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worshipping God, but in reality it is "in vain"? Yes!

Another passage we ought to look at is found in **Matthew 22:29**. Jesus condemned the Sadducees at this time, and said, "*Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*" How could these people "err" if it does not matter what you and I believe on religious matters?

Let us look at an early teacher and preacher of the gospel. A man by the name of Stephen. This space will not allow us to print the entire text, but please read **Acts 7** so you can understand the entire context. Toward the end of **Acts 7**, Stephen condemns the Jews for refusing to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Please notice what happened, "*When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth...And cast him out of the city, and stoned him*" (**Acts 7:54, 58**). Does this reaction sound consistent with people who have heard words to the effect, "I'm O.K. and you're O.K. – There are many roads to the same goal"?

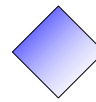
Many times, Paul would cause a riot in the cities he visited. Why was this? This was because he taught "*THE gospel of Christ*" (**Rom. 1:16**)!! He taught that there was not another gospel of Christ. Therefore, you will follow the one true gospel, or a perverted gospel, period (**Gal. 1:6-9**). Paul caused a stir among the Philippians because he was accused of teaching "*customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans*" (**Acts 16:21**). Does this sound like Paul taught that there are "many ways to serve God"? In Ephesus Paul, "*hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands*" (**Acts 19:26**).

Why would he say this to such an honest and sincere group of people who were just trying to worship their goddess the best way they knew how? How do we know that these people were honest and sincere in their beliefs about the goddess Diana? For one thing, they shouted "*Great is Diana of the Ephesians*" for two solid hours to show their devotion to that idol (**Acts 19:34**). Paul did not teach these things in Ephesus alone, but everywhere that Paul went he taught the same gospel (**Acts 19:26; I Cor. 4:17**).

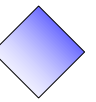
If it is true that God will accept you as long as you are honest and sincere in what you believe, then why was Paul converted in the first place? He was the epitome of an "honest and sincere," "religious" person, fully persuaded in his own mind (**Acts 22:3, 23:1, 26:9-10; Gal, 1:13-14; Phil. 3:4-6**). But it was not enough, was it??

My friend, what we believe religiously, matters! What we believe concerning religious matters will determine whether we go to Heaven or Hell! This is how serious it is. We are not on "different roads to the same goal"! Now, we may be on different roads, but rest assured that one road leads to Heaven and the other road leads to Hell (**Matt. 7:13-14**). These are our choices!! When people declare that it does not matter what you believe as long as you are honest and sincere, they are teaching something completely foreign to the Scriptures. We must follow what the Bible and the Bible alone says on matters of religion, as well as in every other area of our life (**Col. 3:17**)!! If people will not give us book, chapter, and verse for their actions, we need not listen (**I Pet. 4:11**). The next time someone asks the question "Does it matter what I believe religiously...?" How will **YOU** answer them??

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The Voice of Truth



June 6, 2010

Did Judas Fall? By Jimmy Pettigrew

It is obvious that the Apostle Judas Iscariot went to the place of torment after betraying Jesus and committing suicide: "*For the Son of man goeth, even as it is written of him: but woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had not been born*" (**Mark 14:21**). Because of this fact, the eternal security defenders are left with no option but to strictly insist that Judas was never really saved to begin with or surrender their belief in eternal security, something which few of them seem to be willing to do.

Judas is a prime example of a believer who fell into complete apostasy. "*And when it was day, he called his disciples; and he chose from them twelve, whom also he named apostles: Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew, and Matthew and Thomas, and James (the son) of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, and Judas (the son) of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor*" (**Luke 6:13-16**).

Please note: The first time we hear of Judas Iscariot, we are informed that he already was a "disciple." Furthermore, he was "called" and "chosen" by Christ Himself to be an "apostle" at the same time as the other twelve. "*Jesus answered them, Did not I choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil? Now he spake of Judas (the son) of Simon Iscariot, for he it was that should betray him, (being) one of the twelve*" (**John 6:70-71**). Going back to **verse 16, chapter 6** of Luke, please note that Judas "became" a traitor. The word "became" for Judas suggests a change for the worse that occurred sometime after he was chosen as a disciple by Christ to be His apostle. Or we might say he was once a "disciple" of the Lord's elevated to apostle, who later "became a traitor," as God's Word has so stated. Either way, the spiritual condition of this apostle backslides to the place where he betrayed Christ, committed suicide and then went to the place of torment!

