



# The Voice Of Truth

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## Hillcrest church of Christ

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### 'Is There An Excuse For Being Ignorant of God?'

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Does the covenant of God apply to all men? Are alien sinners bound by any commands in the covenant of Christ? Would God punish a man for being ignorant of Him?

There are many in this world and in the body of Christ that would answer "NO" to these vital questions. We need to stop letting our feelings be our guide, and look into God's word for the source to answer these important questions.

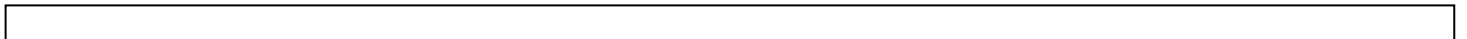
Paul declared that the word is to be preached (2 Timothy 4:2). We see that all scripture is profitable (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and that nothing profitable is to be held back. The whole counsel of God is to be proclaimed to men (Acts 20:20, 27).

Does the covenant of God apply to all men? The Biblical answer is "YES". The Lord commissioned His apostles to teach "all nations" (Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 24:47). "Unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). "To preach the word to the whole creation, to every creature" (Mark 16:15-16). Thus, all men, not merely Christians, are accountable to the covenant of Christ. Christ will judge all men by these words (John 5:22, 27; 12:48). Therefore, all men are accountable to the covenant of Christ because all men will be judged by His words.

Are alien sinners bound by any commands in the

covenant of Christ? The Biblical answer is "YES". The commands to repent and be baptized are in the covenant of Christ (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:15-16). They are not addressed to Christians, but to alien sinners. Since alien sinners are accountable to Christ, therefore, all men are accountable to the covenant of Christ. If not, why encourage alien sinners to obey the Law of Christ, if they are not answerable to the Gospel of Christ? Why even teach or preach the word?

Would God punish a man for being ignorant of Him? Again, the scriptural answer is "YES". "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power?" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Paul writing, guided by the Holy Spirit, gives us two groups upon whom the Lord will take vengeance:



## **(1) ON THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW GOD.**

### **(2) ON THOSE WHO DO NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL.**

We can see from this passage that there is no excuse for being ignorant of God. God will punish those who know not God, or those disobedient to the Gospel. It is the responsibility of every person to know God. "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27). Paul tells us that it is man's duty to seek God; this is the way we come to know God. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." "Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways" (Isaiah 55:6; 58:2).

"Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation" (Romans 15:20). Paul preached in places that had not heard the Gospel before. Why would Paul do this if all men are not accountable to God? Because it is the responsibility of every person to know God. Paul preached in places that had not heard the good news. Yet, some would say, leave them be, if they never heard the Gospel before, God would put them in a saved state, they are not accountable! God would never punish a man that never heard the Gospel! Paul told us He would in 2 Thessalonians. Who are we going to believe, Paul or our feelings?

Paul writing to the churches in Galatia says, "Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods" (Galatians 4:8). A picture is drawn of the condition of the Galatians before they became Christians, "Ye knew not God". Why did Paul preach the good news to them if they didn't need to know the Gospel? Before becoming Christians the Galatians had enslaved themselves to serving false gods, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Galatians 4:9). Observe the contrast between the

condition of one who is not a Christian, "Ye knew not God," and one who has become a Christian, "Known of God." "Known of God" is equal to being recognized by God as one of His obedient children (1 Corinthians 8:3; John 14:15).

We can see through our study that the covenant of Christ applies to all men and that alien sinners are bound by the commands of Christ and that there is no excuse for being ignorant of God (Acts 17:30; Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1).

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### **NOBILITY Borrowed**

Noble people are like those in Berea mentioned in Acts 17:11. The Holy Spirit says they were nobler than those Paul had dealt with in Thessalonica. Two or three vital points are mentioned here.

- 1) They were open-minded (readiness of mind);
- 2) They received the Word (rather than rejecting it);
- 3) They wanted the truth, and wanted to see if the things presented were indeed the truth (whether these things were so);
- 4) They searched the scriptures, and
- 5) They did so daily. If we want to be such that God can call us "noble" - those truly of noble birth and noble minded - then let us follow the example of the Bereans. Have the right attitude toward the Bible, and then study of that volume! Yea, the cure for a thousand ills!

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**OUR WORDS MAY HIDE  
OUR THOUGHTS,  
BUT OUR ACTIONS WILL  
REVEAL THEM.**