroso's (Published in 1891)

The Value of the Soul



Chapter: 13:12

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The stranger snapped out his switchblade as he approached Terry. “Give me your shoes!” he ordered. “Give me your shoes or I’ll deep-six yah.” Growing up on the East Side of Detroit, Terry had learned early not to let people push him around. Besides, his mom had just given him these *Reebok* shoes last week and he was not about to let someone take them away.

Staring directly into the stranger’s eyes, Terry responded, “You talk the talk, can you walk the walk?”

The stranger, thrusting the knife into Terry’s chest, said, “Ya, I can walk the walk, but I’m going to do it in your shoes.”

This is a good example of total disrespect for human life. To kill someone for a \$45 pair of shoes is senseless. Two thousand years ago there was another display of total disrespect for human life. Jesus Christ was murdered because some people were offended by His righteous living. While it may seem that Jesus was killed by people who placed little value on human life, He actually gave up His life because of the value He placed on our souls.

What is the value God places on a soul? What would cause Christ to allow Himself to be stripped of His royalty and damned for our transgressions? Though we will never be able to comprehend *why* He loves us, we should try to grasp the *depth* of His love for us. Mr. Otto, in his song *Looking Through His Eyes*, expresses his desire to see the world as though he were looking through God’s eyes. Otto writes, “... for if once I could see this world the way You see it, I just know I’d serve you more faithfully.” Although we may be small and insignificant when compared to the universe, God is still moved by the plight of our lost souls. Imagine how motivated we would be to reach others for Christ if we truly viewed our “equals” with God’s compassion.

Craig had become a little careless. Now, a lapse in good judgment had gotten him in some minor trouble. This was Craig’s first brush with the law, but because he was in the military, he had to spend a few months in the “Big House.” Although Craig always knew his Christian family loved him, he never knew the *depth* of their love until he went to prison.

When he first broke the news to his family, he expected them to be critical because of his wrongdoing and the shame he had brought on them. To his surprise, instead of turning their backs on him, they rallied around him. They organized a support network to be there in his time of need. The family flew halfway across the country to visit him. They kept in continual communication by phone and mail. The U.S. Mail and AT&T posted record earnings those months. The block Sgt. would often shake his head in unbelief as Craig received his daily

Breakdown of the universe showing the magnitude of the God who created it.

(Source: National Geographic, June 1983)



Planet

Like planet Earth



Solar System

Planets and Sun(s)



Galaxy

100's of billions of stars (or solar systems) in each galaxy.



Galaxy Cluster

1000's (avg.) of galaxy in each galaxy clusters



Super cluster

1000's (avg.) of galaxy clusters in each super clusters



Super cluster clusters

100's (avg.) of super clusters in each super-clusters-cluster



Known Universe

Perhaps billions of super clusters in the universe. (Since, as of yet, there is no known end to the universe, some of these numbers are partially speculative.)

bundle of mail. Although Craig's family did not approve of what he did, they still loved and cared for him. Comparing the support he received to what the other prisoners received, Craig realized just how much his family truly did love him.

Although Craig knew his family loved him before this, he did not comprehend the depth of their love until he saw the lengths to which they went to help him. Likewise, we are not able to comprehend the depth of God's love for us until we see the lengths to which He has gone to help us. Many of us have not given enough thought to how much God lowered Himself when He came to save us. We need a full appreciation of how great God really is. When this reality sets in, our hearts will overflow with declarations of "How Great Thou Art" as we praise and worship Him.

Statically, takeoffs are the most dangerous part of flying. Despite this precious gem of information, I still love takeoffs more than any other part of flying. Although I have flown dozens of times, I am continually awed by how insignificant I feel as I look down and see the cities shrinking below me. Peering out the window, the homes turn into doll houses, then match boxes and finally to tiny specks. Millions of houses and cars can be seen in a single glance. Flying is a reminder of the greatness of God and the complexity of His awareness. God is not only personally aware of and concerned with my problems, He is personally aware of all the problems in the world.

If we could travel in space, we would see cities and states as little more than specks. Eventually our planet and sun would be indistinguishable from the trillions of stars in our universe. Yet, God is larger and more powerful than the universe He has created.

Our narrow view of God's greatness is often perpetuated by the humanness of our world leaders. The President of the United States, for example, is a powerful man in charge of a great nation. Yet, he is still a human with the same limitations as you and I. We must be careful not to minimize God's greatness simply because He has taken a personal interest in our minuscule world. Our concept of His greatness is often so inaccurate, it is an insult to Him.

God is aware of *every* activity in the universe. Not only does He know when a sparrow falls from the sky to the ground, He is also aware of a supernova collapsing in the farthest corner of the universe. Playing chess requires much concentration to maintain an awareness of each chess piece. This is especially true if you are thinking several moves ahead of your present play. However, when playing 3-D chess (movement of pieces on three chessboards) keeping track of all the pieces becomes overwhelming for most people. God is not only aware of every atom in the universe He is controlling them. Although our minds become numb when exposed to such vast numbers, we must strive to grasp an appreciation for our Almighty God.

God has a personal interest in many creatures such as animals and angels. Yet, He has chosen to treat us humans special. He has chosen to become married to us. God is not just asking us to come to Heaven and be His friends, He wants to share everything with us, even the personal intimacy of marriage. God invites us to enjoy a position that even the angels cannot share. It is beyond human reasoning to understand why we were chosen for this honor, but we were.

Many people do not appreciate the fact that God loves us. They assume that love is just natural for

God. A tribe, whose name means "The People," live in a remote jungle in Brazil. Although they seem primitive and crude by our standards, they feel the world revolves around them. When told that God loved them, they responded, "Of course He does, we are The People!" Pride knows no barriers.

The contrast between the greatness of God's royalty and the humiliation He experienced when becoming a man is profound. As humans, we have a difficult time comprehending the sacrifice Jesus endured just to become like us. As great as this sacrifice was, it is small compared to what transpired on the cross. More happened to Jesus than just physical torture, He was spiritually damned. God looked at Jesus as though Jesus had actually committed our sins. God then punished Jesus spiritually for each of these sins.

Before Jesus went to the cross, He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane. Luke 22:44 states that He began to sweat drops of blood. Intense stress can cause the small capillaries in the skin to break and blood emerges. The stress Jesus was experiencing was not from the anticipation of being mobbed and killed. He was under stress because He was about to experience something that He had never experienced before. He was about to be separated from the Father.

When Jesus was hanging on the cross, the sky darkened and Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" God, the Father, had to turn His back on Jesus because of *our* sins. The separation and spiritual damnation Jesus endured indicates the depth of love God has for us and the value He has placed on our soul.

Andrae Crouch, in his song, *I Don't Know Why Jesus Loved Me*, writes, "He left His mighty throne in glory, just to bring us redemption story." It was these words that caused me to dedicate my life to reaching the world for Christ. If God was willing to step down from His mighty throne for me, the least I can do is step down from the throne of my life and give Him complete control.

Questions and Answers



Chapter: 13.13

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Question 1: Who are the heathen?

When the subject of the “heathen” is brought up, it is usually considered one of those theological questions that is fun to discuss, but there is no real answer. While it may be true that no one can dogmatically say what will happen to the heathen, this subject is only a stepping stone to an even larger problem. This problem does concern you, and you can do something about it.

Studying the heathen requires you take a close look at the Biblical plan of salvation. This intimate understanding of the gospel message is essential. This concept of *how* God can make a sinner holy will increase your understanding of how God will deal with the world. You will soon realize the dilemma of the heathen (a person who is without the gospel) is not limited to a small group of natives living in a remote jungle.

Most the world’s population is still “without the gospel,” thus God must deal with them the same way He deals with the heathen. Since the destiny of the world is the same as that of the heathen, it is important to understand how God will deal with the

heathen. It is not important if you define most of the world as heathen. It is important though, for you to understand that most of the world is without the gospel just as the native in a remote jungle, and just as lost.

The sun would be setting in a couple of hours, so Keven decided to end his hunt and head back to his car. He had always been proud of his heritage as part Apache Indian. The memories of his grandfather taking him out hunting were treasures. Keven’s “Indian blood” made him feel secure in his tracking abilities no matter where he went. This 7000 acre forest was no exception.

As Keven headed back, he ran across another hunter and they began talking. “Where are you heading?” the hunter asked. “I parked south of here by Highway 38 and Haggered Road,” Keven said pointing North. “I don’t know,” the hunter said. “I think south is that way,” pointing in the opposite direction. Keven bristled. Sensing Keven’s stubborn pride, the hunter placed his compass on a stump. Sure enough, the hunter was correct, Keven had been heading in the wrong direction. Keven was lost and did not even know it.

Many people in this world are lost spiritually and do not even know it. A person living in deep sin usually realizes his unworthiness and understands his probable condemnation. There are many people, though, who pride themselves in being good and moral. They feel because they are “better than most people,” they should be allowed into Heaven. These “good” people are the hardest to reach for Christ. Before they can be directed to Christ, you must first convince them they are lost.

Question 2: Is it necessary for those people who have never heard the gospel to personally accept it?

If God is going to make a special exception and allow the heathen into Heaven, it would be better *not* to send missionaries. If these people are

already going to Heaven, we would be doing them a disservice by giving them the opportunity to reject Christ, thus sending them to Hell. The Bible is clear and straight forward on the fact that all humans are sinners and are responsible for their actions. The book of Romans teaches that a person who sins without the law will be judged without the law. A heathen will not be responsible for the light that he does not have, but he will be held accountable for the moral standard he does have.

Every person, even if he does not have a Bible, has a “moral standard” written in his heart, a basic knowledge of right and wrong. Though this standard is lower than God’s perfect standard, the Bible, man still cannot maintain it. Although it may vary from person to person, everybody has a standard they try to uphold, and all men violate this standard. James teaches if you know you should do something and you do not do it, it is sin. When God does judge the heathen, it will be according to the standard they have. Therefore, being without the law (the Bible) does not exclude the heathen from being judged. He will still have to give an account for sins committed against his moral standard and the Bible says that the penalty for this sin is eternal damnation.

The book of Ephesians states that the gentiles before Christ were isolated from the Jewish salvation, “having no hope” and “without God.” Thus, the present day heathen are not the only group of people going to hell even though they have never heard the salvation message. These “Old Testament heathen” also went to hell. (For more information, refer to chapter *Breakdown of View 1*, Implication A.)

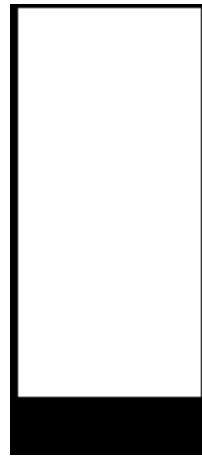
Question 3: How much of the world has not heard a clear presentation of the gospel?

Approximately 7% of the world’s population has accepted the gospel message. It is estimated that 50% of the world’s population does not know of Jesus Christ, and 75% of the world does not have a clear understanding of the gospel message. (For

more information, refer to the chapter “*Most of the World has not Heard the Gospel.*”)

Question 4: How much of the world speaks English?

