

How Does Man Make God A Respector of Persons?

One of the most obvious truths revealed in all the Bible was expressed by Peter in his speech to Cornelius: “*Of a truth I perceive that God is **no respector** of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is accept with Him*” (Acts 10:34-35). Those who believe the Bible believe this statement to be true.

Consequently, man can not literally make God a respector of persons. However, man can subscribe to **theories** which, **if true**, would of necessity make God a respector of persons. Let us observe three common statements which contradicts Peter’s declaration that “*God is no respector of persons.*”

1. “Every person has a right to his own belief.” This statement means that every person can become a law unto himself and devise his own plans by which to be justified. Yet, James states that “*there is one lawgiver*” (Jas. 4:12). The statement that “every man has a right to his own belief” implies that some can be saved by believing and doing one thing — others by believing and doing something else. Many would prescribe easier conditions than would others, and would consequently be saved upon easier or less difficult terms, thereby causing God to show partiality (or respect of persons) toward those whose belief was less demanding than that of others. The truth of the matter is that there is one law (“*one faith*” — Eph. 4:5); “*one lawgiver*” (Jas. 4:12), and we are to “*walk by the **same rule***” (Phil. 4:16)

2. “Be a member of the church of your choice.” Some people become members of certain churches in infancy due to the action of parents who had a few drops of water sprinkled upon their heads and called it “baptism.” Others must have an “experience of grace” and be “voted in.” Some churches are entered by nothing more than an expressed desire on the part of the applicant. The expression “be a member of the church of **your choice**” makes God a respector of persons, and also indicates that He is pleased with religious division, despite Jesus’s prayer to the contrary (John 17:20-21). Friend, we must be members of the church of **God’s choice**, the one Jesus built (Matt. 16:18), over which He rules as “*head*” (Eph. 1:22-23), that wears His name (Rom. 16:16), and follows His “*new covenant*” (Heb. 9:15-17).

3. “Man is saved by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.” This means that one’s salvation is wholly dependent upon God — that God is to be blamed for every soul lost. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit does work in the salvation of souls, but it also teaches that the Holy Spirit works through **medium**, namely, the Scriptures which were revealed to inspired men, and which we must believe and obey (cf. Gal. 3:2; I Cor. 2:10; I Pet. 1:22-23). On the other hand, if God, through the Spirit, works directly upon the heart of some and not upon the hearts of **all**, then we ask how is that possible without God showing favoritism to those who received “the direct operation of the Holy Spirit?” Moreover, we are further made to wonder how a person can harmonize this statement with the many passages which affirm the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures. Cf. Matt. 4:4; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:3; Rev. 22:18-19, etc. It comes with poor grace for a person to claim to believe and respect the bible, while he turns right around and makes

arguments which, if true, would render the Bible inadequate and incomplete as a religious guide.

Other statements could also be included, but these are sufficient to show the importance of our studying the consequences of **any** doctrine before accepting it without question or study. Friend, **“the truth”** saves (John 8:32)! God’s word *“is truth”* (John 17:17). Let us follow the instructions of God as they are set forth in His book, the Bible, and reject the doctrines and commandments of men! **Your** soul, and its salvation, is too precious for you to do otherwise!

*** — B. Witherington