Also, remember this about Judas: he was sent forth to

preach, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those having leprosy and drive out demons. "*But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons: freely ye received, freely give. Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; no wallet for (your) journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the laborer is worthy of his food*" (**Matthew 10:6-10**). "*And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have authority to cast out demons*" (**Mark 3:14-15**). This states that the twelve, including who? Judas, were given spiritual authority by Jesus to Drive out demons (**Matthew 12:26**)! For a person to indirectly say Judas was never saved is to say that Jesus chose Judas, who was unholy, to be His holy representative (**John 6:70-71**)! The Bible tells us that, "Judas by transgression fell." (**Acts 1:25**).

"*Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, who did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me*" (**Psalms 41:9**). Jesus quotes from **Psalms 41** and attributes it to Judas in **John 13, verse eighteen**, "*I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled: He that eateth my bread lifted up his heel against me.*" Please note that Judas was once Jesus' close friend, whom Jesus trusted! Question: Since Jesus knew what was in man, "*for he himself knew what was in man*" (**John 2:25**), how then could Jesus trust Judas in the early days of their friendship if Judas was never saved? "*Jesus saith to him, He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew him that should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean*" (**John 13:10-11**). Judas was not "clean" in contrast to the other disciples. But does this say that Judas was never "clean"? It merely says, at that point in time, Judas wasn't clean then! Remember, he was a disciple in the beginning, chosen to be an apostle, so he must have been clean at the beginning!

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Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com  	1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313 	Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm* <small>*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</small>
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Notice what is said concerning Judas: "Jesus answered them, Did not I choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70). "Now this he said, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein" (John 12:6). "And after the sop, then entered Satan into him. Jesus therefore saith unto him, What thou doest, do quickly" (John 13:27). Those who believe in eternal security, once saved always saved, say Judas was called a devil, a thief, and Satan entered into him, how then could he have been saved? Such overlook the truth that one's spiritual condition can change from righteous to evil as exemplified with Demas, the prodigal son and Solomon.

Notice this passage: "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who it was that should betray him" (John 6:64). Some have also confused the truth stated in John 6:64 to mean Judas never believed even from the beginning. However, it doesn't say that at all! The verse says, "But there are some of you that believe not.

Anger ... Or Insanity?

By Jonathan L. Perz

Are you known to have a bad temper? Do those who know you best tend to walk on eggshells around you because of your known propensity for a short fuse? Is it not altogether uncommon for you to blow your top?

Anger is a major issue in the lives of many who profess Christianity. Some deal with silent, but deadly, kinds of anger issues. Others are known to wear their anger on their shirtsleeves. Some grow angry when things don't go the way they would like them to go and stay angry for an extended period of time. Some are known for short, but outrageous, outbursts.

Regardless of the way anger is demonstrated in your life, does a propensity for anger manifest the soundness of mind that Christians are called on to exhibit in their daily lives (2 Tim. 1:7)?

There are many spiritual issues directly linked to anger. Yet, one of the most prominent, but overlooked, is the instability that comes with one who does not know how to rule his spirit (Prov. 16:32). This instability seeps over into many avenues of one's life, but becomes intensely obvious when one becomes angry.

For Jesus knew from the beginning who they (Plural) were that believed not, and who (Singular) it was that should betray him." Notice there is two groups referred to here. This is evident in the Greek. One is plural in tense that didn't believe from the beginning and the other is singular in tense referring to Judas who would betray Him! Now, Judas, as well as all men, was morally free to make right choices but chose to yield to sin instead. The Bible says, "Judas fell away" (Acts 1:25 ASV); Judas turned aside, clearly indicates that Judas had become an apostate of his own free choosing and went to an apostate's reward: eternal punishment. He went to his own place, referring to damnation of hell. Attempts to teach that Judas was pre-determined to fulfill the role of a traitor fail to realize this fact: That Judas "became a traitor" (Luke 6:16), and leaves the gospel story a doomed man because he chose it so! At some point along the way, Judas lost his commitment to the Lord and became unfaithful.