Looking at the geographic size and influence of countries such as the United States, Canada, England and Australia, it is easy to feel that a vast majority of the world speaks English. In contrast, though, only 8.5% of the world speaks English.



8.5% (514 million)

SOURCE: Book of Facts 2000, World Almanac, and Ethnologue

Question 5: If a person is “seeking” (living up to the light that he has) will God continue to send him more light until either he accepts Christ or stops seeking?

We must ask ourselves if there are actually a few cases when a person in an isolated location has a pure heart in his search for God? The Bible says, “no one seeks after God.” Does that mean no one has a longing and desire for God? No, God has created a God-size vacuum inside everyone. This is why no matter where you go in the world you will find religions. Obviously, the phrase “no one seeks after God” does not mean man lacks a longing or desire for God. Yet, man also has a natural tendency, or desire, to move toward things that are

contrary to God. It appears that these verses which say no one seeks God are actually saying man's desire to want God is over-powered by his desire to fulfill his selfish pleasures. According to the Bible, the natural man does not seek God, at least not in the sense of God becoming "obligated" to send him the gospel. (For more information, refer to chapter "What about the Seeking and Sincere," and the Chapter "Breakdown of View 2", Implication C.)

Question 6: Is it true that all of the people who have stayed in their religion are not sincere and were not living up to the light they have?

There are over 5,000 different religions in the world today. Most of these people have lived their entire lives never knowing anything but their religion and sincerely feel they have the correct religion. In fact, some of these people appear to be much more sincere and devout than most of us Christians. Are these people not living up to the light they have?

Cults, especially, thrive on attracting "sincere" people. They appeal especially to those who are looking for more, and have not found it in the churches they are attending. Yet, when cult members do leave their cults, they usually do not join another church. This indicates they did not leave their cults because God was leading them out, at least in the sense that they were seeking and God pointed them to the true gospel. Instead, they usually leave as a result of disillusionment, or feelings of betrayal. (For more information, refer to the chapter "Breakdown of View 2," Implication H.)

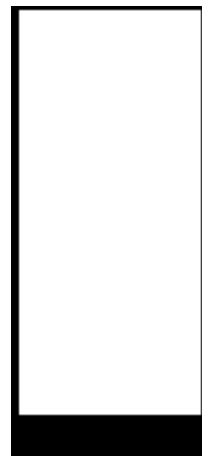
Question 7: Why are there some places in the world with a higher concentration of Christians and other places with few or no Christians?

This is a very good question and one of the strongest arguments supporting the fact that the heathen are going to hell. If hearing the gospel was dependent on a sincere heart and seeking spirit, then God

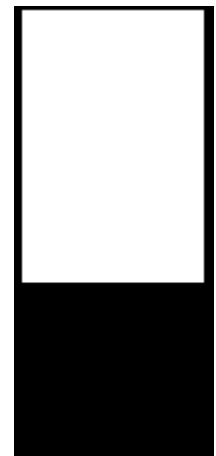
would send the gospel to everyone who was sincere and seeking. Thus, we would expect to find an even proportion of Christians throughout the world since the distribution of people who are seeking and sincere should be even. Yet, this is not what we find. The places with a strong Christian witness and more opportunity to hear the gospel have a higher concentration of Christians, and vice versa. The only reason for this uneven proportion is because the availability of the gospel increases the number of Christians in that given area, not the sincerity of the people. (For more information, refer to the chapter "Breakdown of View 2," Implication G.)

Question 8: How many languages have the Bible?

Out of the 6703 languages known, only 320 (5%) have the whole Bible. 2327 (35%) have at least one verse of the Bible. (For more information, look at the chart on "translation needs" in the chapter "Why Study the Heathen.")



5% with the Bible



32% with at least one book of the Bible

SOURCE: *Bible Translation Needs, Bulletin 3*, 1996, and *Ethnologue* 1996

Question 9: Has anyone ever died and gone to Hell that could have gone to Heaven if he had been given a clear presentation of the heart-melting gospel?

This is another important question because, if the answer were yes, it would mean that people are needlessly going to hell. The fact that the distribution of Christians throughout the world is so disproportionate indicates that a great multitude of people remain non-Christians only because the gospel has not been presented to them. There seems to be several prominent factors limiting people from becoming Christians. The first factor, which has already been discussed, is that Christians are not taking the gospel message to the rest of the world. Another factor is that much of the “gospel message” being preached today is being watered down with works or other false doctrines. Last, many people are turned off to Christianity because of hypocritical Christians who are stumbling blocks. Once a person has been turned off to Christianity it is very hard to reach him with the gospel. The Bible says that a person offended is harder to reach than a fortified city.

Thus, people are going to hell needlessly. Hosea says that for a “*lack of knowledge* my people perish.” Ezekiel states if we do not go and warn the wicked, they “will die in [their] iniquities.” In Ephesians, the Old Testament gentiles who did not have a chance to be a part of the Jewish religion are spoken of as being “without God” and “having no hope.” 1 Corinthians states that some have no knowledge of God and this is to our shame. What does it mean when Jesus states the “harvest is past and the laborers are few”? Could it mean people are needlessly going to Hell because the job of reaching the world is not being accomplished? Could it mean if there were enough Christians willing to do the job, there would be fewer people going to Hell? (For more information, refer to the chapter *Breakdown of View 1*, Implication C.)

Question 10: If a person in a remote and hard-

to-reach area is seeking the true God, will God use some supernatural means (such as an angel or voice from heaven) to reach him with the gospel?

We are not aware of any passages in the Bible that say God will use methods other than humans preaching the gospel to spread the salvation message. God has used supernatural methods (i.e., angels, visions, etc.) to do other tasks, but when it comes to sharing the gospel message it appears God has chosen to use the human element. It pleases God to use the “foolishness of preaching” by people like ourselves to deliver the salvation message. Throughout the Bible, God has used angels and even animals to perform various duties, yet these have *never* included preaching the salvation message. For example, Balaam’s ass was used to warn Balaam, but not to present the salvation message.

We are not downplaying the power of God or saying He does not do supernatural things in this present age. He will use His supernatural powers to enable us to spread the gospel message. He will alter circumstances to bring opportunities that we would not normally have. However, these miracles do not come automatically. James 5:16,17 states we can do the same mighty things that Elijah did, but it requires fervent prayer. Mark 9:29 says certain things can only be done by “prayer and fasting.” The lives through which God’s mighty Spirit flows are those that are sanctified and dedicated to fervent prayer. When reaching those who are without the gospel, again, God chooses to channel His power through humans. As Christians move into new frontiers, God prepares the way. The prayers of missionaries and their supporters can cause dynamic miracles to take place.

There are places in the Bible that talk about God reaching out to the non-believer. However, these people had already been exposed to the Word of God or some believer. A couple of examples are Cornelius and the Ethiopian eunuch. The written Word, the Bible, and the living Word, Christians, are the major tools used by the Spirit. (For more information, refer to “*Breakdown of View 1*,”

Implication B.)

Question 11: Does the person who has more exposure to the gospel have a greater chance of becoming a Christian than the person who has little or no exposure?

As discussed earlier, exposure to the gospel seems to play a major role in whether a group of people will become Christians. The more a person is exposed to the heart-melting message of the gospel, the greater the chance he will become a Christian. Our physical world demonstrates the power and influence of exposure. An example of this power is the disease, malaria. The more you are exposed to the protozoan parasite called sporozoite, the higher your chances will be of coming down with malaria. If exposure did not increase a person's chance of becoming a Christian, we would expect to find the same percentage of Christian children in Christian homes as we do in atheist homes (or Buddhist homes, etc.). This, however, is not what we find. The Bible speaks of it being easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to Heaven. Is the Bible saying money plays a part in a person's spiritual destiny? Is it possible that this same rich man may have gone to Heaven if he were not rich? (For more information, refer to the chapter "*Breakdown of View 2*," Implication F.)

Question 12: If I do not go and reach the lost, will God send someone else in my place?

Luke states that the harvest is great, but the laborers are few. Thus, it appears there are not enough willing Christians to get the job done. Most of the world has not heard the gospel message only because not enough people have gone. Hosea says that because of a "lack of knowledge, my people perish." And, Ezekiel states that if we do not warn the wicked, they will perish. The Bible seems to state clearly if we do not go, neither will

anyone else and the job will not get done. (For more information, refer to the chapter "*Breakdown of View 1*," Implication C, and the chapter "*Breakdown of View 2*," Implication I.)

Question 13: If the heathen does go to Hell, how does God justify sending him there?

God is just in sending anyone who has sinned to Hell. In fact, His holy and righteous nature requires that all sin be punished to its fullest extent. God cannot overlook sin. The only people allowed into Heaven are those who have had their sins washed away by the blood of the Lamb (Jesus Christ). If a person dies without ever personally accepting Jesus Christ, he will go to Hell, despite where he lives, whether in the USA or the darkest jungle.

Some people have questioned the "fairness" of God for condemning the heathen to Hell. They say, "How can God send a person to Hell who has not heard of Him, let alone ever rejected Him? How can a heathen be held accountable for something he has never heard?" First, a person is not condemned to Hell for "rejecting Christ," he is condemned to Hell for his sin. If the heathen was sent to Hell only because he rejected Christ, it would be better to call all missionaries home and stop all evangelism. If a person is going to Heaven until he rejects Christ, sending him a missionary only allows him the opportunity to reject Christ and go to Hell.

Romans states that they who live without the law will be judged without the law. In other words, a person will not be held responsible for keeping a standard of which he is unaware. However, each person does have a standard he tries to live by and because he has violated even this standard, he will go to Hell. These sins are the ones for which he will be held accountable. (For more information, refer to the chapter "*Breakdown of View 1*," Implication A.)

Question 14: If the heathen goes to Hell, will he receive the same punishment as the person who has heard a clear gospel presentation and rejected it? In other words, are there degrees of punishment in Hell?

Just as there are levels of rewards in Heaven, there seems to be degrees of punishment in Hell. The severity of a person's punishment depends on how much "light" he had and what he did with it. In Romans, it says if a person does not have the law (the Bible) he will be "judged without the law." As stated in question #13, if a person has the Bible, he will be responsible for living up to its moral standards. If he does not have the law, he will not be judged by the moral standard that it contains. However, he will be judged for not living up to the moral standards etched in his heart, and the standards shown to him through nature. There will be two judgments for the world: The "Judgment Seat of Christ" and the "White Throne Judgment." The Judgment Seat of Christ is for Christians. Once a person accepts the gospel of Christ, his eternal destiny is no longer in question. Therefore, this judgment is for the distribution of rewards. The White Throne Judgment is for non-believers. After this judgment they will be sent to Hell. This judgment will probably determine the degree of punishment. (For more information, refer to the chapter "*Breakdown of View 1*," Implication D.)

Question 15: Are there any examples of God exercising His holiness above His love?

Yes, there are examples. The Bible clearly states that God loves all the world and He desires that no one should perish. Yet, despite His love for the world, God still must uphold His righteousness. Ephesians 2:12 says that during Old Testament times, everyone who was not part of the Jewish religion went to Hell. Many of these people never had a chance to hear the salvation message. The story of Noah is another good example. God hates the sins that man commits, but He still loves the sinner. Yet, in the days of Noah, God was forced

to exercise His holiness above His love.

