**BIBLE TALK Radio Broadcast**

**On KTTR (99.7 FM) Every Sunday at 8:30 a.m.**

**Rolla, Missouri**

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**False Concepts of God (part 2)**

Last week on our program we begin to look at some false concepts of God. There are many different views and concepts people have of God, but all the different concepts of God cannot be true. If there is a God, then He possesses certain definite, identifying characteristics. Any concept that would not be consistent with these traits is a false concept of God. To characterize God in some other way than who He really is, is to have a false concept of God.

 It should be each person’s desire and goal to learn the true attributes and characteristics of God.

Last week we talked about the false concept that God is physical. God is Spirit, and therefore, is not made of the material creation. He is in NO sense physical, and therefore, is not limited by physical constraints.

Another false concept we talked about last week is that God is local, meaning that God is confined to temples, or church buildings, or to certain other localities. Some people think they are to be good in church buildings because they are in God’s presence, but when they leave they have no concern for being pure and holy. No, God is not confined to a place or locality as man is confined. God is everywhere present. God is fully aware of all we do, think or say at all times. Another false concept of God is that God created man and left him on earth without guidance or help. This is Deism. We emphasized last week that God did not create us and then leave us be. He is assessable to all who will seek for Him. James says in James 4:8, *“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you….”*  And God did not leave us without instruction. He has given us the Bible which is His instructions for our lives.

Today we want to look and three other false concepts of God, and emphasize the true characteristics and attributes of the God of heaven.

Some view God as a god of confusion. They see religious division, the bickering and fighting among religious people, and then conclude that if there is a God, He must be a god of confusion. The problem is these people assume that God is the cause of the division. But God is not the source of division in religion, man is. God has provided for peace and unity. In John 17 Jesus is praying to the Father. In verse 17, praying for the apostles He says, *“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”* The word “sanctify” means “to set apart.” Jesus is praying for the apostles that God will set them apart from the evil of the world. But notice how they will be set apart. He says, *“sanctify them by Your truth.”* And then He says, *“Your word is truth.”*  As they would listen to and apply God’s word to their lives they would then be a people set apart from the world. But then He goes on to pray in verses 20-21, *“I do not pray for these alone* [that is the apostles]*, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.”* Jesus does not only pray for the apostles but He prays for all believers. All believers believe in Jesus through the words of the apostles. That is true of us today. All who believe today believe in Jesus through the words of the apostles. And Jesus prays that all these who hear the word and believe it will be one, even as He and the Farther are one. The Lord has made it possible for believers to be one. As long as believers hear and obey the truth, and are sanctified by the truth they can be one in Christ.

Look with me also in Ephesians 4:3-6, *“endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”* The “unity of the Spirit” is unity that has been enjoined by the Holy Spirit, and is provided by the Spirit. But in order to keep this unity we must accept and abide by these unifying facts – there is one body, one Spirit, on hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. You see, as long as we believe in and reverence the one God, and follow the one Lord Jesus Christ, and heed the one Holy Spirit, hold to the one faith, practice the one baptism, have the one hope, we can be united in the one body, which is the one church. Division occurs when men begin to believe in different gods, follow different lords, heed different spirits, hold to different faiths, practice different baptisms, etc. Division comes when men choose to follow something other than the truth. Division is not God’s fault. It is man’s fault.

Let me illustrate. In 1 Corinthians 14 Paul is dealing with a problem in the assemblies of the church in Corinth. There was confusion in their assemblies. Prophets were speaking at the same time. Tongue speakers were speaking in languages that were not understood, and therefore, edification was being hindered. Paul says to them in verse 33, “*For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the* *saints*.” Why was there confusion in the assembly in Corinth? It was not God’s fault. God had provided the means for peach and harmony (read verse 32). If they would abide by the Lord’s instructions, there would be peace. The reason for confusion in assemblies of the church is because man has free-will and some men chose to follow their own will rather than the Lord’s.

The reason for division in the religious world today is because man has free-will and some choose to act according their own desires rather than follow the Lord. If we will all submit to the authority of Jesus our Lord and His word, the Bible, then we can be united. The problem is not with God and the Bible, it is with man.

Another false concept of God is - God is too good to condemn anyone. The view is, the God of the Bible is described as good, kind, gracious, loving. How could such a loving God condemn a man to hell?

A man being condemned to hell does not tell us how terrible God is, but how terrible sin is. You see, hell is the just punishment for sin. Romans 6:23 says *“the wages of sin is death.”*  When a judge sentences a bank robber to ten years in prison, he is not viewed as being an unloving, uncaring judge, rather what we see is a man receiving the just due for his crime. And we see the judge practicing justice.

It is because of sin that man is condemned. Again, man has free-will. When man chooses to rebel against God and His law, and do his own thing, justice demands that he be punished.

You see, God is a just God. Psalm 89:14 says of God, *“Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face.”*  And so, when man chooses to sin, that is break God’s law, justice demands that he bear the consequences of his sin. Without such justice the law of God means nothing. Man would be blessed whether he obeyed or disobeyed. The law then would be a mockery. Why then have the law?

Sin is serious. Again, Romans 6:23, *“the wages of sin is death*.” Wages is what we earn. Because of our sins we deserve death, and Paul is talking here about the ultimate consequence of sin, that is eternal death, eternal separation from God. And the fact is all of us have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Because of our sins we are all doomed to eternal death. But God is also a loving and gracious God. God desires all men to be saved from their sins (1 Timothy 2:4). Therefore, He provided a way whereby man can be forgiven of his sins. To be saved from sin and its consequences we need God’s forgiveness. But how can God forgive us of our sins and be just in doing it? That is accomplished through the death of Christ. In His death on the cross, Jesus paid the price for our sins, thus satisfying the demands of justice and making it possible for God to forgive us. Romans 5:8 says, *“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* Because of God’s grace and mercy, expressed in the death of His Son, we now can be saved from sin and be free from the condemnation of sin. But if man refuses the salvation that God has provided through the death of Christ, and persist in sin, he deserves death.

Another false concept of god is that God is whatever you want him to be. When Christians try to convert others to the one true God, some will complain and say, “Christians should not condemn others for what they believe.” They will say, “Who are you to say that your god is the right one and all others are wrong?” Their view is that whatever one conceives God to be, that is god to him. But that is impossible if God is a real being. God cannot be all the ways that man may understand Him to be. As we mentioned earlier, God possesses certain definite, identifying characteristics. To characterize God in some other way than who He really is, is to have a false concept of God.

The Bible states clearly that there is only one true God. Isaiah 44:6 says,*"Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel,**And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:* *'I am the First and I am the Last;**Besides Me there is no God.* Isaiah 45:5 ***–***  *“**I am the LORD, and there is no other;**There is no God besides Me…*.”

This one God made every nation of man. Paul said to the idolaters in Athens, “*And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth,**and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings*,” (Acts 17:26).And this God tells us that all men are required to believe in Him and worship Him. When Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica he said, *“Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God”* (1 Thess. 1:8-9). These Christians once believed in other gods, but they repented and turned to serve the living and true God. Paul said to the idolaters in Athens, *“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent”* (Acts 17:30). Hebrews ll:6 says, *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”* It does make a difference what we believe about God. We must believe in the one, true, and living God.

Dear friend, God is not far from each one of us (Acts 17:27). If you seek for Him you will find Him. Why not seek the true and living God today.

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