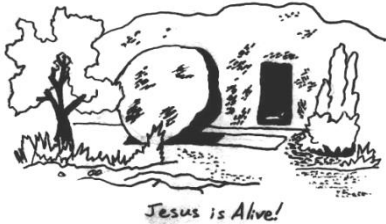


Living God Ministries

Living God Ministries PO Box 38353 Colorado Springs, CO 80937 www.livinggodministries.net

June 1, 2024



New Radio Programs

Six new programs on the Book of Ephesians have been uploaded to the radio archive:

Ephesians 4:4 One Spirit
Ephesians 4:5 One Lord
Ephesians 4:5 One Faith
Ephesians 4:5 Answering the Faith Question
Ephesians 4:5 One Baptism
Ephesians 4:6 One God

Calvinism

I've recently been talking with individuals who believe the Calvinist view, and it seems their main argument is that a spiritually dead person cannot choose to believe or have the desire, and that's what makes them "elect or chosen" because God gave them the faith to believe. They use verse like Romans 10:17 and Ephesians 2:8-9 John 6:44.

To me it seems that everyone has a measure of faith, and it seems redundant or meaningless that Jesus would call all to repent from unbelief if we are incapable of believing. They say a deadman

does not have the desire or the will to believe, and it's God's will who he draws and gives the desire and faith to.

I'm curious what your thoughts are on this, as I'm sure you've had many encounters with this.

There are several things I think you might want to keep in mind when having conversations like this. The most important has to do with the consequences a person will experience if they agree with you. There are two general categories of consequences a person will normally face. The first is the theological or issues related to a change in beliefs. The second is the changes they will experience in their relationships with others. The argument of truth is not normally as important as we would like to think it is.

The pride of people is not a small issue, and admitting they are wrong can be more than a person would be interested in dealing with. The consequences can interfere with how they see themselves. Their purpose and goals in life might need to change. The longer we live, the more we invest in ourselves, and changing core beliefs we have can require us to start over. Starting over means discarding all we had and built previously and this will affect our identity as a person. A common concern I have heard people express is they don't want to admit they wasted their life with beliefs that were not true. This is a common reason why people will reject anything that would lead them to being faced with these kinds of issues.

It is important to remember that people have relationships with others. They are probably a member of a church, and they have family members who are a significant part of their lives.

These kinds of relationships will be affected by a person changing what they believe about God. There will always be conversations that include what people believe, to include comparing their beliefs with others who disagree with them. A significant change in the way a person perceives God will cause a disruption in these relationships. Some of these kinds of disruptions can be minimal, but others can result in them being viewed as a completely different person who has to be re-evaluated for closeness. It is easy for a person to be offended when they are around a person who thinks their beliefs are wrong.

These are some common examples of why people will reject a challenge to their beliefs, and they are not going to let you know this is why. You will find people very comfortable with arguing just about anything theological to keep you from finding out what they are really concerned about. This is why winning an argument doesn't usually change the other person's beliefs. They don't care about the truth anywhere near as much as how they see themselves, and the relationships they have with others. The people who will likely benefit the most from discussions like these will be the bystanders who are watching the argument. People who don't participate in arguments usually have more freedom to change their beliefs.

Those of the Calvinist persuasion will be dealing with the concerns I have just described, and others. I have found that Calvinists with conviction are normally thinking more about the kind of God they want to believe in, rather than the God who is. There is a tremendous amount of appeal to the flesh to believe in these doctrines. These doctrines justify a person not having any personal responsibility. There is no personal responsibility for sin, and there is no responsibility for a person to live their lives. Their idea of living their lives has to do with discovering the plan of God for their life. They prefer to be spectators rather than participants, so they can blame someone else for any discomfort

they experience in life. They will be set free from the burden of evangelism, because God decides on an individual basis who will be saved and who won't be. People are not normally thinking about the truth. They are thinking about the kind of God they want to believe in, who appeals the most to their flesh.