Question 16: Are there any examples that portray a "religious" person going to Hell because he has not personally accepted Jesus Christ as his savior?

Yes, there are several examples. "Religion," in and of itself, does not bring a person any closer to God. In John 3, Jesus told Nicodemus, a religious leader of the Jews, if he was not born again, he would not enter Heaven. Matthew 7:1 says, that, "not everyone who saith unto me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven." These verses illustrate religion does not get a person into heaven. Genesis 4 contains the story of Cain and Abel. Although God loved them both, He rejected Cain's sacrifice and accepted Abel's. The reason God accepted one sacrifice and rejected the other is extremely important. Abel's sacrifice was a blood sacrifice that was symbolic of the death of Christ, the blood covering and cleansing our sins. Cain's sacrifice was an offering of fruit, symbolic of man using works to cover his sins and to reach out to God. No matter how good our religion may be, if salvation is not completely based on the blood of Christ, it is worthless.

Quick Visual Aid of the 5 main Views

Chapter: 13.14

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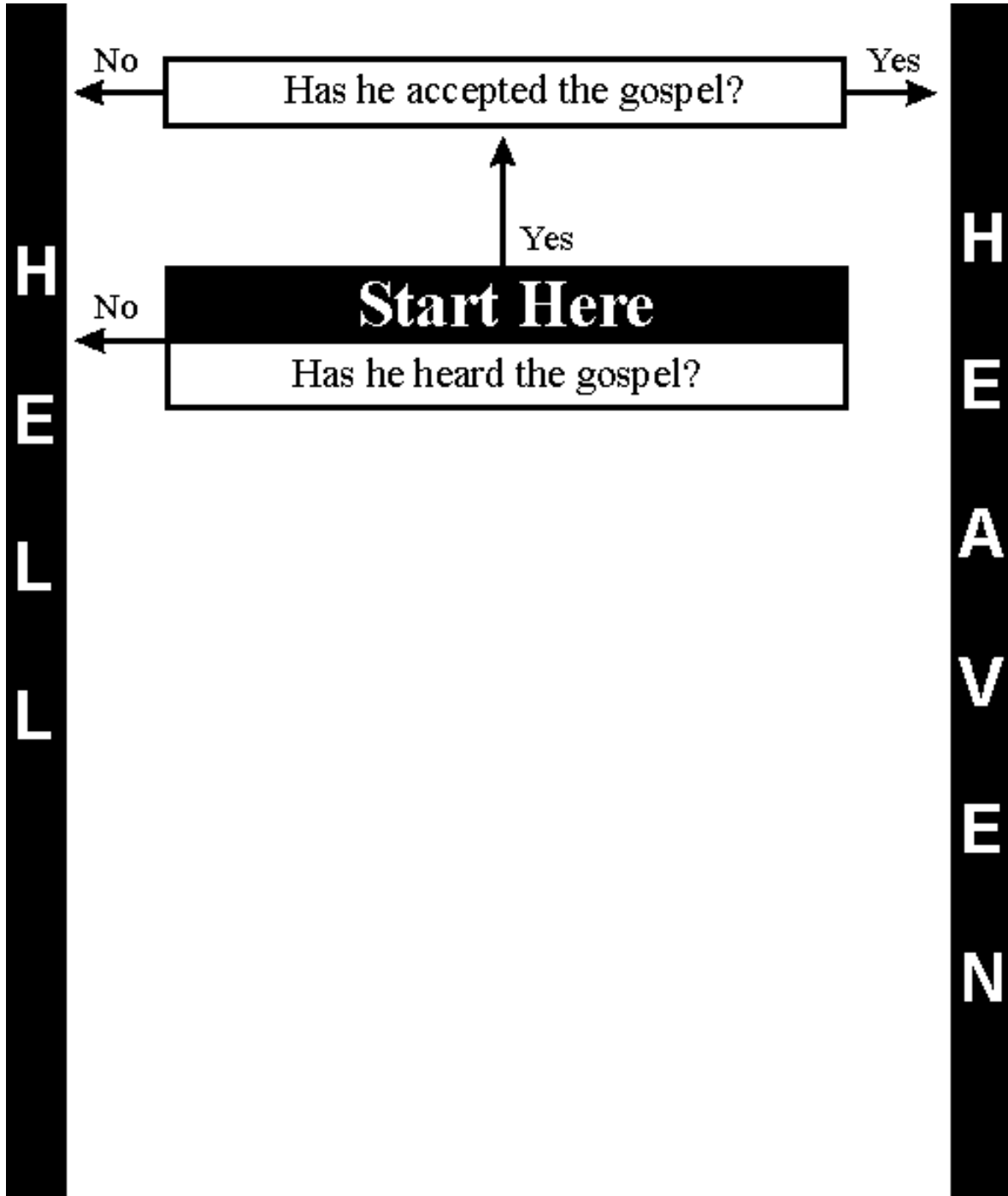
To help you obtain a quick visual understanding of how the five views differ, we have created a flow chart. When you look at the flow chart, simply begin at the “START HERE” marker and then proceed until you end at either the “HEAVEN” or “HELL” marker. First, to refresh your memory, the five views are listed again on the next page.

- View 1** Every person is accountable for his sins, and unless he has personally accepted Jesus Christ as his savior, he will go to Hell and be punished for those sins.
- View 2** Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is essential for a person to have his sins forgiven. If a person is seeking (living up to the light that he has) *God will* then send a Christian to him.
- View 3** Same as view 2, except if there are no Christians available, God will send the gospel message to the seeker via a “supernatural” method (i.e. an angel or a voice from Heaven, etc.).
- View 4** If a person “lives up to the light he has,” God will allow him into Heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the person who has never heard the gospel.
- View 5** Every person who has not heard the gospel will be allowed into Heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the person who has never heard the gospel.

Breakdown to View 1

Chapter: 13.14-a

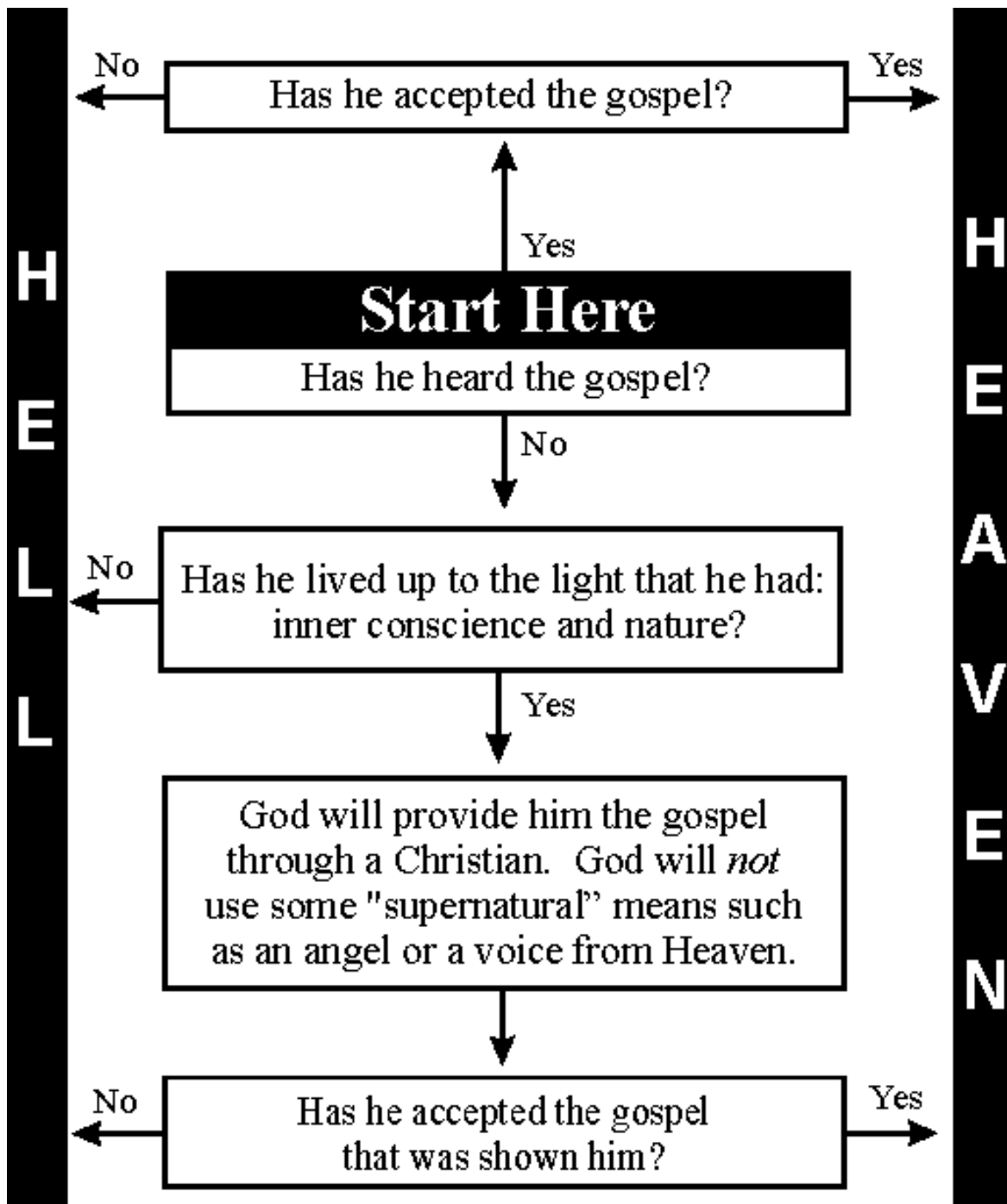
Every person is accountable for his sins, and unless he has personally accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior, he will go to Hell to be punished for those sins.



