

## The BIBLE PROJECT

### PUSHBACK— Hebrews, Galatians, Romans.



#### INTRODUCTION:

Acts read & review concerning internal Jewish/Gentile divisions within early Christianity. *See NT 11.*

#### **BIG IDEA 1: JUDAIZERS CLAIM THAT CHRIST IS INADEQUATE FOR SALVATION WITHOUT SOMETHING MORE**

- The church has struggled internally over the question of whether Jesus Christ is sufficient by himself for the salvation of humankind without additional effort.
- That struggle can be seen in the struggle of the early church over whether the Gentiles would or could be included.
- It is seen in church history over the nature of Christ that elicited the Nicene Creed and the great teaching of Augustine against Pelagius.
  - Athanasius v Arius: The full deity of Jesus is required for adequate atonement.
  - Augustine v Pelagius: The utter depravity of human nature requires God's action.



*Letters of Hebrews, Galatians, and Romans*

## **BIG IDEA 2: EARLY LETTERS INSIST SALVATION COMES THROUGH CHRIST ALONE**

It can be seen within the NT in the mission efforts of the “super apostles” (1 Cor 11) who travelled around and opposed Paul. And it can be seen in the background of the reasons for the writing of Hebrews, Galatians and Romans.

Think about it: that salvation should be a gift is, at the most fundamental level, unprecedented and offensive.

Pure gift  
won for humankind by God’s action on our behalf  
accomplished by God without any help by those who would receive it.

*“If you were to stand before God and he were to ask you, ‘Why should I admit you into the heaven?’ what would you say?”*

Write your answer here: \_\_\_\_\_

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Most folks do not want to think they won’t go to heaven (or that relatives and friends regardless of their relationship with Christ won’t be in heaven). But still they cannot feel free to say that they **know** they will in fact have a home there. So they cop out and respond to the question above “***I don’t know.***”

Why is it hard to say that one knows he is going to heaven? \_\_\_\_\_ \*

### REASONS FOR **PUSHBACK** IN THE CULTURE

Basic philosophical presuppositions—

Pagan

NT era—Gnostics, Stoics, Cynics, Epicureans, Platonists, Aristotelians.  
Each focuses in its own way on an ethics of individual attainment or achievement.

Man is the key figure in the process of salvation – not God.

*God helps those who help themselves.—WHERE IS THAT IN THE BIBLE? Algernon Sidney and then Ben Franklin in Poor Richard’s Almanac.*

Modern – the essence of popular religion is just exactly that if you’re good, OR good enough, you go to heaven.

Reasons:

1. PRIDE

In Washington, DC when Jonathan was in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade our family once were given a bunch of balloons. We walked around the Washington Mall trying to give them away. Almost no one would take a gift.

We want to get our salvation the old fashioned way – we want to earn it.

2. EXPERIENCE—we have learned there is *no free lunch*.

*If the offer seems to be too good to be true, it probably is.*

I once went to court to pay a fine and going out asked the clerk of the court if I could also pay someone else's fine. NO. I pressed the point – I wonder what would happen if I did that. She immediately became suspicious. We would have to know why – “Why would you do that?”

Everything else in our experience teaches us that we get what we earn. Grades. Paycheck. Respect. Even trust or credit. Never do you find someone giving you the money without getting the goods. Closing on a home and the signing off on the contracts and the mortgage and the deed. No money, no deed.

So now you offer salvation with no strings attached?

There has to be a cost. No gift comes without a price.

And indeed there is – THE PRICE OF OUR SALVATION IS VERY HIGH, BUT IT IS PAID FOR US.

Do you remember the movie ***Chariots of Fire***? Eric Liddell v Harold Abrahams?

Abrahams wants to take them on one by one and *run them off their feet*.

Liddell—*God made me for a purpose... but he also made me fast and when I run, I feel his pleasure.*

Abrahams ran to prove something. Liddell ran because he had something.

Abrahams always pressing.

Liddell always giving up – as in giving up running on Sunday...