So "once saved always saved" is a dangerous, false doctrine. It is just the kind of doctrine which would be in the gospel according to Satan. ♦

One of the strongest manifestations of this in Scripture is seen with King Saul. One specific event set him off and he never fully recovered. His life was marked by some of the most erratic, or insane, behavior in all of Scripture and it all boiled down to anger.

It began when they returned from the battle where the young man, David, slew the Philistine giant, Goliath. Upon their arrival home, David was lauded for killing his ten thousands, while King Saul was praised for killing his thousands. The account says, "Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him . . . So Saul eyed David from that day forward" (1 Sam. 16:6-9). From that point on, Saul's behavior went from bad to worse. Observe some of the following events, all surrounding Saul's anger toward David...

- Saul cast a spear at David to pin him to a wall as David played music for Saul – 1 Sam. 18:11
- He was afraid of David – 1 Sam. 18:12
- He said he would give his daughter Merab to David as a wife, but then gave her to another man instead – 1 Sam.

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- He then gave David another daughter, Michal, who loved David—but he gave her with a wicked motive – 1 Sam. 18:20-21
- He tried to have David killed by tricking him into earning the hand of Michal, his daughter – 1 Sam. 18:25
- Had a peaceful period with David at the request of his son Jonathan – 1 Sam. 19:4-8
- Tried to pin David to a wall again with a spear as David played music for him – 1 Sam. 19:9-10
- Sent messengers to kill David, who was ironically saved by Michal, who was given to David – 1 Sam. 19:11
- Saul sent messengers on several other occasions!
- Saul tried to kill his own son Jonathan because Jonathan loved David – 1 Sam. 20:27-33
- He even had eighty five priests of God murdered for helping David – 1 Sam. 22:6-19

And this is the short list (you are encouraged to read all of 1 Samuel 16-22). His behavior had highs and lows. His judgment was blinded by his anger. He did things no reasonable man would do. His anger controlled him. He hurt others to get at the object of his anger. He tried to use everyone and anyone in the exercise of his anger. He tried to commit murder on more than one occasion. He spent the rest of his life pursuing David. He truly became insane in his anger.

Does this describe you at times? Does your anger get the best of you, causing you to do things you later regret?

"Does It Matter What I Believe?"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Many ask this question in reference to religious matters. Some will try to say that it does not matter what we believe as long as we are honest and sincere about religious issues. Let us look to the Bible and see the consequences of that reasoning.

If, in religion, it does not matter what you and I believe, why did God say, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3)? Why did God not allow those Jews to worship the "god of their choice"? Isn't it possible that there were some Canaanites and heathens that were sincere and honest in their infant sacrifices, mutilation of their bodies, and other forms of "worship" to their gods? Yet,

When angry, do you act more like an insane man than one in your right mind? Are you living with anger and malice in your heart right now?

If there was ever a man who had a right to be angry with His fellow man, it was, and is, Jesus Christ. Yet, did He manifest anger when He died for our sins? Did he revile and threaten when He bore our sins in His own body on a tree (1 Pet. 2:21-25)? Not at all. As a matter of fact, Jesus sought God's forgiveness for the very men who nailed Him to that cross (Luke 23:34)?

In light of such an example, what is it that we have dealt with that could possibly justify not only getting, but staying, angry? If you are living with anger, turn it over to God and let Him handle it (Rom. 12:19)! He will judge righteously and set all wrongs right in His own due time. If you are known for a short fuse, don't try to hide the fuse, remove it. Is whatever it is that sets you off worth losing your soul over? If you believe that you were just born with a bad temper, and can't help yourself, you are deceiving yourself (1 John 1:8-9). King Saul traveled down a dark road, not because he was born with anger issues, but because he chose that road! Anger is a choice! At that critical moment of temptation, when your blood is starting to boil, deliberately and purposefully choose not to be angry. With the strength of the Lord, you can do it (Phil. 4:13)!

Have you ever wondered why some who commit murder can get a lesser sentence by pleading temporary insanity? Anger, in so many ways, is a form of temporary insanity. So many sins—life changing sins—have been committed while angry. Don't let anger ruin your life. Master your anger, don't let your anger master you!

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