Breakdown to View 2

Chapter: 13.14-b

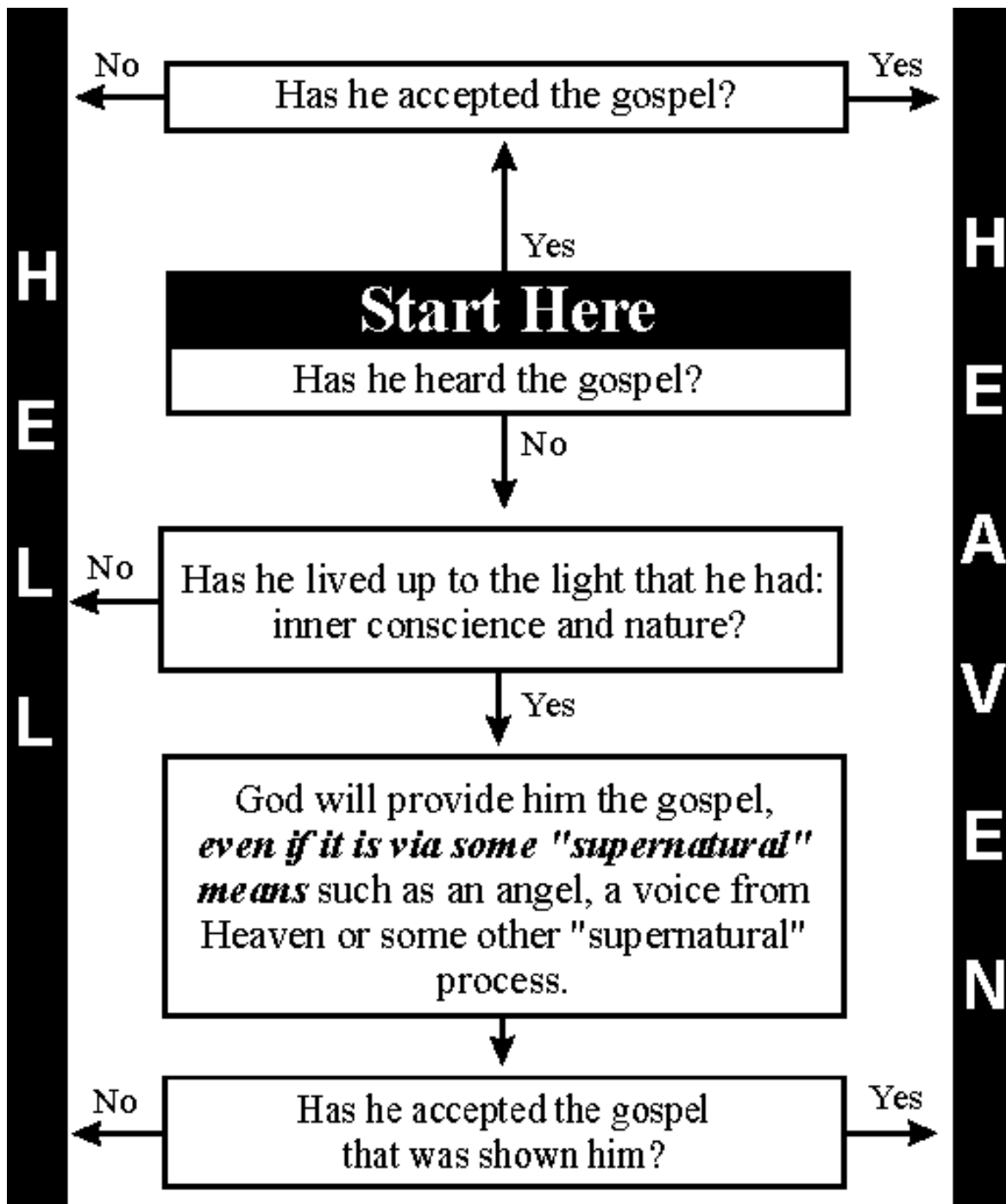
Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is essential for a person to have his sins forgiven. If a person is seeking (living up to the light that he has), God will then bring a Christian to him.



Breakdown to View 3

Chapter: 13.14-c

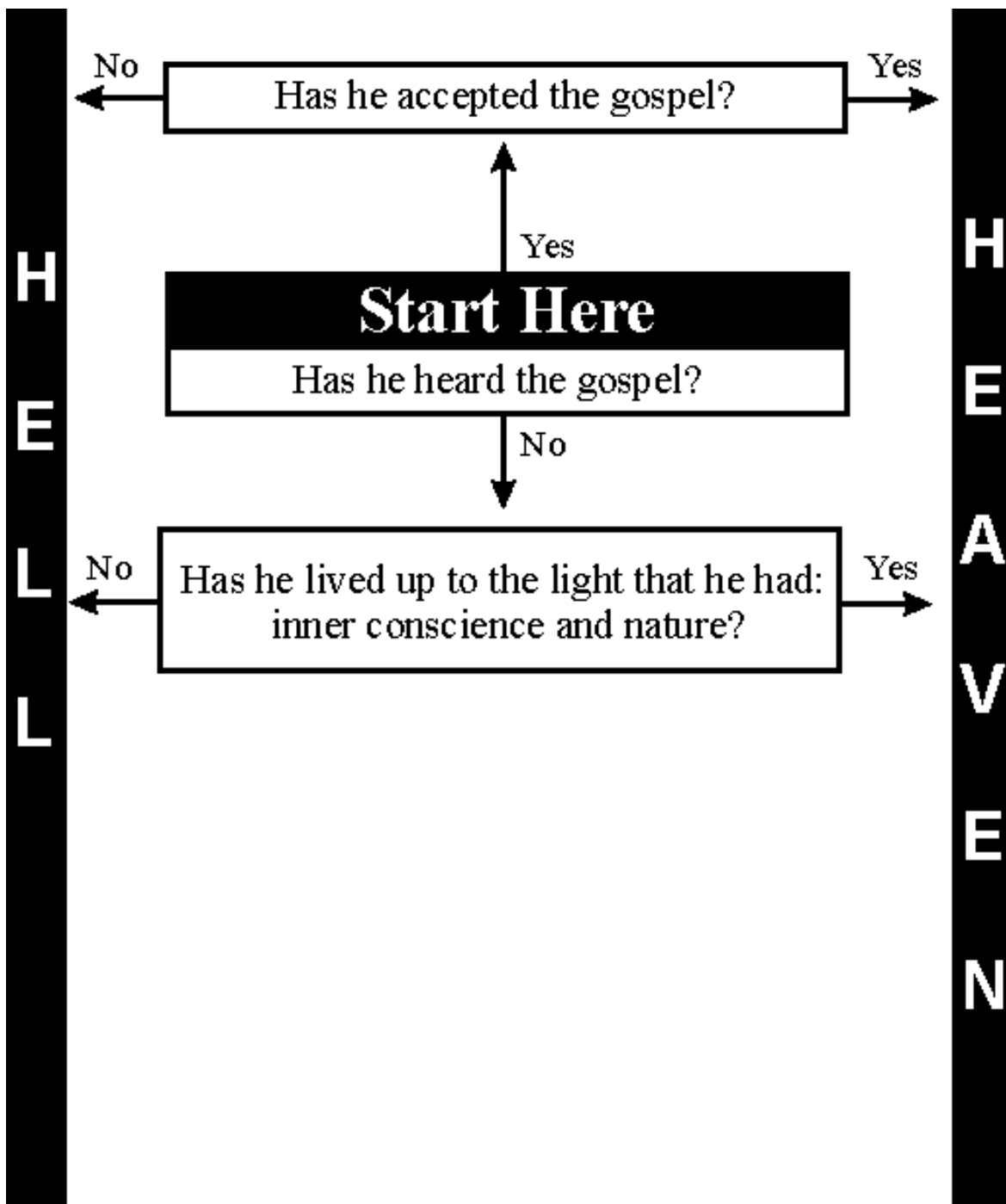
Same as View 2, except if there are no Christians available, God will send the gospel message to the "seeker" via a "supernatural" method (i.e. an angel or a voice from Heaven).



Breakdown to View 4

Chapter: 13.14-d

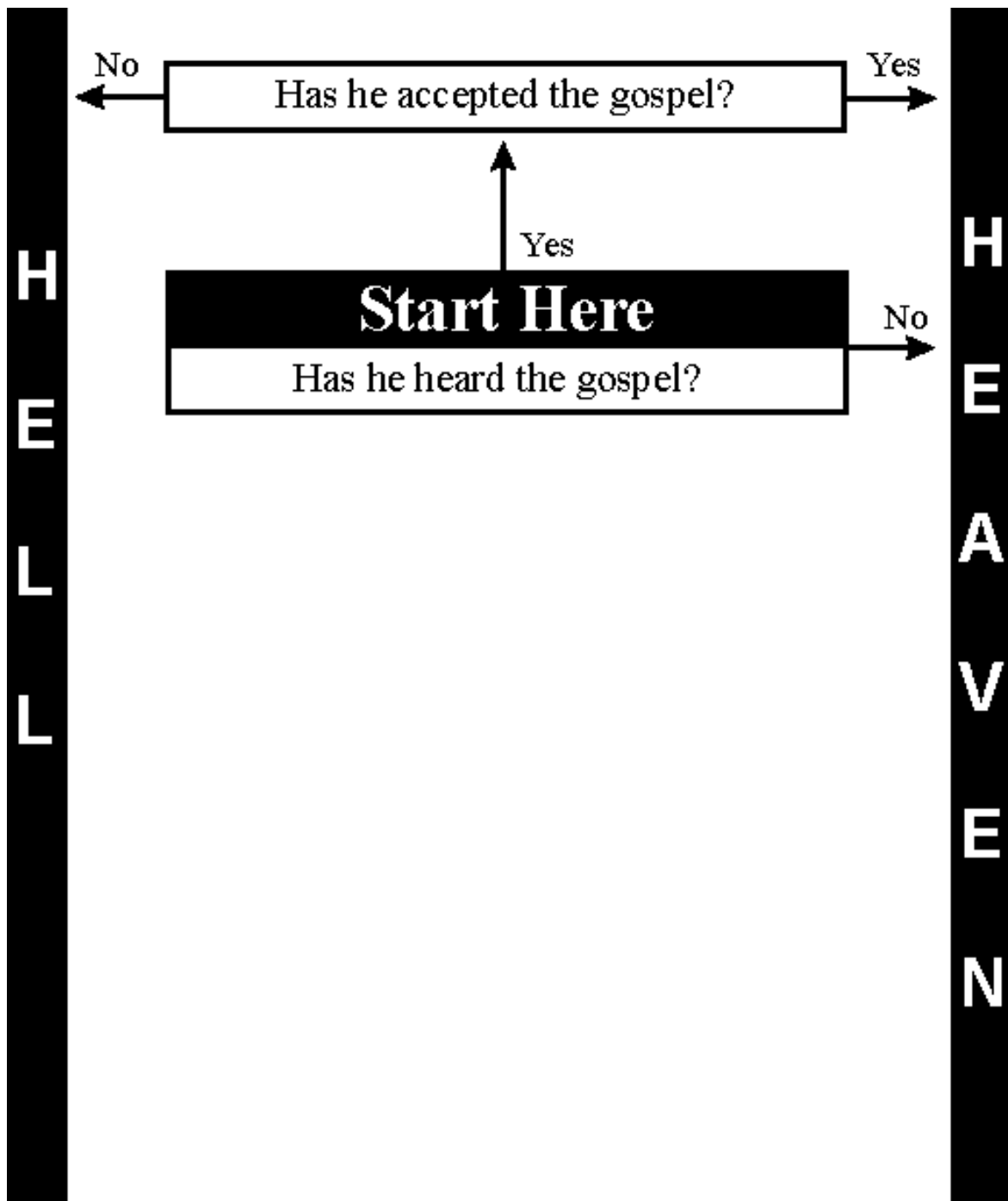
If a person "lives up to the light that he has," God will allow him into Heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the person who has never heard the gospel.



Breakdown to View 5

Chapter: 13.14-e

Every person who has not heard the gospel will be allowed into Heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the person who has never heard the gospel.



Implications of the 5 Views

Chapter: 13.15

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Because “hidden implications” can cause problems, it is important for you to be familiar with the implications associated with your view. You have already seen the differences in the five views. Now that you have decided which view best describes what you believe, continue reading to see the implications of your view.