True story except they never did compete head to head.

Early Christianity against this ordinary common sense background and also against the background of a developing Judaism proved fertile ground for those who began to feel that you had to contribute your **fair share** to your own salvation.

Jesus may have died for some sins, like original sin, sins committed before profession of faith, sins committed before baptism, but not all your sins.

PUSH BACK came from 2 sources

1. From within early Christianity – Judeo-Christianity—attempted to put new wine of Christianity into old wineskins of Judaism. (Mk 2.22)
2. From Judaism itself – sought to recapture Jews won to Christianity by asserting the need for righteousness based on merit.

Galatians 3. 1-5: O, foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you into believing a different Gospel which is no gospel at all. Did you receive the spirit by works or by believing what you heard?

Galatians 1.6-9 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and turning to a different Gospel. ... Even if we or an angel from heaven preach a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed.

Heb 2.1 Therefore, we must pay the most careful attention to what we have heard lest we drift away.

Heb 10.32-39—we are not among those who shrink back but among those who have faith and so are saved.

Heb 13.9 Don't be carried away by strange teaching, but be strengthened by grace, not by regulations about food.

Rom 16.17-18 – Take note of those who create dissension...in opposition to the doctrine you have been taught...Such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites

### **BIG IDEA 3: HEBREWS DECLARES THAT CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO OT**



To whom should we listen?

Christ is superior to the OT patriarchs and prophets

Heb 1.1-14; To whom [else] has God said “sit until I make your enemies my footstool?”

3.2-6 – Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses

Jesus is the true High Priest & priesthood supersedes Levitical priesthood

Heb 3.1 – the apostle and high priest of our profession

4.14-15 – we have a high priest who has in every respect been tested as we are but without sin.

5.1-10 – other priests have to make atonement for their own sin, but Jesus was perfected and made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.

6.19-7.10 – Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek—as did Aaron through Abraham to Melchizedek. Melchizedek blessed Abraham. Shows who is the greater.

7.11-8.5 – Jesus in order of Melchizedek. Became priest not by physical descent, but by virtue of an indestructible life – there is the introduction of a better hope than the law through which we approach God.

Other priests were many because they died. We now need only one priest who is alive forever.



Holy blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. Unlike other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, then for those of the people; **this he did once for all when he offered himself**....  
8.6 Jesus has attained a more excellent ministry and to that degree is the mediator of a better covenant.

Jesus is greater than the temple –



Heb. 9.1-12 –Jesus enters once for all into the tent not of this creation – God’s real presence –

Jesus IS SUPERIOR TO THE LAW AND THE TRADITIONS



Heb 7.15-18, 28—abrogation of the earlier commandment because it was weak and ineffectual; 7.28 law appoints priests who are subject to weakness, but the oath ... appoints a son who has been made perfect forever.

8.6-13 Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant – if first covenant were faultless there would have no need to look for a second one. quotes Jer 31.31-34. He made the first covenant obsolete.

10. 1 – Law is a shadow of things to come

Jesus PRESENTS A BETTER SACRIFICE



Heb 9.13-10.25—If the blood of goats and bulls ... how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience...

10.14—For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

**READ 10.19-25**

THEREFORE, HE MAKES ALL THE **OLD THINGS OBSOLETE** (Old Covenant] AND PRESENTS A NEW COVENANT Heb 8.13  
AND A NEW KINGDOM WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN Hebrews 12.28

**BIG IDEA 4: Letter to GALATIANS –dependence upon law and ceremony for salvation can end only in death.**



Galatians

Falling back to law righteousness

Gal 3.2-5

3.10-11a

4.8-11, 21

5.4;

Paul had met the problem of mixing the old with the new so many times ...

2.11-18—The first GA—cf Acts 15

5.11

6.12-15—those who want to make a good showing in the flesh compel you to be circumcised to escape persecution.

... that he had lost all desire to be anything less than blunt 5.12 – I wish those who would unsettle [the church] would castrate themselves. [Yikes!]