The beliefs of Calvinism are normally summarized in five points, and they all result in several conclusions about God that are contrary to who He really is. He is an active participant in our lives, who has goals and objectives of His own. He allows people their own free will in the midst of His participation. He knows everything He wants to know, but that doesn't require Him to know everything. He is relational, and can change the way He relates to people according to what they believe, or in response to their decisions. This is the God I know, who is testified of in the Bible. If these descriptions of Him are true, the five points of Calvinism will be at best, wishful thinking.

It is important to know the beliefs of Calvinism are nothing new. The vocabulary they use and examples they present are a modern representation of ancient beliefs. Consider what Calvin said about the origin of his beliefs:

"Augustine is so much at one with me that, if I wished to write a confession of my faith, it would abundantly satisfy me to quote wholesale from his writings."

It could be Calvin concluded these beliefs on his own through thinking about the God he wanted to believe in, he learned everything from Augustine, or of course there is some combination of the two. Regardless of how he came to these conclusions, it is important to know these conclusions are nothing new.

In my notes, I have a profound description of Augustine from the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1974, volume 2, page 364:

“Augustine, November 13, 354 AD – August 28, 430 AD. The dominant personality of the Western Church of his time, is generally recognized as having been the greatest thinker of Christian antiquity. His mind was the crucible in which the religion of the New Testament was most completely fused with the Platonic tradition of Greek philosophy; and it was also the means by which the product of this fusion was transmitted to the Christendoms of medieval Roman Catholicism and the Renaissance Protestantism.”

A summary of what this means, is that Calvin got his beliefs from Augustine, who got his beliefs from Plato, which were the beliefs of Pagan Greek Philosophy. This means Calvinism is a belief system derived from interpreting the Scriptures according to the beliefs of Pagan Greek Philosophy. I think the most profound assessment of these beliefs was described in the movie, “The Princess Bride,” by the great Vizzini who said, “Have you ever heard of Plato? Aristotle? Socrates? Morons!” The majority of the people in Christianity as a whole, throughout the history of the church, have been Pagans according to their beliefs, and this will continue until the Lord returns.

I personally came from a Rabbinical background, and was not expecting to run into these beliefs when I entered the Christian world. The Jews have a history of struggling with people who have these beliefs about God. This was what the Maccabean War was fought over. The church as a whole, Catholic and Protestant, promote beliefs about a God, who the Jews fought a war over to survive as a people.

I have brought these issues up on several occasions in the past thirty five years of believing in Jesus. It of course has been unusual to find someone who would seriously reconsider their beliefs about who our God is and how He relates to us. I have found it to be much more effective to just stay true to testifying about Him. People hear the truth, the Holy Spirit confirms the truth in their hearts, and then they get to

struggle with the consequences they would have to face if they really do embrace the truth. I have lots of listeners to the radio program who really enjoy the programs because they know I am telling the truth about who God is and how he relates to us. They struggle with what I tell them because it is opposed to what they believe in terms of Pagan Greek Philosophy, thinking it is Christianity. It is through this struggle over a long period of time that people transition away from Paganism.

Most Sincerely,
Aaron
Teaching Pastor for Living God Ministries

Radio Stations

We are presently broadcasting on the following radio stations:

Denver, CO KLTT 670 AM 5:00 – 5:30 pm
Denver, CO KRKS 990 AM 3:00 – 3:30 pm
Colorado Springs, CO 100.7 FM 7:00 – 7:30 am
Sacramento, CA KCBC 770 AM 8:30 – 9:00 am
Los Angeles, CA KBRT 740 AM 5:30 – 6:00 pm
Los Angeles, CA KKLA 99.5 FM 11 – 11:30 pm
Portland, OR KPDQ 800 AM 3:00 – 3:30 pm
Dallas, TX KWRD 100.7 FM 3:00 – 3:30 pm
Dallas, TX KAAM 770 AM 6:00 – 6:30 pm
Milwaukee, WI WJYI 1340 AM 11:30 – 12 pm
Milwaukee, WI WJYI 98.7 FM 11:30 – 12 pm