Implications of View 1

View 1 says, “*Every person is accountable for his sins, and unless he has personally accepted Jesus Christ as his savior, he will go to Hell to be punished for those sins.*”

- A) Implies everyone needs to personally accept the gospel to enter Heaven.
- B) Implies God has chosen to use humans to deliver the gospel message, as opposed to God using “supernatural” means such as angels, etc.
- C) Implies if we do not go and share the gospel with the heathen, they will die in their sins and go to Hell.
- D) Implies there will be degrees of punishment in Hell based on how the person lived up to

the light that he was given.

Implications of View 2

View 2 says, “*Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is essential for a person to have his sins forgiven. If a person is seeking (living up to the light that he has) God will bring a Christian to him.*”

- A) Implies everyone personally needs to accept the gospel to enter Heaven.
- B) Implies God will use humans to deliver the gospel message, as opposed to God using “supernatural” means such as angels, etc.
- C) Implies if a person “seeks God,” (continually lives up to the light he has from inner conscience and nature) God will provide him with the gospel.
- D) Implies everyone who could possibly be saved is getting saved. This comes from the concept that God will give increased light to everyone who is seeking and will continue to increase the light until the unbeliever stops seeking. Therefore, since everyone will be given as much knowledge as his heart desires, everyone who could possibly be saved will be saved.
- E) Implies world evangelism is already taking place. Everyone who could possibly get saved is being saved.
- F) Implies having more exposure to the gospel will *not* increase a person’s chance of becoming a Christian. This is because View 2 implies that God has given everyone, through general revelation, an equal opportunity to accept the gospel. Otherwise, according to this view, those who had been heavily exposed to the gospel would have an “unfair” advantage.
- G) Implies there should be an even proportion

of Christians throughout the world. Acceptance of the gospel is *not* dependent on the amount of *opportunities* presented or geographic location, but on an inner attitude toward God and truth.

- H) Implies the non-Christian who *stays* in his religion (or cult) is not sincere or not living up to the light given him. This view implies God will provide the gospel to any person who is sincere and continually lives up to the light that he has. Thus, if the non-Christian is truly sincere, God *must* offer him the gospel, thereby forcing him to leave his religion or cult.
- I) Implies that if we do not go and bring to the heathen the gospel, someone else will.
- J) Implies when a person is born, his inner nature or attitude is already established concerning whether he will or will not “live up to the light” given him. Since God will give light to those who are seeking, we must assume that the reason most of the world has not heard the gospel is because they were not seeking. If they were seeking, God would be forced to enlighten them. Because the desire to seek is not increased by a person’s surroundings, our only option is to assume the person was born with no desire to seek.

Implications of View 3

View 3 says, “*Same as view 2, except if there are no Christians available, God will send the gospel message to the “seeker” via a “supernatural” method (i.e. an angel or a voice from Heaven).*”

Same as View 2, except for Implication B.

- B) Implies God will deliver the gospel message to anyone who is seeking. He will use any

method available, whether it is a human or some “supernatural” means.

Implications of View 4

View 4 says, “*If a person “lives up to the light that he has,” God will allow him into heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the Heathen.*”

- A) Implies if a person is sincerely seeking and “living up to the light he has,” God will then honor that quality and let the person into Heaven.
- B) Implies that personal acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ is not essential for the heathen to enter Heaven.

Implications of View 5

View 5 says, “*Every person who has not heard the gospel will be allowed into heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the Heathen.* “

- A) Implies if a person has never had a chance to hear the gospel, he is not responsible for personally accepting the gospel. Since he has not rejected the gospel, he can enter Heaven. This basically means that personal acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ is not essential to enter Heaven.
- B) Implies it would be better *not* to send missionaries to the heathen. If the heathens are already going to Heaven, sending them a missionary would only give them the opportunity to reject Christ, and thus, go to Hell.

Breakdown of the Five Main Views

Chapter: 13.16

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The following five chapters contain a complete breakdown of each of the five views. The implications of each view are compared extensively with the scriptures. Although this chapter breaks down all five views, it is not necessary to study all of them. Just study the view to which you adhere.

Breakdown of View 1

View 1

Every person is accountable for his sins, and unless he has personally accepted Jesus Christ as his savior, he will go to Hell to be punished for those sins.

Chapter: 13.17

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Implication A: Implies that everyone needs to personally accept the gospel to enter heaven.

The Bible is clear and straightforward about the fact that all humans are sinners and responsible for their actions. Jesus, Himself, taught the doctrine of eternal damnation. According to the Bible, Jesus Christ is the only way a person can enter Heaven. Everyone must personally accept what Jesus did on the cross to receive forgiveness for their sins. Just being a good person, or even being a very “religious” person, will not get anyone into Heaven. Personally accepting the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the *only* way sins are forgiven. If a person has never heard the gospel, he is unable to “accept it.” Thus, he will die in his sins and go to Hell. Sin is what sends a person to Hell, not his “rejection of Christ.” The human race was condemned and destined to go to Hell long before Christ died on the cross. We are not condemned for “rejecting” Christ, but for violating the law written on our hearts and transgressing our own moral standards (however high or low they may be). Romans says that we are “without excuse” even if we have never heard about God’s standards.

Paul teaches in the book of Romans that a person who lives without the law will be judged without the law. He is not responsible for light he does not have, but will be held accountable for the moral standard that he does have. James states that if you know you should do something and you do not do it, you have sinned. Being without the law (the Bible) does not exclude a person from being judged; he must still give an account for his sins. The Bible states clearly the penalty for those sins is eternal damnation.

Acts 4:12 There is no salvation in any other.

1 John 2:2 Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

1 Pet. 1:23 Being born again of “incorruptible seed.”

Jn. 14:6 Jesus is the way.

Jn. 3:36 He that does not have the Son has the wrath of God on him already.

1 John 5:12 He who does not have the Son does not have eternal life.

Ez. 3:18, 33:8 If we do not warn the wicked, they will still die in their iniquity.

Rom. 3:23 All have sinned.

Rom. 6:23 The wages of sin are death.

Rom. 2:12 Those who live without the law will perish without the law.

Rom. 1:20 The heathens are “without excuse.”

Jn. 3:1-3 Being good or religious will not get a person into heaven.

A person is not responsible for the light he does not have. He will, though, be held accountable for the moral standard which he does have. Since he is unable to even maintain this standard, he is “without excuse” and will be damned to Hell.

Implication B: Implies God has chosen to use humans to deliver the gospel message, (as opposed to God using “supernatural” means such as angels, etc.).

We are not aware of any passages in the Bible that imply God will use any way other than humans to spread the salvation message. God uses His supernatural power to enable us to spread the Word. He does not use it to deliver the gospel message by giving visions, sending angels, or “dropping Bibles out of the sky.”

There are many places in the Bible that talk about how it pleases God to use humans for spreading the gospel. 1 Corinthians states God has chosen to use the foolishness of preaching to save them that are lost. Throughout the Bible, God has used only humans to spread the salvation message. Revelation 14:6,7 refers to an angel flying around preaching the “gospel,” but here the gospel (which means “good news”) is the good news that the tribulation is almost over. It has nothing to do with eternal salvation.

In Numbers 22:28, an ass talked to Balaam, but this was not a salvation message. In Luke 19:40, the Pharisees told Jesus to rebuke His disciples for giving Him praise and glory. Jesus responded that if His disciples held their peace, “the stones would immediately cry out.” This passage has often been used to show God will even use rocks to give the salvation message. Yet, it is actually talking about giving God His due glory and praise. If we do not

give Him the glory He deserves, it will come from elsewhere, even the stones. There is no doubt that God could use these means if He wanted, but, He has not given us any indication from the Bible this is His intention. In fact, even secular anthropological studies of remote tribes offer no evidence of God using these supernatural means.

The life of the Christian is more vital in spreading the gospel than the actual *preaching* of the gospel. The Bible says our bodies are vessels into which God will pour His power. The Spirit works through the Christian. Thus, when the Christian presents himself as a living sacrifice, dynamic power is channeled through him and lives are changed.

Rom. 10:17 Faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

2 Cor. 5:18-20 God has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

1 Cor. 1:21 It pleased God to save them through preaching.

1 Cor. 1:26-29 God has chosen the weak to do His work.

Acts 1:8 We are to preach to the uttermost parts of the world.

Mt. 28:19 Go into all nations.

Mk. 16:15 Go into all the world and preach the gospel.

Lk. 24:47 Preach to every nation.

Jn. 20:21 As the Father sent Me, so I send you.

Mt. 5:13-16 We are the salt and the light of the world.

2 Tim. 4:2 Preach the Word always.

Implication C: Implies if we do not go and share the gospel with them, they will die in their sins and go to Hell.

In a study of the heathen, one of the most difficult questions to answer is what will happen to the person who never hears the gospel. The Bible seems to point in one direction though our feelings point in another. Of all the questions concerning the heathen, you probably will find the answer to this question hardest to understand and accept.

The Bible appears very dogmatic on the necessity for personal acceptance of Christ to go to Heaven. It also appears that God has chosen to use humans to deliver that gospel message. Yet, we know there are vast areas throughout the world that do not have any knowledge of the gospel. Billions have died without ever hearing the gospel. So, what is going to happen, or actually has already happened, to these people. Since they have not accepted the gospel, we must assume they have been condemned to Hell.

However, this leads us to a very disturbing question. Why have the unsaved not accepted the gospel? Obviously, the gospel was not available for them to accept. Yet, why was the gospel not available? Was it because they were not “seeking or sincere”? In the chapter “*Breakdown of View 2*,” the implications C, D and H deal extensively with this subject. It appears that *seeking* and *sincerity* are not contributing factors. God has chosen us, Christians, to be His witnesses and to deliver His gospel message.

This brings up a sobering question: If we do not go, will people needlessly go to Hell? Hosea says “My people are destroyed for a *lack* of knowledge.” Also there is the familiar verse from Ezekiel about the “watchman” who was to warn the wicked. If the watchman does not warn the people, they will “*die in their iniquities*” and he will be responsible (their blood will be required at his hand).

Before Christ came and died on the cross, what happened to the Gentiles who were not exposed to

the Jewish religion? Contrary to what some people think, the Hebrews did not go to Heaven because they kept the 10 commandments. The Jewish religion was based on the coming Supreme Sacrifice of the Lamb of God (Jesus) dying on the cross. It was an absolute requirement that everyone, Hebrews and non-Hebrews, adhere to the Jewish religion to go to Heaven..

Several times the Bible says Israel was to be a lighthouse for the rest of the world. It was their responsibility to show the world the power, glory and salvation of God Almighty. Israel failed in its mission. Ephesians says that before Christ came, the Gentiles, who had not been exposed to the Jewish salvation, were “*without God, having no hope.*” In Matthew, Jesus said the Pharisees had “shut up Heaven.” As a result, not only were they not going to Heaven themselves, but they were blocking others from going too. This shows that people do go to Hell because of us. In Luke, Jesus said, “the harvest is great and the laborers are few.” There are not enough willing Christians to reach the world with the gospel.

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for a LACK of knowledge.

Ez. 3:16-21, 33:6-9 If you do not warn the wicked, they will die in their iniquities. It is up to us to warn them.

Eph. 2:12 The Gentiles, before Christ, were without God, “having no hope.”