**BIG IDEA 5: ROMANS: THE BELIEVER IS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH**



LAW AND TRADITION CANNOT AND WILL NOT SAVE.

GOOD WORKS WILL NOT JUSTIFY IN GOD'S EYES.

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\* Answer to the question on page 2 (Why is it hard to say that one knows he is going to heaven?)  
To say I know I'm going to heaven sounds like I'm bragging about how good or obedient or holy I am. In other words it seems to say I have kept the law and *deserve* to go to heaven.

Does anyone get to heaven because they are good enough? NO.

**Romans read and review**

Gentiles also are guilty before God

1.18-20: Wrath of God is revealed against all wickedness of people (Jew and gentile) because what may be known about God is plain to all... 1. 32 although they know God's righteous decree ...

Romans 2: <sup>12</sup> When the Gentiles sin, they will be destroyed, even though they never had God's written law. And the Jews, who do have God's law, will be judged by that law when they fail to obey it.

2.14 the gentiles who do not have the law, do by nature things required by law... They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness...

Jews stand under same sentence as Gentiles.

Law righteousness will not remove guilt R 2.17-24, nor circumcision, nor privilege [3.1]

Romans 2 <sup>29</sup> No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God.

Jew is no better than Gentile before God 3.9-20

But there is a righteousness revealed to save everyone 3.21-26

There is no right to boast

God is not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.

But what about Abraham—Abraham was also saved by faith *before he was circumcised*. Ro 4

As Abe was justified by faith, so are we.

Why then, can we *not* sin as much as we want??? – Rom 6

What is the purpose of the law? Romans 7 (Galatians 3.24 – schoolmaster (KJV) “guardian” NIV

No condemnation and life in the spirit as a member of God's family – Rom 8.,

What about Israel? Divine purpose accomplished by Israel's self-exclusion. Romans 9-11

Therefore, by the mercies of Christ ... be transformed. Romans 12.1-2

Paul writes his great conclusion as the premise to his letter to Rome:

He who through faith is righteous shall live Rom 1.16-17.

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. <sup>17</sup> For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

Rom. 1.16-17 \*Habakkuk 2.4

## **BIG IDEA RECAP**

**BIG IDEA 1: JUDAIZERS CLAIM THAT CHRIST IS INADEQUATE FOR SALVATION WITHOUT SOMETHING MORE**

**BIG IDEA 2: EARLY LETTERS INSIST SALVATION COMES THROUGH CHRIST ALONE**

**BIG IDEA 3: HEBREWS DECLARES THAT CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO OT**

**BIG IDEA 4: LETTER TO GALATIANS –DEPENDENCE UPON LAW AND CEREMONY FOR SALVATION CAN END ONLY IN DEATH.**

**BIG IDEA 5: ROMANS: THE BELIEVER IS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH**

## **The Bible Project 2.04**

**Consider the following if you choose to prepare for the next class:**

Be ready to ask questions about the previous lesson: NT 11

Re-read Romans using the points made on p. 7 above as guidance.

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. What is meant by Rom. 3.10?
2. Does the Bible teach that a person must be righteous to attain eternal life?
3. How does a person get righteousness?
4. How does a person attain eternal life?
5. Is it possible to live a good and moral life and still fail to attain eternal life?
6. How does a person get to the place where he or she feels the need to become acceptable to God (justified in God's eyes)?
7. What part does a person's evaluation of the authority of Scripture play in the process of their salvation?

Please also take notes on the following passages

- Col. 1.22
- Rom. 5 19b
- Col 2.14
- Rom 5.6
- Rom 5.9
- Rom 3.25-26
- Rom. 3.22
- Rom. 4.5

**MARKERS**

Romans 1	I am not ashamed of the Gospel
Romans 2	Gentiles know enough of what God requires
Romans 3	All have sinned
Romans 4	To those who trust God, he gives righteousness
Romans 6	The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life...
Romans 8	No condemnation