1 Cor. 15:34 Some have not the knowledge of God and this is to our shame.

Mt. 23:13 The Pharisees had “shut up Heaven.” Therefore, not only were they not going to Heaven themselves, they were blocking others from entering.

Luke 10:2 The harvest is great but the laborers are few.

Jer. 8:20 Harvest is past, summer is ended and

the world has not been saved.

Rom. 3:20 The “law” was given, not to save a person, but to show how sinful a person is compared to God.

Rom. 3:28 Man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

Gal. 2:16 By the works of the law, no flesh will be justified.

Gal. 2:21 If righteousness came by the law, then Christ died in vain.

Gal. 3:21 The law does not give life.

Gal. 3:24 The law was our schoolmaster, bringing us to justification by Christ through faith.

Implication D: Implies there will be degrees of punishment in Hell (based on how he lived up to the light he was given).

Just as there are degrees of rewards in Heaven, there seems to be degrees of punishment in Hell. It is possible that the severity of a person’s punishment in Hell depends on how much “light” he had and what he did with it. Romans states that if a person does not have the “law” (the Bible) he will be “judged without the law.” In other words, if a person has the Bible, he will be responsible for living up to the moral standards contained within it. If he does not have the “law,” he will not be judged by it. Instead, he will be judged for not living up to the moral standards etched in his heart or shown him in nature.

There will be two judgments for the world: The “Judgment Seat of Christ” and the “White Throne Judgment.” The “Judgment Seat of Christ” is for Christians. This judgment is *not* to determine whether they will go to Heaven, that was already determined by their acceptance of Christ, but to distribute their rewards. The White Throne Judgment

is for non-believers only. After it they will be sent to Hell. This judgment will determine the degree of punishment.

Luke 20:47, Mt. 23:14, Mk. 12:40 Those who are religious under false pretenses will “receive greater condemnation.”

Mt. 11:24 In the day of judgment, it will be more tolerable for Sodom than it will be for Capernaum.

Luke 12:47,48 Parable of those who were punished more severely because they knew the Lord’s will and did not do it. To those who were given much, much is required.

Mk. 14:21 For the person who betrayed Jesus, it would have been better if he were never born.

Rom. 2:5 A hardened heart stockpiles wrath against the Day of Wrath.

Rev. 20:12,13 Non-Christians are judged according to their ungodly deeds.

Jude 1:15 Judgment will be executed upon the ungodly for their ungodly deeds.

Mt. 12:36 We will give account for every idle word in the day of judgment.

Rom. 2:12 Those who have sinned without the law will be judged without the law.

2 Cor. 5:10 Judgment Seat of Christ.

Rev. 20:11-15 White Throne Judgment.

Breakdown of View 2

View 2

Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is essential for a person to have his sins forgiven. If a person is seeking (living up to the light he has) *God will* bring a Christian to him.

Chapter: 13.18

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Implication A: Implies everyone needs to personally accept the gospel in order for them to be able to enter Heaven.

Same as Implication A in the chapter “*Breakdown of View 1.*”

Implication B: Implies God has chosen to use humans to deliver the gospel message (as opposed to using “supernatural” means such as angels, etc.).

Same as Implication B in the chapter “*Breakdown of View 1.*”

Implication C: Implies if a person “seeks God” (continually lives up to the light that he has: inner conscience and nature) God will provide him with the gospel.

When the Bible says, “no one seeks after God,” does it mean that no one has a desire for God or

that no one wants to do what is right? Does it mean no one has sought after the Creator of the Universe? This does not seem to be what is meant by these verses.

When God created us, He incorporated a “God-size vacuum” into our being, a vacuum only God can fill. This vacuum not only makes a person empty and restless until he finds Christ, it also makes him thirsty for Spiritual things. Man has a natural desire for God and for reconciliation. Religion is not something that has to be taught; it just comes naturally. This is why no matter how primitive and isolated a group of people may be, they always have a religion. The main reason some people have no interest in Christianity, or claim to be atheists, is because either some Christian has “turned them off” or something has happened that has made them bitter toward God.

These deep-down desires of wanting to do good and finding God that are found in everyone are very polluted. With these desires to do good are the desires to do evil. These bad desires are *much* stronger than the good desires. That is why Paul says in Romans there were certain good things he wanted to do, but, he ended up doing just the opposite. We all can relate to this. We can think of things that we know we should do, and yet for some reason, we deliberately do just the opposite even when we know it is wrong.

If some good wheat falls off a tractor into a pile of manure and gets mixed in by the horses walking over it, the wheat is contaminated. Though some good wheat is in the pile, it is worthless. In the same way, our good works and desires for God become uninfluential. We have so many bad desires that our good desires are overwhelmed. When the Bible says no man does good or seeks God, it is saying despite the good we have, we are more prone to do evil. Genesis states from our youth, the “imagination of man’s heart are evil,” and the book of Psalms says man goes astray as soon as he is born.

Thus it appears according to the Bible, the natural

man, without some outside influence, does not “seek God,” at least in the sense God *is obligated* to send him the gospel. As we will see later, God has chosen to use the presence of the *Word of God* (the Word written on paper or the Word living in the hearts of Christians) to “draw” people to Himself.

Rom. 3:11 No one “seeks” after God.

Jn. 6:44 No man comes to God except that God draws him.

Ps. 14:2,3 God looked down from heaven to see if any sought Him. He found that they have *all* gone aside. “There is none that does good, no not one.”

Ps. 53:2,3 No one “seeks” after God.

Gen. 8:21 From youth, the imagination of man’s heart is evil.

Rom. 7:15-24 The good things that we want to do we do not do, but we end up doing just the opposite.

Implication D: Implies that everyone who could possibly be saved is getting saved.

The main premise of View 2 is God *will* provide everyone with an *equal opportunity* to accept Christ and a lack of Christians willing to spread the gospel is not a limiting factor. View 2 implies God will not allow the disobedience or unfaithfulness of Christians to hinder a seeking person from hearing the gospel. God knows when someone is living up to the light and seeking. He also knows those who would accept Him if they had an opportunity. Therefore, God, according to View 2, must provide the gospel to these people and give them the opportunity to accept it.

Thus, with this assumption, the only factor involved in whether a person hears the gospel is the attitude of his heart. The failure of the Christian church to

witness has no effect on whether the heathen hears the gospel. Since God is taking full responsibility for delivering the gospel, everyone who wants to accept Christ will be given the opportunity and will be saved.

Implication E: Implies world evangelism is already taking place.

It is estimated that 50% of the world’s population has never heard of the person called Jesus Christ. 75% of the world does not have a clear enough understanding of the gospel to become a Christian. Approximately 7% of the world has accepted the gospel. That leaves about 5.4 billion people who are unsaved. In the past 62 years, the world’s population has increased about 20 times faster than the number of Christians.

According to view 2, God *will* provide the gospel to everyone who would accept it if they heard it. We can then say everyone who would possibly get saved, will get saved. Since there is nothing we can do to *increase* the amount of people who will get saved, we must assume that world evangelism is taking place. If *we* can increase the number of people who will be saved, then some people have gone to Hell because of us.

There are more people being born than being born again. Not only is the church not gaining ground, it is not even holding the ground that it has. Many cults are growing faster than the Christian church.

Implication F: Implies more exposure to the gospel will *not* increase a person’s chance of becoming a Christian.

Wherever there is a high exposure to the gospel, there is a higher percentage of Christians. Wherever there is little exposure to the gospel, there are few or no Christians.

The main premise of View 2 is God will give everyone an equal opportunity to become a Christian. This means nothing can increase a person's probability or chance of becoming a Christian.

Yet, there seems to be a great amount of secular and Biblical information that indicates exposure does increase a person's chance of becoming a Christian. As we increase exposure to the gospel in an area, we find an increase in the number of Christians. This means there are *some* people who *would not* become Christians under a limited exposure, but *would* become Christians under heavier exposure. This being true, then there are people who are living in underexposed areas who are dying and going to Hell only because they have not had enough exposure to the gospel.

Because of the consequences involved, this question about exposure *must be* resolved. Here are some important questions that should be considered. The more we are exposed to the protozoan parasite called sporozoite, the higher our chances will be of coming down with the disease, malaria. Our chances of coming down with the disease would be greater than someone who had never been exposed to it. Now, we know that we cannot directly compare the gospel to a disease, but the principles governing exposure are consistent regardless.

As Christian parents, we would like to be assured of raising mature, spirit-filled, Christian children. However, if a person's salvation is *not* determined by his upbringing or exposure to the gospel, but by being someone who *just happened* to want to live up to the light, then, the chance of our children becoming Christians is no greater than a native in the deepest part of Africa. Yet, when compared, it is evident that Christian parents have a higher percentage of Christian children than non-Christian parents. In fact, many parents use the verse in Proverbs to show that their upbringing does play a part.

There are a couple of other points that should be considered also. The Bible says in Proverbs, a

person offended is harder to win than a fortified city. It is easy to "turn a person off" and make their hearts cold toward us and what we represent. In Matthew, Jesus said that iniquity could cause a person's heart to grow cold. Jesus also stated that the Pharisees had "shut up Heaven" and *blocked* others from entering. Thus, it must be possible to turn a person off to Christianity. Our inconsistent hypocritical lives decrease a person's desire to want what we have. Unfortunately, many people have developed a bad taste toward Christianity because of the Christians who are stumbling blocks. When we look around, we find many Christians who have spent years of their lives bitter and angry with other Christians (i.e., bitterness resulting from church splits, etc.). If we as Christians can permanently (or at least severely) offend other Christians, then is it possible that someone who would have accepted Christ did not because we offended them or gave them the wrong impression of Christianity?

Follow this thought with the idea that peer groups can greatly control the life of a person, either constructively or destructively. Those around us influence our attitudes and values. This is why there are some locations that have an unusually high crime rate. It follows, then, that a person's surroundings can influence him to want to "live up to the light."

Keep in mind that although we may be influenced by others, we are still responsible for our actions. We can never excuse ourselves by placing the blame on someone else. We may be influenced by others, but we still have a choice! It just happens that because of our sinful nature we usually make the wrong choice. We are conditioned, but not controlled. Others may influence us, but they cannot force us to act. Our response is our responsibility.

Here is another question that must be considered. Can the heart-melting message of the gospel influence a person's desire for God and for repentance? Can this unusual and powerful message of grace and reconciliation *cause* a person to want to "seek God" and "live up to the light" more than what he would have had he not heard? Take the

city of Nineveh as an example. When Jonah preached to this Gentile, wicked and heathenized city, almost the whole city repented and turned from their wickedness. There was a big revival among the Ninevites. What was it that caused this population to all turn to God simultaneously? What about other revivals happening around us where thousands of people turn to God simultaneously? Why are there so many people being saved *at once*? Why is it that large groups of people suddenly start "seeking" God?

Could it be that hearing the heart-melting gospel message *powered by the Holy Spirit* is the main, although not necessarily the only, ingredient that causes a person to turn to God? The reason large groups turn to God simultaneously is not because they all started to "seek God" at the same time. It is because they all are exposed to the power of the Holy Spirit and the gospel message simultaneously. Remember, the words of Paul, "Faith comes by hearing the Word of God."

Last, the Bible says it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to Heaven. Is it saying that if the same man was not rich he would be more likely to go to Heaven? Does this not imply that our surroundings do influence our values and desires for God?

Listed below are a few verses that demonstrate it is possible to make a person's heart cold or receptive.

Prov. 22:6 Raise up a child in the way that he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.

Prov. 18:19 A person offended is harder to win than a fortified city.

Mt. 19:24 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to heaven.

Mt. 23:13 The Pharisees had "shut up heaven." As a result, not only were they not going to heaven, but they were blocking others from going too.

Mt. 24:12 Because iniquity abounds, the hearts of many grow cold.



When Jesus said it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to Heaven, was He saying this same man would have had a better chance of going to Heaven if he were not rich?

Implication G: Implies there should be an even proportion of Christians throughout the world.

There are some places in the world with very high concentrations of Christians and other places with very low concentrations of Christians. In fact, there are many places where there are large groups of people, some numbering into the millions, with no gospel message or Bible. There is no indication that anyone in these groups, including their forefathers, has ever had any knowledge of what Christ did on the cross.

View 2 implies that God will give everyone an equal opportunity to accept Christ. The deciding factor of whether a person will hear and have a chance to accept the gospel is not the amount of *opportunity*, but the sincerity of the person's heart. Since the attitude of the person's heart would be random and not based on his environment or exposure to the gospel, an equal distribution of Christians would be expected throughout the world. The law of Random Distribution dictates when something is distrib-

uted at random, it will spread out proportionately. For example, let's say you have 1000 red marbles and 1000 yellow marbles intermingled in a bag, and you poured them on the floor at random. You will find a fairly even mixture of red and yellow marbles distributed throughout the room.

When we look at the distribution of Christians throughout the world, we do not find the proportions even close to being equal. Wherever there is a heavy gospel witness, there is a high concentration of Christians. Wherever there is little or no gospel witness, there is a low concentration of Christians. If you take these areas with the low concentration, and increase the gospel witness, a proportional increase in the amount of Christians will also be seen.

So, we are faced with this question: Could there be other factors that contribute to whether a person will accept the gospel? Could geographic location play a part? Could constant exposure to the heart-melting gospel play a part? These questions must be answered.

Implication H: Implies everyone who stayed in his religion was not sincere and was not living up to the light that he had.

There are over 5000 religions in the world (not including the different cults) and many of their members are, in some sense of the word, "sincere" and "devout." Are we saying that all these religious people are not "living up to the light"? We know that billions of people are raised in a religion completely different from Christianity. Most of these people have lived their lives, never knowing anything but their religion. Probably the majority sincerely feel they are practicing the correct religion. How then can we say all these people are not sincere or living up to the light they have?

A nurse was putting what she thought was silver nitrate into the eyes of a newborn baby. This is a common procedure for the prevention of blindness

from the venereal disease, gonorrhea. However, mistakenly she used sulfuric acid and blinded the child. Even though she was sincere, she was still wrong. Misguided sincerity is still sincerely wrong.

Cults are especially successful in attracting people who seem sincere. They trap many who are looking for more, and are not finding it in the lukewarm and backslidden churches that they attended. When cult members do leave their cult, they do *not* usually join or attend another church. This seems to indicate they do not leave the cult because God is "leading them out," at least not in the sense that they were "seeking" and God has shown them the true gospel. They usually leave because they are disillusioned, or feel betrayed by their group.

Implication I: Implies that if we do not go and bring the gospel to the heathen, someone else will.

If it is true that "If I do not go, God will send someone else," then the only result of not going when directed by God, is missing the blessing of being used by God. This is not true though. God *has* given us the responsibility of reaching the lost. People who do not hear the gospel are needlessly going to hell.

Two different places in Ezekiel speak of how we are to warn the wicked. If we do not, they will die in their iniquities, and we will be responsible for them perishing. 1 Corinthians states it is to our shame that some people still have no knowledge of God. In Hosea, God says because of a lack of knowledge, His people are destroyed. Ephesians adds that before Christ came, the Gentiles were, "without God in this world ... having no hope."

Finally, what is meant in Luke when God says the "harvest is great but the laborers are few"? Could this mean there are not enough willing Christians to reach the world with the gospel? For more information, refer to the chapter "*Breakdown of View I,*" implication C.

Implication J: Implies when a person is born, his nature or attitude is already established concerning whether he will or will not “live up to the light.”

The main premise of View 2 is God will provide the gospel to those who continually live up to the light. Since there are vast locations that have no gospel, we must conclude that the unsaved are not seeking. Let us carry it a step further. View 2 also implies that God will give everyone an equal opportunity to accept the gospel. If this is true, then a person’s attitude of wanting to “live up to the light” cannot be influenced by his upbringing or surroundings. So, if a person’s attitude changes, it changes only because of his inherent values. We must then conclude when a person is born, it is already determined whether he will or will not “live up to the light.” Yet, the scriptures tell us that everyone is born with the same attitudes, and they are opposed to God and what is right.

Is. 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray.

Ps. 58:3 We go astray as soon as we are born.

Eph. 2:3 We are, by nature, the children of wrath.

Ps. 51:5 We were shaped in iniquity and conceived in sin.

Prov. 21:8 The ways of man are devious and strange.

Ecc. 8:11 The hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil.

Rom. 8:7 The carnal mind is enmity against God.

Gen. 8:21 The imagination of man’s heart is evil from youth.

Micah 7:2,3 There is none upright among men, they all do evil with both hands earnestly.

Breakdown of View 3

View 3

Same as view 2 except if there are no Christians available, God will then send the gospel message to the “seeker” via a “supernatural” method (e.g. an angel or a voice from Heaven).

Chapter: 13.19

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All implications are the same as View 2 except for Implication B.

Implication B: Implies God will deliver the gospel message to anyone that is seeking. He will use any method available, whether humans or some “supernatural” means.

For more information, refer to the chapter “*Breakdown of View 1*,” Implication B.

Breakdown of View 4

View 4

If a person “lives up to the light that he has,” God will then allow him into heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the Heathen.

Chapter: 13.20

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Implication A: Implies if a person is sincerely seeking and “living up to the light that he has”, God will then honor that as a quality worthy enough to let that person into Heaven.

For more information, refer to the chapter “*Breakdown of View 1*,” Implication A.

Implication B: Implies personal acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ is not essential for the heathen to enter Heaven.

For more information, refer to the chapter “*Breakdown of View 1*,” Implication A.

Breakdown of View 5

View 5

Every person who has not heard the gospel will be allowed into heaven. Personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is not essential for the Heathen.

Chapter: 13.21

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Implication A: Implies if a person has never had a chance to hear the gospel, he then is not responsible for personally accepting the gospel.

For more information, refer to the chapter “*Breakdown of View 1*,” Implication A.

Implication B: Implies it would be better not to send missionaries to the heathen.

If the heathen are already going to Heaven, sending them a missionary would only give them the opportunity to reject Christ, and thus, go to Hell. For more information, refer to the chapter “*Breakdown of View 1*,” Implication A.

The Christian's Mission to the World



Chapter: 13.22

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World evangelism encompasses a full spectrum of Christian ministries. It includes ministries such as overseeing the church nursery, teaching Sunday School as well as participating in “foreign missions.” I Corinthians says no part of the body is greater than any other part. The same holds true for Christian ministries; No mission is greater than any other mission (although some tend to be neglected much more than others). It is important for each individual to be in the Lord’s will. No matter what ministry a person is in, if he is not where God wants him, he is out of “God’s will.” It is good to do the Lord’s work, but it is even better to do His will.

There are no boundaries in world evangelism. No country or group of people is more precious than any other in the eyes of God. In the literal sense, we are all foreign missionaries because “this world is not our home.” Heaven is our home and the whole world is a foreign land.

When seeking the Lord’s leading, a good rule of thumb is get involved with the people nearest you. A light that shines the farthest, shines the brightest at home. If you cannot be effective as a Christian witness here at home where you know the language

and culture, you will not be effective in a land different from your own. You must first be a good steward of the opportunities God has given before He will entrust you with greater responsibilities. We should continually look for ways to expand our outreach and vision. It is easier for God to guide a Christian who is moving than to try to push a Christian who is standing still. A car is a good example of this. It can be guided and directed only while it is moving.

Do not limit yourself by setting boundaries. God sees no boundaries, and neither should we. The concept of “expansion evangelism” (or expansionism), was derived from Acts 1:8, “... and you shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the Earth.” Paraphrased for our individual lives this verse says, “You are to be my witness first in your hometown, then expand this witness to cover your state. Expand it further to cover the United States, and keep on spreading out until there are no more places to go.” Obviously, you will never reach every place in the world. You may never leave your hometown. However, the influence of your life should be felt throughout the world.

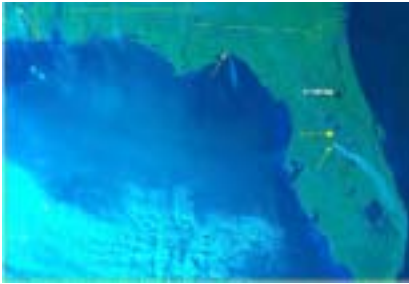
INFLUENCE

*We must be continually expanding
the influence of our outreach.*

For example, a person you have led to the Lord may be serving in Africa, plus you are supporting missionaries in Brazil, St. Louis and Canada. You are also praying specifically for several works all over the world. For expansion evangelism to work, God’s people must always be looking for new areas of service, although they are already involved in



Witness first in your own home town.



Then, expand your witness and influence to those in your state.



Expand it even further to reach those in your country



Keep on spreading it until there are no more places to go.

many Christian ministries. You should spend 80-90% of your energy on your present Christian work, and the other 10- 20% “getting your feet wet” in new types of ministries. Continually try to expand your horizons. You will find that the Lord often “leads” this way.

As you expand your missionary outreach, you may find God leading you to a foreign land. Although foreign missionaries are desperately needed, special preparations should be taken and cautions considered.

Christians should never take a commitment to serve the Lord lightly. Before a person makes the decision of commitment, he should “count the cost” and determine if he is willing to pay the price. Although the rewards of serving the Lord are great, a person should go into this commitment with his eyes fully open to the problems and dangers.

Many Christian workers will testify the more involved you are in sharing Christ with others, the more Satan will try to destroy your life and testimony. Apart from the actual attacks of Satan, a foreign missionary faces the pressures of living in a foreign culture. The frustrations of having their lives turned completely upside down can put a great pressure on their marriage. Many normal methods of relaxation are impossible. Therefore, new ways of unwinding must be found. The Christian workers must work extra hard at keeping their emotional, spiritual and marital life fresh and vibrant.

These problems are by no means insurmountable, and many missionaries have been successful in adjusting. A person’s adjustment, though, depends largely on his spiritual, emotional and marital stability.

Another requirement of stewardship is the proper management of time and resources. Since many Christians will be sacrificing financially to help put you on a foreign field, it is important your life be usable and productive for God. If you are not *already* an effective Christian witness, you are not ready to go to a foreign field. Simply being a

missionary does not automatically make you an effective Christian. In fact, being on a foreign field makes it even more difficult to share Christ. It is hard enough to share Christ when you understand the culture and the language. It is even more difficult when you live in a land that thinks and speaks differently.



*The light that shines the farthest,
shines the brightest at home.*



How bright is your light shining?

In summary, there are three points that you should keep in mind. These points will not only help prepare you for missions, but will also help indicate your readiness for the foreign field.

- 1 Be effective in your Christian witness *before* you go to the field. Remember, the light that shines the farthest, shines the brightest at home.

2. Be active in foreign ministries, such as praying, financially supporting, and seeking out special missions projects for involvement.
3. Be obedient to God's leading. This involves how you treat your mate, the way you conduct your personal life, your moral integrity, and your spiritual service.

How convinced are you?



Chapter: 13.23

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The firemen readied their gear as their fire truck raced toward the burning building. As the truck pulled to a stop, the firemen determinedly carried out their various tasks. While some firemen began to spray down the two-story home, another crew entered it, looking for anyone who might be trapped inside.

As the men moved cautiously from room to room, they heard a loud cracking sound. “The roof is caving in,” the squad leader yelled. “Pull out! Pull out!” With this, the squad made its retreat.

Once the crew was outside, the Captain said, “We can’t save this building. Concentrate your efforts on the surrounding buildings. Following his com-

mand, the firemen turned their hoses on the homes closest to the fire.

“What’s that sound?” asked fireman Smith. “What’s making that crying noise?” After listening, one of the firemen interjected, “That’s just the draft of air being sucked in by the fire.”

“No!” said Smith. “It’s definitely human.” Suddenly, the eyes of all of the firemen expressed terror as they realized that the crying sound was coming from a baby trapped inside. Smith, thinking about his newborn baby at home, said, “We have to go in.”

“That’s suicide,” stressed another fireman. “You have no idea what room the child is in.”

“It just as easily could have been my child inside there.” Having said that, Smith darted toward the inferno.

“Get back here, Smith,” demanded his Captain. “That’s an order!” Undaunted, Smith entered the building.

“You two,” the Captain instructed. “Grab a hose and follow him in as far as you can. Try to secure an exit for him.” Pointing to two other firemen, the Captain said, “Grab that hose and follow behind the first hose. Keep those guys soaked. They’re going to need you to protect them from the surrounding fire.”

Following the direction of the screams, Smith worked his way up the stairs. Suddenly, a burnt step breaks and Smith falls on his face. Determined, Smith pulls his injured leg out of the hole and crawls up the remaining steps.

Finding the baby, Smith puts his precious cargo under his jacket and makes his descent. Fortunately, the cool tunnel, created by the fire hoses, provides a safe passage.

Once outside, Smith is treated for burns on his face, hands, and legs. Everyone is praising him as a hero.

He shrugged it off, however, saying he was only acting as a father.

Smith risked his life and suffered multiple burns in order to save the trapped child. He even risked being disciplined for disobeying a direct order and endangering the lives of the other firemen. Do you think Smith would have made these sacrifices if he weren't convinced the child would die without his help? If Smith believed there was a good chance the child would be safe without his help, do you think he would have gone in? I think the answers are obvious.

This same question applies to reaching the lost for Christ. Will a Christian be willing to endure great pain and suffer incredible losses to bring the gospel to people if he wasn't convinced they are going to Hell? Once again, I think the answer is obvious.

An example of this sacrifice is William Carey, the father of modern missions. "He plodded through the first seven years in India enduring poverty, desertion of a coworker, bouts with disease, the deaths of two children, and his wife's mental illness – all before he saw his first convert baptized. More than 40 years he labored without a furlough, until he translated the Bible into six languages and portions of it into 29 others." (Source: *Power for Living*, September 13, 1998.)

Have you really thought about the sacrifices missionaries make to bring the gospel to hard-to-reach places? We usually think about them giving up many of the luxuries we have become accustomed to. We sometimes even think about them contracting a crippling illness or even dying at a young age. Seldom, however, do we think about the emotional, marital, and spiritual deterioration these Christians face.

Marital deterioration and rebellious children are a realistic concern for these missionaries. There are many Christians workers who have lost their own vineyard (mates and children) while working in "God's vineyard." Just as tragically, there are many Christian workers who have backslidden spiritually,

never to recover. They could have avoided this spiritual deterioration if they had played it safe and not taken on such a difficult task.

I ask you again, is it realistic to believe a large number of Christians would take these chances if they didn't believe these people were lost and going to hell? Would Christians sacrifice to evangelize the whole world if they didn't believe it was necessary? I know the answer is an emphatic no.

Ultimately, our primary motivation to reach these people should *not* be our burden for the lost. Our primary motivation should be our desire to glorify God. (See the chapter *Finding the Elusive Will of God* for more information.) Yet, our actions should be based on what we believe the Bible teaches. Our priorities should be derived from the priorities laid out in the Bible. This is the purpose of these chapters. I will show you what I believe the Bible teaches on this subject and you can draw your own conclusion.

Putting it all Together



Chapter: 13.24

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The Bible is clear on the necessity of personally accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ. This basic theme runs throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament the believers were looking toward the Supreme Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, while New Testament believers now look back to this event. The Old Testament believers did *not* go to Heaven because they kept the 10 Commandments. The “law” was given only as a standard of God’s perfection and expectations. When a person sincerely tries to keep all God’s standards, he soon realizes his ineptness. Thus, he develops a better understanding of what is meant when God says “there is none righteous, no not one.” When a person truly comprehends this, he understands the need for a salvation outside himself.

To demonstrate how the law reveals to a person just how sinful he really is, we can use the illustration of a freshly washed and waxed car. Under normal light the car seems clean and without blemishes. However, when the car is exposed to extremely bright light, the previously “hidden” nicks, scratches and streaks become visible. It is the same way when a person exposes himself to the “brightness” of God’s standard. The previously

hidden needs and faults become visible.

Because Christianity is drastically failing to fulfill the Great Commission, we are faced with the sobering question of what will happen to those who are not reached with the gospel. The Bible teaches in Romans that everyone has a moral standard written in their heart. Because everyone has failed to even live up to this low standard, they are without excuse. Romans also states that those who live without the law will be judged without the law. These people are not going to be judged for violating a standard they know nothing of, but are going to be judged by the standard written in their hearts. James says that if a person knows that something is wrong and does it anyway, he has sinned. Even if the heathen do not have the Bible to point out their sins, they are aware of their wrongs and this condemns them.

There are two different judgments, the White Throne Judgment for nonbelievers and the Judgment Seat of Christ for Believers. If a person accepts the gospel of Jesus Christ, he is positively going to Heaven. Therefore, the purpose of the Judgment Seat of Christ is to distribute rewards. If a person has not accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ, he is positively going to Hell. Thus, the White Throne Judgment is to declare the sentence and “degree of punishment.”

A study of the heathen involves many more people than what we usually consider. It is not a small handful of remote tribes that are heathen, but most of the world. Only about 6.6% of the world’s population has accepted the gospel; this leaves about 5.7 billion who have not. Our Christian influence is obviously decreasing. In the past 64 years the increase of the world’s population has been about 19 times greater than the increase of Christians. A striking majority of the world’s population does not have a clear understanding of the gospel. Their understanding of the actual plan of salvation is as limited as our understanding of other major religions. We have heard of other religions (like Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.) but most of us could not thoroughly explain their method of

salvation. Since most of the world has not heard a clear gospel message, we must include them in our study of the heathen.

Most Christians agree that in order for a person to go to Heaven, he personally has to accept the gospel. There is considerable disagreement, however, about those who have not heard the gospel and are “seeking” or “living up to the light” that they have. This is a subject on which the Bible is not specific. After you have looked at the facts, you must draw your own conclusions.

Although the Bible is not dogmatic on this subject, it is far from silent. There are many important issues that must be considered. The first issue is: does man really “seek” God and “live up to the light that he has?” Written in the hearts of *all* men is a desire for God, a desire to fill that “God-size vacuum.” Yet, could God’s concept of seeking differ from ours?



Time is like money; you can spend it on whatever you wish, but once it has been spent, it is gone forever.

The whole premise of God sending more light to those who are seeking stems from the concept that God will give everyone an equal opportunity to accept the gospel. If God is going to give everyone an equal opportunity, exposure to the gospel will not give anyone a greater desire to seek God than what he normally has. If it did, this “extra” exposure would give him more opportunity to “accept the gospel.”

If more exposure to the gospel does not increase a person’s chances of accepting the gospel, we would expect to find an even proportion of Christians throughout the world. Yet, this is not the case. According to this view, God will ensure world evangelism. However, this world evangelism does not appear to be happening. This is evident by the tremendous rate at which Christianity is losing ground. Also, if exposure does not play any part, then we should not find a greater percentage of Christian children with Christian parents. Would we, as Christian parents, be able to raise our children as strong Christians if our Christian influence did not play a role?

If God will send more light to those who are seeking, can we assume that the non-Christians who stay in their religion, are not sincerely seeking? Some of these people seem more sincere and committed than most Christians.

Taking these facts into consideration, it appears that those who have not heard the gospel are still accountable for the standard that they have. Because all men sin against this low standard, they are “without excuse.” The Bible is clear on the necessity of personally accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ to obtain atonement for sin. All men who have not personally accepted this gospel will be judged and condemned for their sins. Because the Bible teaches that there will be degrees of punishment in Hell, we can conclude that the heathen will be judged based on the light they have. Those who reject the gospel will come under heavier condemnation than those who have never heard.

If the heathen are going to Hell, what can we do about it? Is there an answer? The solution is *not* making a quick decision to do something “spectacular.” The direction of your life should not be based on an emotional response of guilt or pity. Following the leading of God requires a close walk with Christ coupled with much prayer and meditation. There are two areas though, that all Christians can work on now while they seek God’s clear direction in their lives. These two areas are the dedication of our lives and the faithfulness of our

prayers. God has chosen to use humans as vessels through which to channel His awesome power and might. When we dedicate completely our bodies to God as living sacrifices, God's power is transformed within our lives. This is the quality that allowed the dynamic people in the Bible to change the world around them. Couple this with consistent prayer and we will truly rock the world.

To illustrate the need for total commitment, let us look at the simple game of bowling. If you knock down 9 pins (90%) you will earn 9 points. But, if you knock down just 1 more pin (100%) you have the potential of earning 30 points. In this game there is not that much difference between knocking down 50% or 90%. Yet, between 95% and 100% lies the potential for winning the game. It is the same with the dedication of our lives to God. We may have 50% or 90% of our life committed to God, but the real power comes when we are 100% committed to God. We would not expect there to be that much difference between 95% and 100%, but this is one of the dynamic keys to a powerful victorious life.

Acts 1:8 says that after we receive the power of the Holy Spirit, we should be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the world. To put the verse into a more contemporary setting, it is like God telling me to be His witness first in Jackson, then to expand my reach and influence throughout Michigan. After that, my witness should reach those living within the United States, and finally, to the rest of the world. Though there are many places in the world that I will never reach physically, my influence should extend to these areas. This is possible via my prayers, financial support or by the ministry that I play in the lives of others.